

ShootingStar

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Black Literary Magazine

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Kwanzaa...

*Celebrating the fruits of
our Labor*

Winter, 1987

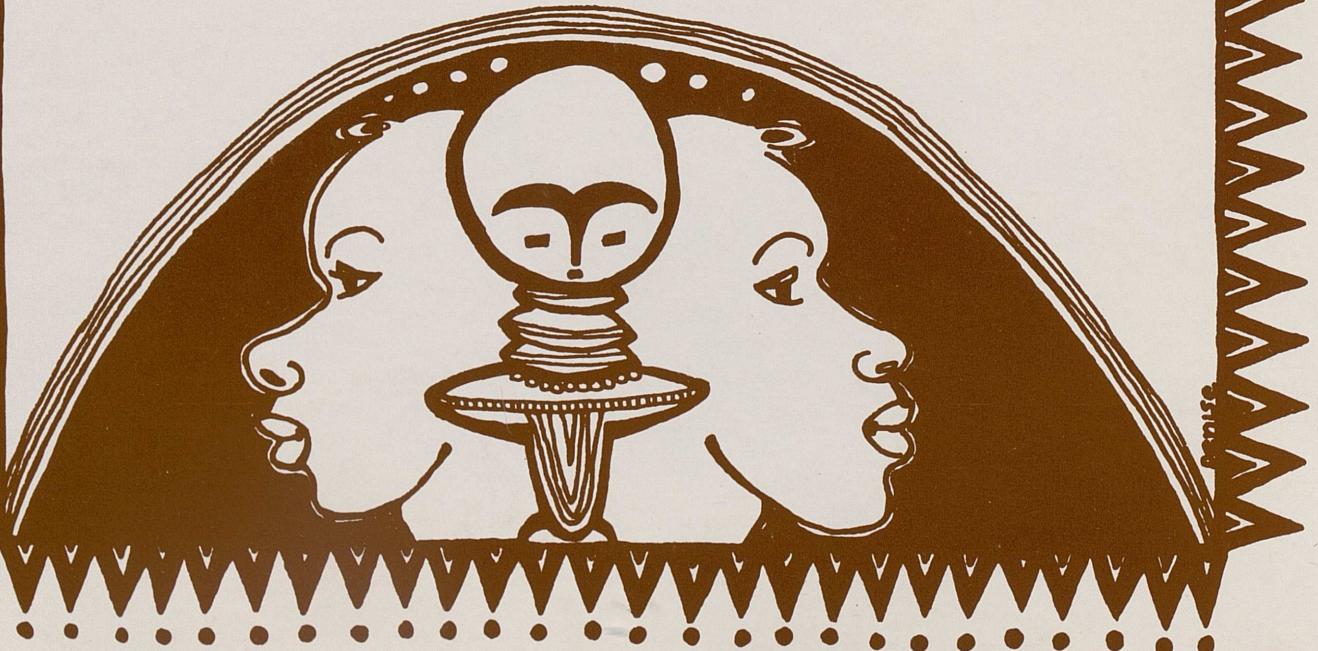
Gwendolyn Ife



NGUZO SABA

The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa

1. **UMOJA (oo/moja)=Unity** To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.
2. **KUJICHAGULIA (kooji/cha/goolia)=Self-determination** To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for and spoken for by others.
3. **UJIMA (oo/jima)=Collective work and responsibility** To build and maintain our community together and make our sisters' and brothers' problems our problems and to solve them together.
4. **UJAMAA (oojama)=Cooperative Economics** To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.
5. **NIA (nee/ah)=Purpose** To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
6. **KUUMBA (koo/oom/ba)=Creativity** To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
7. **IMANI (ee/manee)=Faith** To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.



Design by Denise Goren



Waitmond L. Vire, Jr.

Vire participated in the Carnegie Mellon University Scholars Program and graduated from Westinghouse High School in Pittsburgh and California State College (California, Pennsylvania) in 1978.

Vire is especially adept with oil paint, air brush, water colors and leroy pen. He also works with drawing inks, liquidtex acrylic colors, color creation film and many other art forms.

His special interests include portrait painting, photography, music and taping, mechanical models and reading.

Publisher's Statement

I have always enjoyed the fellowship and sharing of the Christmas season. But, I wanted to avoid the winter solstice's ethnically empty rituals as well as compulsory, commercialized gift giving.

Seven years ago, an acquaintance invited me to Carnegie Library's Homewood Branch in Pittsburgh for an evening of spiritual, cultural and epicurean feasting. That was my first "Kwanzaa." Since then, I've come to believe that one of the biggest needs of African-American people is a home-grown system of shared, deeply meaningful symbolisms and joyous traditions.

I strongly believe that a people, just like an individual, must appreciate and love themselves before they can wholesomely extend and receive these gifts. Kwanzaa is a good beginning because...

Our ceremonies, beginning with Kwanzaa, must be unique and special to our African-American experiences.

Our traditions must encourage understanding and respect for our ancestors.

Our sacraments must encourage us to cherish ourselves as we are while sometimes-failing-but-constantly-reaching for our glorious potential.

Our rites must immerse each generation in a compelling desire to build for the next.

December, 1987 celebrates Kwanzaa's 21st anniversary. This December also completes SHOOTING STAR REVIEW's first volume. I'm thankful for each one of our readers and for the faith and friendship of all of SHOOTING STAR REVIEW's supporters.

Like Kwanzaa, SHOOTING STAR REVIEW is beginning a tradition of personal enrichment and enhancement. SHOOTING STAR REVIEW was initiated because literature and visual art, as with all of the humanities, are more than "cultural glitter." Literature and visual art take participants beyond theory, speculation and yesterday's news to enduring truths that provide foundations for humanistic decision-making.

I sincerely hope that this and every issue brings a new and brightly shining awareness into each reader's universe.

Habari gani
Happy Kwanzaa!

Publisher

Shooting Star Review is an educational magazine that uses the literary and visual arts to explore the African-American experience.



FEATURED ARTIST

RUTH G. RICHARDSON

Ruth G. Richardson is a well-respected watercolorist and photographer who studied art with Lois Mailou Jones, Victor Lowenfeld and Zolton Szabo. While currently the Executive Director of Three Rivers Youth in Pittsburgh, and listed in *Who's Who In American Women*, Richardson is also a member of the Pennsylvania Watercolor Society, Midwest Watercolor Society, Visions and the National Conference of Artists.



ShootingStar

REVIEW

SHOOTING STAR REVIEW
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UMOJA

(oo/moja)=Unity. To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.

Sharing our homes and our food with friends and family builds feelings of warmth, closeness...unity. These activities are a valuable part of the Kwanzaa experience. The following essay offers concepts that create harmony within our bodies. When we feel good inside, it's easier to feel good about others.



Sandra Gould Ford

The First Fruits of Kwanzaa Reap Health Year Round By Gerald Savage

After a stroke, borderline diabetes and too many excess pounds at the age of 25, I am now a vibrant, 160 pound 31-year-old with no health problems. I've found that a vegetarian (vegan) lifestyle brings miracles into a life. My wife Felicia is also a -vegan. She maintained this diet throughout her entire pregnancy with our beautiful, healthy, now five-month-old son. Despite the fact that stress and poverty have a great and damaging impact in African-American communities, we are responsible for many of our physical difficulties.

Today, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and many other diet-related diseases are rampant among Black people. Because Kwanzaa—its spirit, meaning, rituals and historical foundations—is very much connected to food, meat-free dining provides a great opportunity to exercise Kwanzaa's principles while building eating habits that assure vibrant health (our Divine birthright) every moment of the upcoming year.

I've learned that vegetarianism is an important element in a broader concept called holistic health. It opened my mind to understanding that our Creator provides ALL of our nutritional needs in the earth. We only need to plant the seeds, till the soil and God does the rest. I also know that some down-to-earth education is essential to benefiting from the blessings of Mother Nature's bounty.

There are actually three types of vegetarians:
VEGANS...those who avoid eating any animal products or by products
LACTO...those who consume dairy products, and
LACTO-OVAL...those who eat dairy products and eggs

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Be as proud of your race today as our fathers were in the days of yore. We have a beautiful history. And we shall create another in the future that will astonish the world.

Marcus Garvey

THE ORIGINS OF KWANZAA

By Terri Lewis

For African-American people, nationalist thinking involves preserving our distinct and special heritage of creativity, intellectual dynamics and endurance. Kwanzaa continues a centuries-old tradition of nationalist thinking that was revitalized in the 1960s. This fourth blossoming of nationalist pride (previously attempted in the eras of David Walker, Martin DeLaney and W.E.B. DuBois) involved the rescue and construction of our own history, restructuring the goals and purpose of our struggle, and taking responsibility for the self definition of ourselves and our culture.

US, a nationalist organization, was formed by Maulana Karenga to promote the "creation, recreation and circulation of (African-American) culture." US contended that "progress in struggle is directly linked to progress in thought and that until the oppressor monopoly on our mind is broken and we acquire new values and views of self, society and the world liberation is impossible and by definition unthinkable." In addition, nationalist thinkers believed that a people who cannot and will not define, defend and develop their own interest will have others' definitions and interests (as though they were human putty) imposed on them.

These fundamental concepts formed Kwaida ideology, out of which Kwanzaa was born. Thus, Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday that blends historical activities and concepts with current needs.

Kwanzaa is a practical expression of African-American pride and awareness. The seven day event (December 26 through January 1) is an annual reaffirmation of our commitment to spiritual, cultural, psychological and physical liberation. Each day of Kwanzaa is dedicated to a specific value. The appropriate sequence is:

Umoja	Unity
Kujichaulia	Self-Determination
Ujima	Collective Work and Responsibility
Ujamaa	Cooperative Economics
Nia	Purpose
Kuumba	Creativity
Imani	Faith

Swahili was adopted because it is easily pronounced by African-Americans and provides a linkage to our ancestral homelands. Participants are encouraged to entertain, celebrate and share the bounty of this year's harvest. Symbols of Kwanzaa that should grace each household include:

Mazao (fruit and vegetables) that are clustered on a
Mkeka (place mat) preferably natural fibre, with a
Kinara (candle holder for seven candles) and
Mishumaa Saba (the candles) 1 black, 3 red and 3 green
Vibunzi (ears of corn for each child hoped for or born into the family)
Zawadi (gifts) must be personally made or educational
Kikombe Cha Umoja (communal unity cup) of wood or stoneware

Kwanzaa's most important aspect is the recognition of our ancestors' struggles and contributions and the reminder that our efforts to meet our great potential continues!



First Fruits

continued from pg. 4

People who are new to vegetarianism often ask, "Where do you get your protein?" "How do you get enough calcium?" "Can I really survive without meat?" "Don't you miss that juicy, succulent turkey at Thanksgiving?" I'm always glad to answer that vegetarian dining provides all of the essential nutrients and taste satisfaction found in an omni-carnivorous diet.

Here are some guidelines that can build better health during this Kwanzaa season.

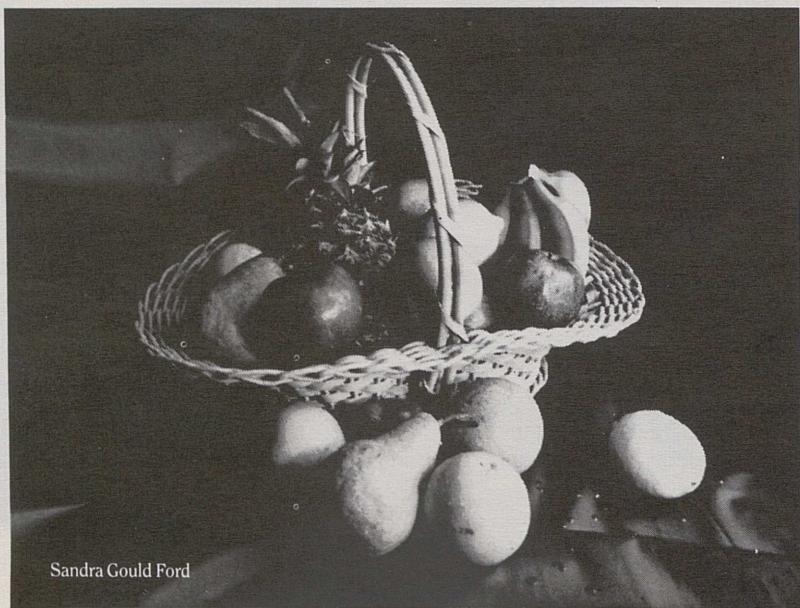
Believe me, miraculous improvements can be experienced as a result of following these guidelines. Be aware, though, that those who make abrupt and drastic changes usually experience some odd sensations. These brief effects generally mean that the body is upgrading its mode of operation while eliminating the meat-induced residues and toxins.

BASIC GUIDELINES

- *Understand why we eat*—Eating should be pleasurable, but that satisfaction should never override food's real purpose. That purpose is to provide energy and maintain our bodies. When we eat for the sole purpose of enjoyment, we expose ourselves to disaster. Too often, detrimental items like alcohol, drugs, refined sugars and processed foods are ingested only because they either taste good, are convenient or make us "feel" better.

- *Consume the Best Foods*—All substances that enter the mouth, whether food or drink, should be of the highest and most natural quality. If we treated our bodies like some of us treat our cars, many would be in much better shape. I see people spend extra dollars for premium gasoline instead of regular in order to assure a long-lasting automobile, but we don't think twice about consuming nutritionally cheap, packaged and canned meals. And those processed foods are usually created with additives, preservatives and dead, inorganic materials. Wouldn't it be better if we took advantage of the abundant fresh fruits and vegetables gathered from this year's harvest?
- *Develop a Consistent Lifestyle*—Diet, for many, means a temporary change of eating habits. We think of diets as patterns that begin and then end. But we should resist selecting our foods based on ever changing rules. The need to change generally means that we were doing something wrong. No matter what our practices—vegetarian or 'omnivore'—when we eat "incorrectly" (too much, too little, etc.), we experience discomfort... disease. Wouldn't it be better to establish a fixed, strengthening and vitality-filled lifestyle that promotes the mental, physical and spiritual well-being that the Divine Power intended?
- *Observe Timing*—A "scheduled" approach to eating and then drinking avoids washing away digestive juices and enzymes before they properly act upon foods during the digestive process. Undigested foods moving through our systems provide no benefit and are often a burden that prevent maximum use of our bodies' resources. It's wise, when drinking, to wait at least 30 minutes to eat. After eating, we should wait at least one hour before drinking. When proteins and some starches are consumed, the digestive juices need more time to do their job and we should wait even longer before diluting their strength.
- *Eliminate that Waste*—It is imperative that our intestines, especially the colon, be kept as clean as possible. Fresh, alive, uncooked fruits and vegetables can do the trick. These foods provide the fiber (buzzword of the eighties) we need to keep things moving. Starches, proteins and some dairy products stall in the intestines. Their slow progress allows the body more time to drain away softening moisture thus producing a tougher and bulky end product. It is estimated that about 75% to 95% of all diseases result from waste sitting in the colon. Keep the sewage system clean!

continued on pg. 7



Umoja

*I found space/in the peace/of your listening
with your long sighs*

quiet tales

deep laugh

*together easing/into a collective/
yet singular identity*

umoja

*if
gently*

*we sing the force of our identity
dance the vibrant colors of our dreams
shriek release into the silence*

kugichagalia/choose your way

imani/will lead/us home

Christina Springer, 1987

continued from pg. 6

- **Plan Food Combinations for Maximum Benefit**—Did you know that sugars, primarily fruits, take little time to digest and move quickly from the stomach to the small intestine? Starches are pre-digested in the mouth by the ptyalin in our saliva and then digestion is completed in the stomach. Proteins are primarily digested in the stomach before moving to the small intestine. These foods need the most time for digestion. Quickly digested foods can pull proteins with them before they are digested. Or, the quickly digested foods will sit in the stomach and begin fermenting while waiting for the other foods to finish.

Different foods also require different gastric juices. When different juices are needed simultaneously, they often neutralize each other's qualities and tremendously slow digestion. Mixing incompatible foods can cause gas to form from sour, undigested, putrefying matter remaining in the stomach and, eventually, the colon. These conditions can affect other body functions, resulting in stomach aches, bad blood circulation, constipation, mucus and ear wax buildup, headaches and many other ailments.

To insure efficient digestion and enjoy the maximum benefit from the foods we eat, the following food combinations should be avoided:

- A. Starches and Proteins
- B. Starches and Sugars
- C. Fruits and Vegetables
- D. Sugars and Proteins

Starch foods include beets, potatoes, carrots, refined breads, pasta and crackers.

Protein foods include nuts, seeds, whole grains, dry beans and peas, meat, poultry, fish, milk products and eggs.

An excellent wall poster called "Simple Food Combining" is available from Simple Food Combining, Box 1858, Boulder, CO 80306 for \$3.95 plus \$1 postage and handling.

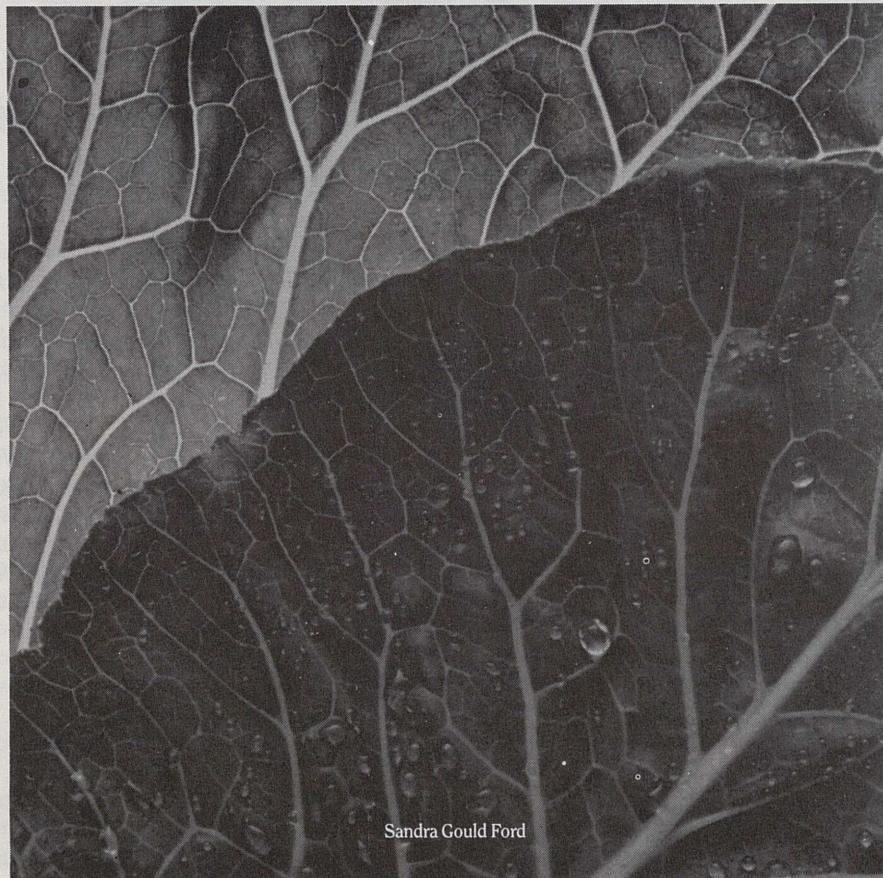
- **Eat what you need**—but never eat until stuffed. We are all too familiar with the scenario that exists around the traditional holiday dinner table. The word of the hour is "Gorge! Gorge! Gorge...!" Usually these enormous meals—consisting of "everything on the farm"—send us to the den or porch to "recuperate." Normal digestion is perhaps the most strenuous activity our body must accomplish. Blood and oxygen normally available to other body organs and the brain must rush to assist the stomach. These generous meals produce a state of shock.
- **Drink, drink, drink**—Fresh, unprocessed juices (this does not mean from cans and bottles) and distilled waters are best for us.
- **Maintain a positive attitude**—No matter how careful we are about what we eat, when our thinking is negative, improved diet can't help us. Negative feelings take a toll on our physical state of being.

In a society that is increasingly conscious of good health, many are now considering vegetarianism as an important and quality way of life. This Kwanzaa season is a good time to start. Rejoice in its goodness. Eat happily!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gerald Savage is an Assistant Director of Admissions at Pratt Institute School of Engineering. In addition to composing and arranging music, he plans to start a health consulting firm and restaurant.

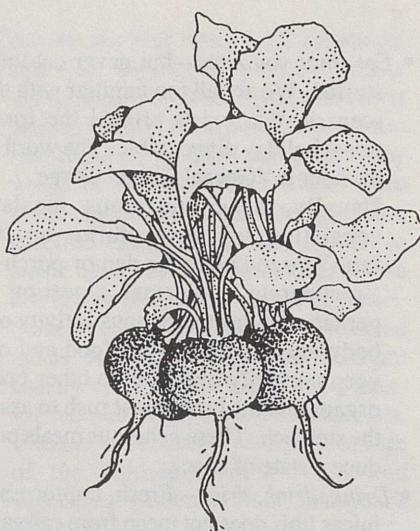
Please turn page for Recipes and Recommended Books.



Recommended Reading

Books by Norman W. Walker:

- **BECOME YOUNGER**
- **COLON HEALTH**
- **FRESH VEGETABLE AND FRUIT JUICES**
- **COOKING WITH MOTHER NATURE**
by Dick Gregory
- **FIT FOR LIFE**
by Diamond and Diamond
- **BACK TO EDEN**
by Jethro Kloss
- **LAUREL'S KITCHEN**
by Robertson, Flinders and Godfrey
- **NUTRITION FOR VEGETARIANS**
by Thrash and Thrash
- **BOOK OF WHOLE MEALS**
by Annmarie Colbin
- **THE ENCHANTED BROCCOLI FOREST**
- **CABBAGE TOWN**



WHEN I AM OLD

by Kim Rounds Foster

©1987

*When I am old
and my tired, ancient body
begins to fold in upon itself,
and my spirit holds the valued keys
to every lesson learned;*

*Then will I sit down
among generations I have made,
and weave satiny smooth tales
made of lived and unlived dreams
and coarse realities.*

*Then will I sit down
among hearts that need my touch,
and boast of conquered realms
and weep for necessary pains
that I have wrought.*

*When I am old
and my once-strong woman-fullness
has withered, worn and left me
(while yet my spirit holds its fullness
and the melody to its song);*

*Then will I sit and rest,
for the meaning for my being
will have blossomed to its peak,
and my soul will seek its refuge
on higher, brighter planes.*

*And with my peace in my pocket,
made of light and morning dew,*

I will go home.

Kim Rounds Foster, a native Wichitan, is a writer and cultural activist. She attended Wichita State University. She later founded the Wichita Black Creative Writers Collective, a group of local poets, writers and cultural activists. Currently, she is the Women's Feature Editor for Wichita's Black Newspaper, the *NEWSHAWK*.

RECIPE

TOFU VEGETABLES

2 Tblsp.	Olive Oil
2 Med.	Tofu Squares (4"x4")
1/2 Stick	Soy Margarine
2 Med.	Onions
1 Med.	Green Pepper
1 Med.	Zucchini
2 Med.	Yellow Squash
	Tamari Sauce
	Tahini (optional)

Cut Tofu into bite-size squares. Sauté in olive oil and soy margarine until light brown. Add Tamari to taste and continue browning. Stir fry onions until brown; then slowly add remaining vegetables, and lightly sauté (avoid overcooking). At this point, 3-4 tblsp. of Tahini can be mixed with 1/2 cup of water to make a gravy.

Tofu is high in protein, calcium and iron. The vegetables contain vitamins A and C and fiber. Tahini is also high in calcium.

KUJICHAGULIA

(kooji/cha/goola) = Self-determination. To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for and spoken for by others.

Illustrated by Saihou Njie

WILL ALL YOU
LESSER PEOPLE
PLEASE MOVE TO
THE BACK...

EDITORIAL STATEMENT



Several years ago, a few folks felt Black people needed a new ethnic identity. "After all," some said, "I'm not black, I'm brown. No, I'm yellow." They forgot that those fine color distinctions are divisive and trample the holistic nature of Blackness.

Some anointed themselves "Afro Americans" despite the fact that an "Afro" is a hairdo. No one calls the folks who stayed on the original continent "Afroes." They're Africans. The appropriate phrase for creating a linkage to our past is "African-American."

When Wallace Muhammad took over the Nation of Islam—an organization that encouraged pride in Blackness and weaned us from calling ourselves Negroes and colored—he wanted us to call ourselves "Bililians." Bilal was a most honored and worthy servant to Prophet Muhammad. People—Christians and Buddhists for example—do name themselves after religious figures. But that religious identity becomes an addition to, and not a

replacement for ethnic heritage.

The most amazing phenomenon is that former colored people, negroes, niggers and black folks now call themselves "minorities." At least nigger implies an affecting entity. Being called "minority" is tantamount to calling entire races a...

Well, let's check the *American Heritage*:

minority n., 1. The smaller in number of two groups forming a whole; a group of persons or things numbering less than half of a total. Compare **majority** [the greater number or part of something... often preceded by *great*]. 2. A racial, religious, political, national, or other group regarded as different from the larger group of which it is part.

Now, let's check the very important root of minority:

minor adj. 1. Lesser or smaller in amount, extent, quantity, or size. 2. Lesser in importance, rank, or stature... 3. Lesser in seriousness or danger, requiring

comparatively little attention or concern...

It's going to be awfully difficult for black, brown, red and yellow children to feel as though they're an equally valuable human presence on this planet if this generation buys into the false assumption that everyone who looks like us is "lesser or smaller." It's going to be a hell of a battle to convince those who think of themselves as the "majority" that folks who don't look like they do should be taken seriously.

There are some who would argue that "minority" is an accurate description of the people who are lumped into that category. But it should go without saying—don't you agree—that people who look like us have never been and never will be less than anyone else on this planet... by any standard of measurement.

If we are to make one New Year's Resolution, it should be that people of color no longer be thought of or called a "minority."

UJIMA

(oo/jima)=Collective work and responsibility. To build and maintain our community together and make our sisters' and brothers' problems our problems and to solve them together.



Part of *Shooting Star Review*'s purpose is to keep our classic works of literature alive for today's readers. As part of the theme Ujima, we are pleased to present Paul Lawrence Dunbar's story "The Ingrate" beginning on page 11.

For Elnora C.

*Snuff-dipper from Texas,
large product of the place
whose largeness is legend,*

*She smiles: "I'm so proud
to see our young peoples
wit' good jobs.*

Y'all got the chance.

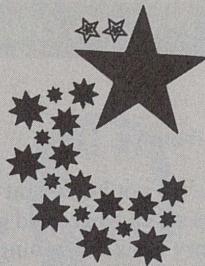
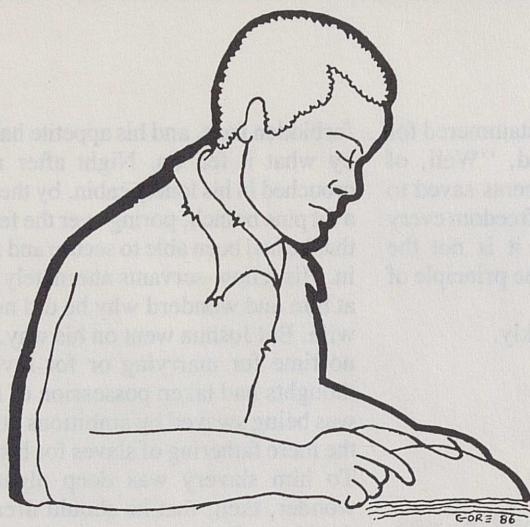
*I'm so glad
the Welfare
sent you out
to visit me...*

*There's a Black detective
come to the projects, too.
Sometime he stop by—
I calls him 'Shaft'!"*

*As I look around the room,
she smiles brown and warm.
I do, too,
to cradle the babe,
to court the girl,
to confess
to this old woman
that Shaft and I
are wanting,
like her worn
birth certificate
which shows no date.*

*Snuff stains,
her true testament,
recall the Texas soil
of her labor
and carpet the room
like fruit from
a tree
before which
I wish to
burn my books,
burn my forms,
and bow.*

Frank Dobson



The Ingrate

By Paul Lawrence Dunbar

Illustration by Robert Gore

Mr. Leckler was a man of high principle. Indeed, he himself had admitted it at times to Mrs. Leckler. She was often called into counsel with him. He was one of those large souled creatures with a hunger for unlimited advice, upon which he never acted. Mrs. Leckler knew this, but like the good, patient little wife that she was, she went on paying her poor tribute of advice and admiration. Her husband's mind was particularly troubled as usual, too, over a matter of principle. Mrs. Leckler came at his call.

"Mrs. Leckler," he said, "I am troubled in my mind. I—in fact, I am puzzled over a matter that involves either the maintaining or relinquishing of a principle."

"Well, Mr. Leckler?" said his wife, interrogatively.

"If I had been a scheming, calculating Yankee, I should have been rich now; but all my life I have been too generous and confiding. I have always let principle stand between me and my interests." Mr. Leckler took himself all too seriously to be conscious of his pun, and went on: "Now this is a matter in which my duty and my principles seem to conflict. It stands thus: Josh has been doing a piece of plastering for Mr. Eckley over in Lexington, and from what he says, I think that city rascal has misrepresented the amount of work to me and so cut down the pay for it. Now, of course, I should not care, the matter of a dollar or two being nothing to me; but it is a very different matter when we consider poor Josh." There was deep pathos in Mr. Leckler's tone. "You know Josh is anxious to buy his freedom, and I allow him a part of whatever he makes; so you see it's he that's affected. Every dollar that he is

cheated out of cuts off just so much from his earnings, and puts further away his hope of emancipation."

If the thought occurred to Mrs. Leckler that, since Josh received only about one-tenth of what he earned, the advantage of just wages would be quite as much her husband's as the slave's, she did not betray it, but met the 'naive reasoning with the question, "But where does the conflict come in, Mr. Leckler?"'

"Just here. If Josh knew how to read and write and cipher——"

"Mr. Leckler, are you crazy?"

"Listen to me, my dear, and give me the benefit of your judgment. This is a very momentous question. As I was about to say, if Josh knew these things, he could protect himself from cheating when his work is at too great a distance for me to look after it for him."

"But teaching a slave——"

"Yes, that's just what is against my principles. I know how public opinion and the law look at it. But my conscience rises up in rebellion every time I think of that poor black man being cheated out of his earnings. Really, Mrs. Leckler, I think I may trust to Josh's discretion, and secretly give him such instructions as will permit him to protect himself."

"Well, of course, it's just as you think best," said his wife.

"I knew you would agree with me," he returned. "It's such a comfort to take counsel with you, my dear!" And the generous man walked out on the veranda, very well satisfied with himself and his wife, and prospectively pleased with Josh. Once he murmured to himself, "I'll lay for Eckley next time."

Josh, the subject of Mr. Leckler's charitable solicitations, was the plantation plasterer. His master had given him his trade, in order that he might do whatever work was needed about the place; but he became so proficient in his duties, having also no competition among the poor whites, that he had grown to be in great demand in the country thereabout. So Mr. Leckler found it profitable, instead of letting him do chores and field work in his idle time, to hire him out to neighboring farms and planters. Josh was a man of more than ordinary intelligence; and when he asked to be allowed to pay for himself by working overtime, his master readily agreed—for it promised more work to be done, for which he could allow the slave just what he pleased. Of course, he knew now that when the black man began to cipher this state of affairs would be changed; but it would mean such an increase of profit from the outside that he could afford to give up his own little speculations. Anyway, it would be many years before the slave could pay the two thousand dollars, which price he had set upon him. Should he approach that figure, Mr. Leckler felt it just possible that the market in slaves would take a sudden rise.

When Josh was told of his master's intention, his eyes gleamed with pleasure, and he went to his work with the zest of long hunger. He proved a remarkably apt pupil. He was indefatigable in doing the tasks assigned him. Even Mr. Leckler, who had great faith in his plasterer's ability, marveled at the speed with which he had acquired the



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three R's. He did not know that on one of his many trips a free Negro had given Josh the rudimentary tools of learning, and that since the slave had been adding to his store of learning by poring over signs and every bit of print that he could spell out. Neither was Josh so indiscreet as to intimate to his benefactor that he had been anticipated in his good intentions.

It was in this way, working and learning, that a year passed away, and Mr. Leckler thought that his object had been accomplished. He could safely trust Josh to protect his own interests, and so he thought that it was quite time that his servant's education should cease.

"You know, Josh," he said. "I have already gone against my principles and against the law of your sake, and of course a man can't stretch his conscience too far, even to help another who's being cheated; but I reckon you can take care of yourself now."

"Oh, yes, suh, I reckon I kin," said Josh.

"And it wouldn't do for you to be seen with any books about you now."

"Oh, no, suh, su't'n'y not." He didn't intend to be seen with any books about him.

It was just now that Mr. Leckler saw the good results of all he had done, and his heart was full of a great joy, for Eckley had been building some additions to his house, and sent for Josh to do the plastering for him. The owner admonished his slave, took him over a few examples to freshen his memory, and sent him forth with glee. When the job was done, there was a discrepancy of two dollars in what Mr. Eckley offered for it and the price which accrued from Josh's measurements. To the employer's surprise, the black man went over the figures with him and convinced him of the incorrectness of the payment—and the additional two dollars were turned over.

"Some o' Leckler's work," said Eckley, "teaching a nigger to cipher! Close-fisted old reprobate—I've a mind to have the law on him."

Mr. Leckler heard the story with great glee. "I laid for him that time—the old fox." But to Mrs. Leckler he said: "You see, my dear wife, my rashness in teaching Josh to figure for himself is vindicated. See what he has saved for himself."

"What did he save?" asked the little woman indiscreetly.

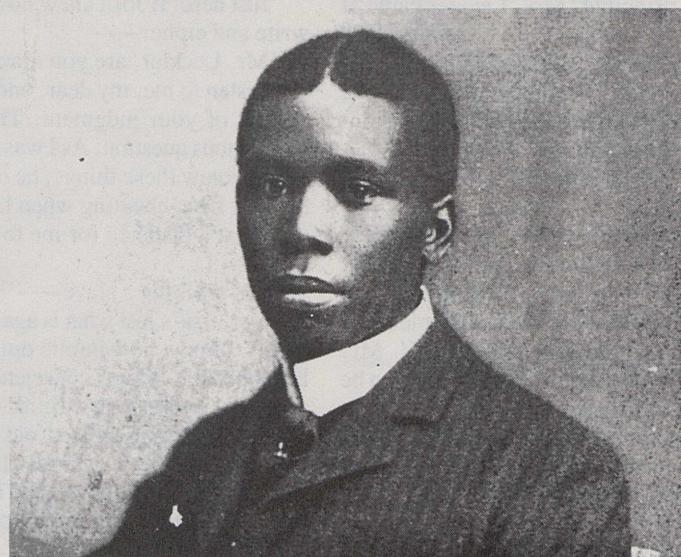
Her husband blushed and stammered for a moment, and then replied, "Well, of course, it was only twenty cents saved to him, but to a man buying his freedom every cent counts; and after all, it is not the amount, Mrs. Leckler, it's the principle of the thing."

"Yes," said the lady meekly.



Unto the body it is easy for the master to say, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." Gyves, chains and fetters will enforce that command. But what master shall say unto the mind, "Here do I set the limit of your acquisition. Pass it not?" who shall put gyves upon the intellect, or fetter the movement of thought? Joshua Leckler, as custom denominated him, had tasted of the

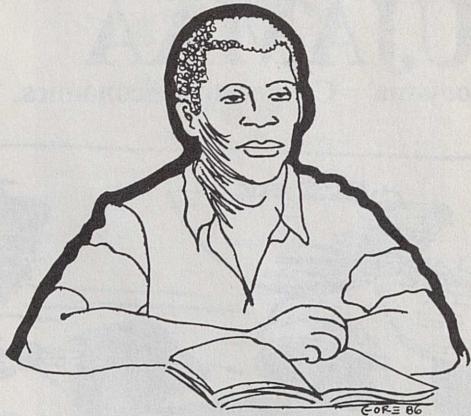
forbidden fruit, and his appetite had grown by what it fed on. Night after night he crouched in his lonely cabin, by the blaze of a fat pine branch, poring over the few books that he had been able to secure and smuggle in. His fellow-servants alternately laughed at him and wonderd why he did not take a wife. But Joshua went on his way. He had no time for marrying or for love; other thoughts had taken possession of him. He was being swayed by ambitions other than the mere fathering of slaves for his master. To him slavery was deep night. What wonder, then, that he should dream, and that through the ivry gate should come to him the forbidden vision of freedom? To own himself, to be master of his hands, feet, of his whole body—something would clutch at his heart as he thought of it; and the breath would come hard between his lips. But he met his master with an impassive face, always silent, always docile; and Mr. Leckler congratulated himself that so valuable and intelligent a slave should be at the same time so tractable. Usually



PAUL LAWRENCE DUNBAR (1872-1906)

Paul Lawrence Dunbar (1872-1906) was born in Dayton, Ohio. He was a very popular young man, and his professional writing career began as a hobby while working as an elevator operator. Although most famous for his poetry, Dunbar was also a prolific fiction writer during his brief lifetime. His work mainly captured the humor and gentleness of the lives of rural Southern Black folk. Some of his books include *Oak and Ivory*, *Majors and Minors* and *The Sport of the Gods*.





intelligence in a slave meant discontent; but not so with Josh.

Meanwhile the white hills of the North were beckoning to the chattel, and the north winds were whispering to him to be a chattel no longer. Often the eyes that looked away to where freedom lay were filled with a wistful longing that was tragic in its intensity, for they saw the hardships and the difficulties between the slave and his goal, and, worst of all, an iniquitous law—liberty's compromise with bondage, that rose like a stone wall between him and hope—a law that degraded every free-thinking man to the level of a slave-catcher. There it loomed up before him, formidable, impregnable, insurmountable. He measured it in all its terribleness, and paused. But on the other side there was liberty; and one day when he was away at work, a voice came out of the woods and whispered to him, "Courage!"—and on that night the shadows beckoned him as the white hills had done, and the forest called to him, "Follow."

"It seems to me that Josh might have been able to get home to-night," said Mr. Leckler, walking up and down his veranda; "but I reckon it's just possible that he got through too late to catch a train." In the morning he said: "Well, he's not here yet; he must have had to do some extra work. If he doesn't get here by evening, I'll run up there."

In the evening, he did take the train for Joshua's place of employment, where he learned that his slave had left the night before. But where could he have gone? That no one knew, and for the first time it dawned upon his master that Josh had run away. He raged, he fumed; but nothing could be done until morning, and all the

time Leckler knew that the most valuable slave on his plantation was working his way toward the North and freedom. He did not go back home, but paced the floor all night long. In the early dawn he hurried out, and the hounds were put on the fugitive's track. After some nosing around they set off toward a stretch of woods. In a few minutes they came yelping back, pawing their noses and rubbing their heads against the ground. They had found the trail, but Josh had played the old slave trick of filling his tracks with cayenne pepper. The dogs were soothed, and taken deeper into the wood to find the trail. They soon took it up again, and dashed away with low bays. The scent led them directly to a little wayside station about six miles distant. Here it stopped. Burning with the chase, Mr. Leckler hastened to the station agent. Had he seen such a Negro? Yes, he had taken the north-bound train two nights before.

"But why did you let him go without a pass?" Leckler almost screamed at the owner.

"I didn't," replied the agent. "He had a written pass, signed James Leckler, and I let him go on it."

"Forged, forged!" yelled the master. "He wrote it himself."

"Humph!" said the agent, "how was I to know that? Our niggers round here don't know how to write."

Mr. Leckler suddenly bethought him to hold his peace. Josh was probably now in the arms of some Northern abolitionist, and there was nothing to be done now but advertise; and the disgusted master spread his notices broadcast before starting for home. As soon as he arrived at his house, he sought his wife and poured out his griefs to her.

"You see, Mrs. Leckler, this is what comes of my goodness of heart. I taught that nigger to read and write, so that he could protect himself—and look how he uses his knowledge. Oh, the ingrate, the ingrate! The very weapon which I give him to defend himself against others he turns upon me. Oh, it's awful—awful! I've always been too confiding. Here's the most valuable nigger on my plantation gone—gone, I tell you—and through my own kindness. It isn't his value, though, I'm thinking so much about. I could stand his loss, if it wasn't for the principle of the thing, the base ingratitude he has shown me. Oh, if I ever lay hands on him again!" Mr. Leckler closed his lips and clenched his fist with an eloquence that laughed at words.

Just at this time, in one of the underground railway stations, six miles north of the Ohio, an old Quaker was saying to Josh: "Lie still, thee'll be perfect safe there. Here comes John Trader, our local slave catcher; but I will parley with him and send him away. Thee need not fear. None of thy brethren who have come to us have ever been taken back to bondage. "Good evening, Friend Trader!" and Josh heard the old Quaker's smooth voice roll on, while he lay back half smothering in a bag, among other bags of corn and potatoes.

It was after ten o'clock that night when he was thrown carelessly into a wagon and driven away to the next station, twenty-five miles to the northward. And by such stages, hiding by day and traveling by night, helped by a few of his own people who were blessed with freedom, and always by the good Quakers wherever found, he made his way into Canada. And on one never-to-be-forgotten morning he stood up, straightened himself, breathed God's blessed air, and knew himself free.

continued on page 16



UJAMAA

(oojama)=Cooperative Economics. To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from



Self help—pulling ourselves up by our own hands—is not an easy endeavor. But the idea becomes more appealing as social, health, economic development and educational programs, so important to African-American communities are threatened. Today, after anchoring America's lowest socio-economic position for centuries, African-Americans are finding new ways to grasp higher financial, political and educational status. We're learning that improved individual and community-wide lifestyles can be accomplished by helping ourselves to blossom. During this 21st Kwanzaa season, here are three areas where our talents, skills and abilities can be dedicated:

ECONOMIC SELF HELP

"If I were to put together a self help agenda, I'd talk about leveraging—Blacks not spending their money with race blindness," says Dr. Julianne Malveaux, a San Francisco economist and writer. She is well aware that African Americans have an estimated, annual spending power that exceeds \$200 billion. But about 95% of our income leaves the community faster than a speeding bullet. Within 24 hours, our economic resources are deposited in large

department stores, supermarkets, discos, bars and movie theatres that operate and provide employment outside of our neighborhoods.

This must stop. We need to start spending in Black-owned stores, and demanding competitive prices along with quality service from our Black businesspeople. At the same time, we should organize our money through consumer groups and follow through with letter-writing campaigns to White-owned businesses pressuring them to provide scholarships and contributions to our schools and non-profit organizations. We should also insist upon increased employment and the all-important advancement opportunities for capable Black employees.

Tony Brown, the nationally respected journalist, started the "Buy Freedom" campaign in 1985 with the goal of African Americans spending at least 50% of our money with our own companies. The other 50% would be spent with businesses that hire, promote and support our people and our institutions.

Andre Jones, an economic development consultant in Boston, sets an excellent example. Andre uses Black health profes-

sionals, sends his clothes to a Black-owned cleaners and even puts his money in a Black-owned bank. Through our individual gifts and good will, our community will become a stronger economic force.

UPGRADING EDUCATION

Wittgenstein, a Vienna-born philosopher and mathematician, verbalized a simplistic yet important understanding...that, "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world." In addition, the ability to harness the powers within numeric symbols—as did our central African ancestors who created the yet-to-be-improved-upon mathematic system—is essential to building the quality of life that we all desire.

Unfortunately, the recent Census reports that only 57% of 25 and older Black adults completed high school. Only 8.4% of our people are college graduates. The inability to read, write and 'rithmetic is a vitality-sapping plague within our communities. Worse, many inner city schools are too preoccupied with fighting social ills like drugs and violence to battle illiteracy. Individually and collectively, let's nurture our youth before this world's negative forces dim their bright potential.

of from them together.



For instance, more Black children may also benefit from attending the alternative schools run by Black administrators and teachers. The National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise in Washington, DC estimates that more than 200 of these independent, neighborhood schools for elementary and secondary students are operating around the country. In addition to teaching the reading, writing and math basics, many of these schools provide top notch instruction in science, history, foreign language and computer programming. Dr. Joan Ratteray, who conducted a study of these schools in 1983, found that what makes them especially valuable for Black youth is that they provide Black history lessons either through regular academic classes or music, theater and dance courses.

Today's African-American professionals are a key to expanding our next generation's opportunities. One role model is Richard Hardon, president of Metro Petroleum, Inc. in Atlanta. Mr. Hardon makes annual contributions to predominantly Black Morris-Brown College, his alma mater, and serves on the school's fundraising committee. He also donates money and counselling time to the Southwest Youth Business Organization,

a group that teaches Black children how to start and run a company. "Still, that's not enough," Mr. Hardon says. "There's a lot more to be done."

Another shining example is provided by members of Pittsburgh's Black Media Federation who run a two-month program each spring to train local high school students in journalistic reporting, Black history and basic survival skills for the workforce and the world. Reporters, editors and media technicians volunteer their services to the sessions that run all day on Saturdays.

More of these nurturing, re-investing-of-talent activities can easily be started in other areas. All it takes is time and planning to set up workshops in a potpourri of fields. Just imagine the impact we could have on the development of our Black youth!

POLITICAL POWER

Many of the problems that burden our communities—housing, open drug traffic and other crimes, to name a few—are affected by the amount of political power we exercise.

As U.S. citizens, we must use the power of the vote, a right that our ancestors risked their lives for, and hold elected officials—whether white or black, whether Democrat, Republican or Independent—responsible for their actions on issues affecting the Black community.

About 27 million African Americans live in this country, and we are a majority population—or close to it—in some cities. By organizing we can elect more local and state officials who are sensitive to and will-

ing to meet our needs from improved neighborhood services to reduced infant mortality rates. At the same time, we can build a national voting block through African-American organizations, national and community-based, that hold political candidates accountable.

In conclusion, there are numerous ways that Black people can work to better our condition. This essay presents a few avenues. During Kwanzaa, let us reflect on ways to practice its principles to better our whole community...to help ourselves.



Linda Watkins is currently on Fellowship at Yale University in the African-American studies department.

**A Moment Of
Remembrance
For An Extraordinary
Talent And Visionary...**

**JAMES BALDWIN
(1924-1987)**

The Ingrate continued from pg. 13

behind. But these fugitives and the papers he read told him other things. They said that the spirit of freedom was working in the United States, and already men were speaking out boldly in behalf of the manumission of the slaves; already there was a growing army behind that noble vanguard, Sumner, Phillips, Douglass, Garrison. He heard the names of Lucretia Mott and Harriet Beecher Stowe, and his heart swelled, for on the dim horizon he saw the first faint streaks of dawn.

So the years passed. Then from the surcharged clouds a flash of lightning broke, and there was the thunder of cannon and the rain of lead over the land. From his home in the North he watched the storm as it raged and wavered, now threatening the North with its awful power, now hanging dire and dreadful over the South. Then suddenly from out the fray came a voice like the trumpet of God to him: "Thou and thy brothers are free!" Free, free, with the freedom not cherished by the few alone, but for all that had been bound. Free, with the freedom not torn from the secret night, but open to the light of heaven.

When the first call for colored soldiers came, Joshua Leckler hastened down to Boston, and enrolled himself among those who were willing to fight to maintain their freedom. On account of his ability to read and write and his general intelligence, he was soon made an orderly sergeant. His regiment had already taken part in an engagement before the public roster of this band of Uncle Sam's niggers, as they were called, fell into Mr. Leckler's hands. He ran his eye down the column of names. It stopped at that of Joshua Leckler, Sergeant, Company F. He handed the paper to Mrs. Leckler with his finger on the place.

"Mrs. Leckler," he said, "this is nothing less than a judgment on me for teaching a nigger to read and write. I disobeyed the law of my state and, as a result, not only lost my nigger, but furnished the Yankees with a smart officer to help them fight the South. Mrs. Leckler, I have sinned—and been punished. But I am content, Mrs. Leckler; it all came through my kindness of heart—and your mistaken advice. But oh, that ingrate, that ingrate!"



FRATERNITY

*my brother has rolled
along, a long way
from the black song of poplarville.
he mississippied
through bayou country, in a slow hurry
to sip the oil of ollie street,
greased his axle on bourbon;
in tumble-weedy texas
tacos and mary jane
mesmerized his lips.
the dry drizzle
of buffalo made him new york
in german to california,
the flow of peaceful vineyards
boiling in his brain.
california dreaming
its blue persuasion
laid pounds of fever
on his back. tradewinds
blew him east again in future shock.
now he calls for mama.
she's tired of prodigals,
but she loves him.
our downhome bloodship circle
gives him dreams, survival motions,
and tickets
for cold turkey in tumbuctu.*

Jerry W. Ward, Jr.

Jerry W. Ward, Jr., Professor of English at Tougaloo College, is a poet and critic whose articles and poems have appeared in many professional and literary journals. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia (1978) and is the United Negro College Fund Scholar-in-Residence at Talladega College. His work in progress includes *A Gathering of Roots: Five Black South Writers* and a new collection of poems.



KWANZAA QUIZ...

Nourishing our minds as well as our bodies is especially important during Kwanzaa. Reflection, soul-searching, appreciation of the past and preparation for the future are essential. This Kwanzaa Quiz is designed to provide particularly rich food for thought. Do you know who said the following passages?

KWANZAA QUIZ

1. God gave them [the discoveries] to me, how can I sell them to someone else?

a) Lewis Howard Latimer b) George Washington Carver c) Granville T. Woods

2. The European elite undertook to manufacture a native elite. They picked out promising adolescents; they branded them, as with a red-hot iron, with the principles of high-sounding phrases, grand glutinous words that stuck to the teeth. After a short stay in the mother country they were sent home, whitewashed. These walking lies had nothing left to say to their brothers; they only echoed.

a) Stokely Carmichael b) Carter G. Woodson c) Frantz Fanon

3. Life is change. Movement. It's the nature of the universe. We aren't only in that great cosmic force, we are that force.

a) Margaret Bush Wilson b) Susan L. Taylor c) Oprah Winfrey

4. I have often said that the history of black business closely parallels the social and political experience of black Americans. Ours is a saga of tremendous courage in the face of adversity; determination and tenacity against seemingly insurmountable odds, and a penchant for success and achievement despite the absence of equal opportunity.

a) Earl G. Graves b) A.G. Gaston c) Coleman Young

5. Yet do I marvel at this curious thing: To make a poet black, and bid him sing!

a) Richard Wright b) Jean Toomer c) Countee Cullen

6. Power never takes a back step—only in the face of more power.

7. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness—an American, a Negro; two ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

a) Nat Turner b) Mary McLeod Bethune c) W.E.B. Du Bois

8. harmony will come in proportion as the black man gets something that the white man wants, whether it be of brains or of material.

a) Paul Cuffe b) Booker T. Washington c) Eldridge Cleaver

9. De nigger woman is de mule uh de world.

a) Zora Neale Hurston b) Sojourner Truth c) Alice Walker

10. The main thing is to be free, and that's what I've always wanted to be.

a) Frederick Douglass b) Harriet Tubman c) Alex Haley

11. There must always be the continuing struggle to make the increasing knowledge of the world bear some fruit in increasing understanding and in the production of human happiness.

a) Charles R. Drew b) Walter Fauntroy c) Angela Davis

12. As a people, we must remember that we are not as weak as we have allowed ourselves to be painted, and we are not as strong as we can be.

a) Arthur Mitchell b) Cardiss Collins c) John Edward Jacob

13. Negroes must earn their way to higher achievement. They can't get it by throwing rocks, preaching anarchy or making demands that go beyond reason.

a) Willie Mays b) Thurgood Marshall c) Alain Locke

14. The potential in this country is so great that it makes me tremble and weep to see it go awry.

a) Paul Robeson b) Maya Angelou c) Andrew Young

15. All the way from Africa to Georgia I carried my sorrow songs. I made ragtime.

a) Langston Hughes b) Margaret Walker c) James Baldwin

16. My job is to knock down every barrier that prevents blacks, other minorities and women from enjoying the fullness of American freedom. Our fight is to make this system work for black people as well as it works for anybody else.

a) Qwendolyn Brooks b) Adam Clayton Powell c) Benjamin L. Hooks

17. We [American women] will no longer be denied our rights as human beings, equal in all respects to males.

a) Coretta Scott King b) Frances Welsing c) Shirley Chisholm

18. Right off the boat, we took the lean, tight-butted, matter-of-fact foreign parlance we heard and made it into a voluptuous, vital, moving tongue of our own. We filled it with rhythm; we be word dancers.

a) Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor b) Parren Mitchell c) Tony Brown

19. America is woven of many strands; I would recognize them and let it so remain...our fate is to become one, and yet many.

a) Toni Morrison b) Ralph Ellison c) Ossie Davis

20. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.

a) Jesse Jackson b) Martin Luther King, Jr. c) Henry Hyland Garnett

NOTE: It might make an interesting individual or family project to become familiar with all of the people whose names are part of this quiz.

20. b) Martin Luther King, Jr.

19. b) Ralph Ellison

18. a) Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor

17. c) Shirley Chisholm

16. c) Benjamin L. Hooks

15. a) Langston Hughes

14. c) Maya Angelou

13. b) Thurgood Marshall

12. c) John Edward Jacob

11. a) Charles A. Drew

10. c) Alex Haley

9. a) Zora Neale Hurston

8. b) W.E.B. Dubois

7. c) Malcolm X

6. a) Malcolm X

5. c) Countee Cullen

4. a) Earl G. Graves

3. b) Susan L. Taylor

2. c) George Washington Carver

ANSWERS

HE'S KEEPING MORE STUDENTS IN SCHOOL THAN THE TRUANT OFFICER EVER DID.

MARTY GREEN, PARTNERSHIP IN EDUCATION VOLUNTEER,
AND DUQUESNE LIGHT EMPLOYEE.

By every measure, Marty Green has succeeded. But he's seen too many people fail.

"I've seen too many people unable to succeed because of a lack of education. In my estimation, if you don't finish high school, you're not going anywhere in this world."

That's why Marty gives up a lot of free time to a program called Partnership in Education, sponsored by the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce and Duquesne Light.

"This program gave me a personal opportunity to help encourage high school students to stay in school. To me, that is meaningful community involvement."

Marty has brought in speakers on just about everything. From how to run a nuclear power plant, to hackers and computer security, to technology's effect on human rights.

He has one creed—to keep young people in school, you have to keep them interested.

"Usually I'm looking around the class to see their reactions. I want to be sure it's worthwhile for them. If it isn't, perhaps we need to look at something else to hold their interest."

And at the school Marty sponsors—the Schenley high-tech magnet—the interest runs high among faculty and students.

"My experience with the students at Schenley is that they push themselves to achieve. Those youngsters are there because they want to

be there. And their grades bear that out."

But to Marty, the bottom line is that diploma.

"If students continue to drop out at the rate of the last 15 or 20 years, then we're going to have too many people dependent on society."

"We need people contributing. And in the 1990s and beyond, you won't be able to contribute without a high school diploma. The world is just too high-tech today."

"Those youngsters who are in school today, tomorrow are going to be our ratepayers. They're going to be the people who run this city. And run this electric company."

"Those youngsters are tomorrow's leaders."

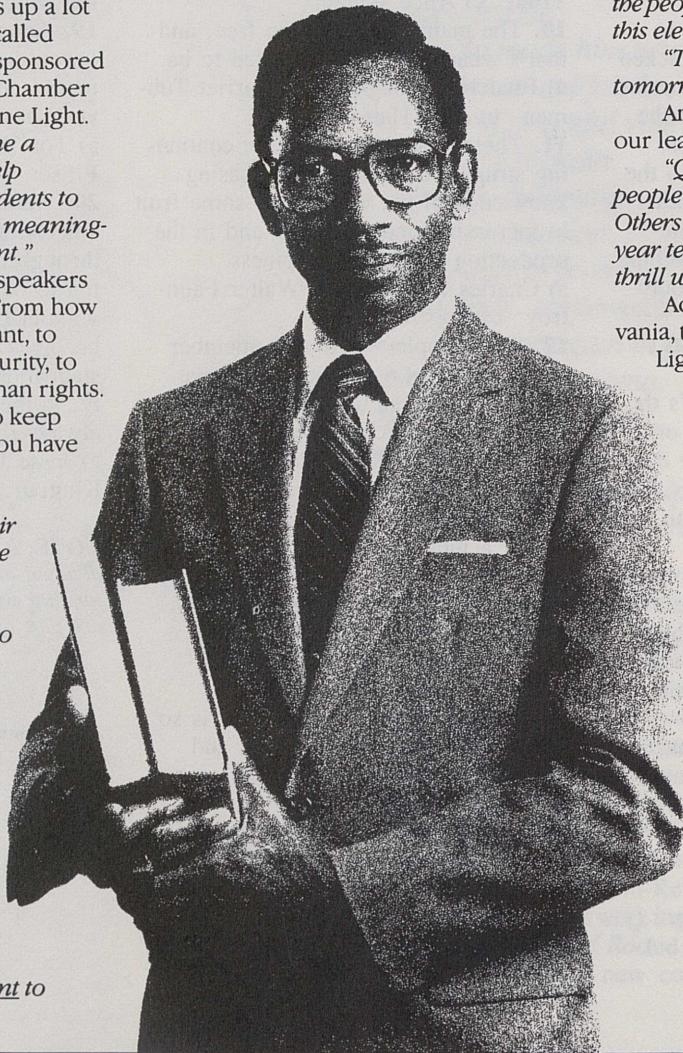
And thanks to people like Marty, our leaders will be well prepared.

"Quite a number of those young people are going on to college. Others are planning to go to a two-year technical program. It's a real thrill working with them."

Across Southwestern Pennsylvania, there are over 4,000 Duquesne Light employees actively involved in their communities.

Another way they're involved is through our Speakers Program. If you'd like a Duquesne Light speaker to address your group on energy awareness issues, contact your Duquesne Light community relations representative at 393-6074.

TOGETHER, WE
HAVE THE
POWER TO
CHANGE THE
FUTURE.



Duquesne Light

NIA

nee/ah)=Purpose. To make our collective vocation the building and development of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

To accomplish this quality, appropriate education is essential. This excerpt from Carter G. Woodson's book *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (reprinted by permission of AMS Publications, Washington, DC) is especially insightful.

How, then, did the education of the Negro take such a trend? The people who maintained schools for the education of certain Negroes before the Civil War were certainly sincere; and so were the missionary workers who went South to enlighten the freedmen after the results of that conflict had given the Negroes a new status. These earnest workers, however, had more enthusiasm than knowledge. They did not understand the task before them. This undertaking, too, was more of an effort toward social uplift than actual education. Their aim was to transform the Negroes, not to develop them. The freedmen who were to be enlightened were given little thought, for the best friends of the race, ill-taught themselves, followed the traditional curricula of the times which did not take the Negro into consideration except to condemn or pity him.

In geography the races were described in conformity with the program of the usual propaganda to engender in whites a race hate of the Negro, and in the Negroes contempt for themselves. A poet of distinction was selected to illustrate the physical features of the white race, a bedecked chief of a tribe those of the red, a proud warrior the brown, a prince the yellow, and a savage with a ring in his nose the black. The Negro, of course, stood at the foot of the social ladder.

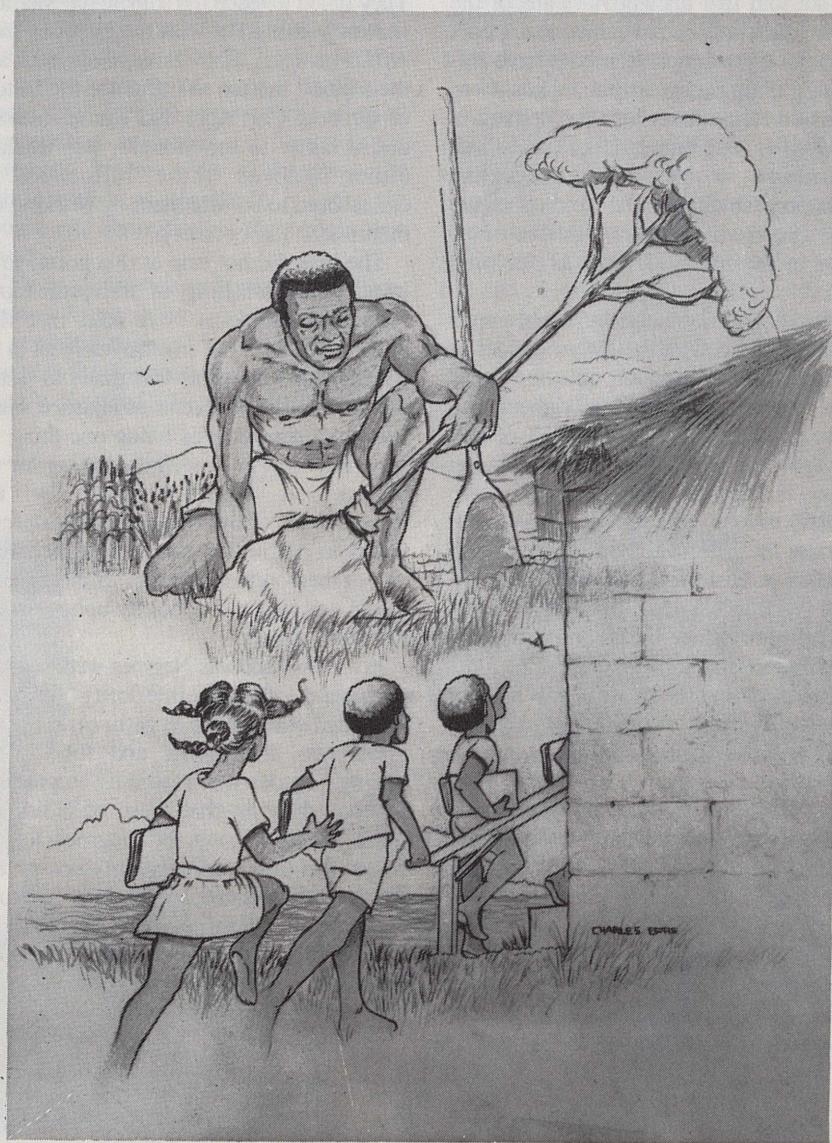
The description of the various parts of the world was worked out according to the same plan. The parts inhabited by the Caucasian were treated in detail. Less attention was given to the yellow people, still less to the red, very little to the brown, and practically none to the black race. Those people who

continued on pg. 20



“How We Drifted Away From The Truth”

from *Mis-Education of the Negro*
by C.G. Woodson



Even men like Roland Hayes and Henry O. Tanner have risen to the higher levels by getting out of this country to relieve themselves of our stifling traditions and to recover from their education.

were far removed from the physical characteristics of the Caucasians or who do not materially assist them in the domination or exploitation of others were not mentioned except to be belittled or decried.

From the teaching of science the Negro was likewise eliminated. The beginnings of science in various parts of the Orient were mentioned, but the Africans' early advancement in this field was omitted. Students were not told that ancient Africans of the interior knew sufficient science to concoct poisons for arrowheads, to mix durable colors for paintings, to extract metals from nature and refine them for development in the industrial arts. Very little was said about the chemistry in the method of Egyptian embalming which was the product of the mixed breeds of Northern Africa, now known in the modern world as "colored people."

In the study of language in school pupils were made to scoff at the Negro dialect as some peculiar possession of the Negro which they should despise rather than directed to study the background of this language as a broken-down African tongue—in short to understand their own linguistic history, which is certainly more important for them than the study of French Phonetics or Historical Spanish Grammar. To the African language as such no attention was given except in case of the preparation of traders, missionaries and public functionaries to exploit the natives. This number of persons thus trained, of course, constituted a small fraction hardly deserving attention.

From literature the African was excluded altogether. He was not supposed to have expressed any thought worth knowing. The philosophy in the African proverbs and in the rich folklore of that continent was ignored to give preference to that developed on the distant shores of the Mediterranean.

Most missionary teachers of the freedmen, like most men of our time, had never read the interesting books of travel in Africa, and had never heard of the *Tarikh Es-Soudan*.

In the teaching of fine arts these instructors usually started with Greece by showing how that art was influenced from without, but they omitted the African influence which scientists now regard as significant and dominant in early Hellas. They failed to teach the student the Mediterranean Melting Pot with the Negroes from Africa bringing their wares, their ideas and their blood therein to influence the history of Greece, Carthage, and Rome. Making desire father to the thought, our teachers either ignored these influences or endeavored to belittle them by working out theories to the contrary.

The bias did not stop at this point, for it invaded the teaching of the professions. Negro law students were told that they belonged to the most criminal element in the country; and an effort was made to justify the procedure in the seats of injustice where law was interpreted as being one thing for the white man and a different thing for the Negro. In constitutional law the spinelessness of the United States Supreme Court in permitting the judicial nullification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments was and still is boldly upheld in our few law schools.

In medical schools Negroes were likewise convinced of their inferiority in being reminded of their role as germ carriers. The prevalence of syphilis and tuberculosis among Negroes was especially emphasized without showing that these maladies are more deadly among the Negroes for the reason that they are Caucasian diseases; and since these plagues are new to Negroes, these sufferers have not had time to develop against them the immunity which time has permitted in the Caucasian. Other diseases

to which Negroes easily fall prey were mentioned to point out the race as an undesirable element when this condition was due to the Negroes' economic and social status. Little emphasis was placed upon the immunity of the Negro from diseases like yellow fever and influenza which are so disastrous to whites. Yet, the whites were not considered inferior because of this differential resistance to these plagues.

In history, of course, the Negro had no place in this curriculum. He was pictured as a human being of the lower order, unable to subject passion to reason, and therefore useful only when made the hewer of wood and the drawer of water for others. No thought was given to the history of Africa except so far as it had been a field of exploitation for the Caucasian. You might study the history as it was offered in our system from the elementary school throughout the university, and you would never hear Africa mentioned except in the negative. You would never thereby learn that Africans first domesticated the sheep, goat, and cow, developed the idea of trial by jury, produced the first stringed instruments, and gave the world its greatest boon in the discovery of iron. You would never know that prior to the Mohammedan invasion about 1000 A.D. these natives in the heart of Africa had developed powerful kingdoms which were later organized as the Songhay Empire on the order of that of the Romans and boasting of similar grandeur.

Unlike other people, then, the Negro, according to this point of view, was an exception to the natural plan of things, and he had no such mission as that of an outstanding contribution to culture. The status of the Negro, then, was justly fixed as that of an inferior. Teachers of Negroes in their first schools after Emancipation did not proclaim any such doctrine, but the content of their curricula justified these inferences.

An observer from outside of the situation naturally inquires why the Negroes, many of whom serve their race as teachers, have not changed this program. These teachers, however, are powerless. Negroes have no control over their education and have little voice in their other affairs pertaining thereto. In a few cases Negroes have been

chosen as members of public boards of education, and some have been appointed members of private boards, but these Negroes are always such a small minority that they do not figure in the final working out of the educational program. The education of the Negroes, then, the most important thing in the uplift of the Negroes, is almost entirely in the hands of those who have enslaved them and now segregate them.

With "mis-educated Negroes" in control themselves, however, it is doubtful that the system would be very much different from what it is or that it would rapidly undergo change. The Negroes thus placed in charge would be the products of the same system and would show no more conception of the task at hand than do the whites who have educated them and shaped their minds as they would have them function. Negro educators of today may have more sympathy and interest in the race than the whites now exploiting Negro institutions as educators, but the former have no more vision than their competitors. Taught from books of the same bias, trained by Caucasians of the same prejudices or by Negroes of enslaved minds, one generation of Negro teachers after another have served for no higher purpose than to do what they are told to do. In other words, a Negro teacher instructing Negro children is in many respects a white teacher thus engaged, for the program in each case is about the same.

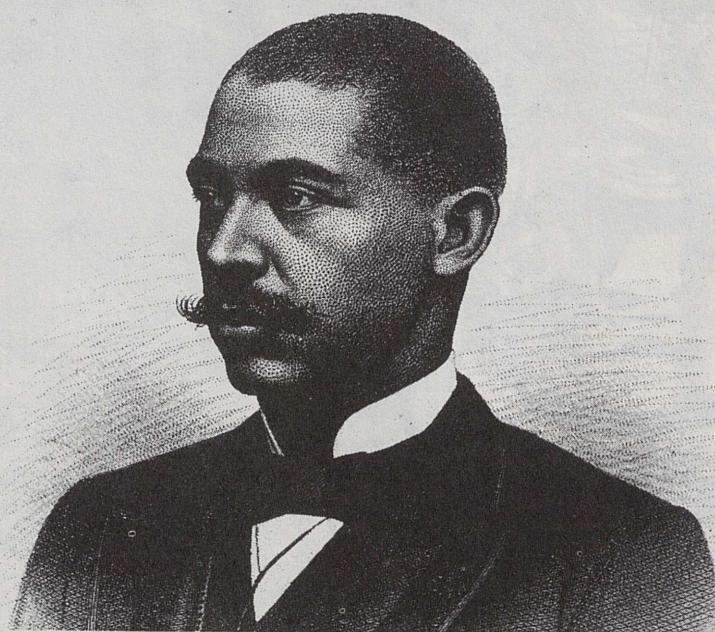
From literature the African was excluded altogether. He was not supposed to have expressed any thought worth knowing.

There can be no reasonable objection to the Negro's doing what the white man tells him to do, if the white man tells him to do what is right; but right is purely relative. The present system under the control of the whites trains the Negro to be white and at the same time convinces him of the impropriety or the impossibility of his becoming white. It compels the Negro to become a good Negro for the performance of which his education is ill-suited. For the white man's exploitation of the Negro through economic restriction and segregation the present system is sound and will doubtless continue until this gives place to the saner policy of actual interracial cooperation—not the present farce of racial manipulation in which the Negro is the figurehead. History does not furnish a case of the elevation of a people by ignoring the thought and aspiration of the people thus served.

This is slightly dangerous ground here, however, for the Negro's mind has been all but perfectly enslaved in that he has been trained to think what is desired of him. The "highly educated" Negroes do not like to

hear anything uttered against this procedure because they make their living in this way, and they feel that they must defend the system. Few mis-educated Negroes ever act otherwise; and, if they so express themselves, they are easily crushed by the large majority to the contrary so that the procession may move on without interruption.

The result, then, is that the Negroes thus mis-educated are of no service to themselves and none to the white man. The white man does not need the Negroes' professional, commercial or industrial assistance; and as a result of the multiplication of mechanical appliances he no longer needs them in drudgery or menial service. The "highly educated" Negroes, moreover, do not need the Negro professional or commercial classes because Negroes have been taught that whites can serve them more efficiently in these spheres. Reduced, then, to teaching and preaching, the Negroes will have no outlet but to go down a blind alley, if the sort of education which they are now receiving is to enable them to find the way out of their present difficulties.



**Carter Godwin Woodson
(1875-1950)**

Carter Godwin Woodson's strongest desire was to see the month of February set aside for better understanding and appreciation of African-American contributions. Thus, he is credited as the Father of Black History in the U.S.

Almost single-handedly, Woodson freed Black studies from the biases of white historians and created, thru extensive research, a respected field of study.

He devoted much time urging African-Americans to study and document our history.

In 1915, Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and in the next year the *Journal of Negro History* was started. Woodson's books on Black History (including *African Heroes and Heroines*) are numerous and valuable resources. From 1944 until his death, Woodson edited the 6-volume *Encyclopedia Africana*.



KUUMBA

(koo/oom/ba)=Creativity. To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

THE CRAFTSMAN

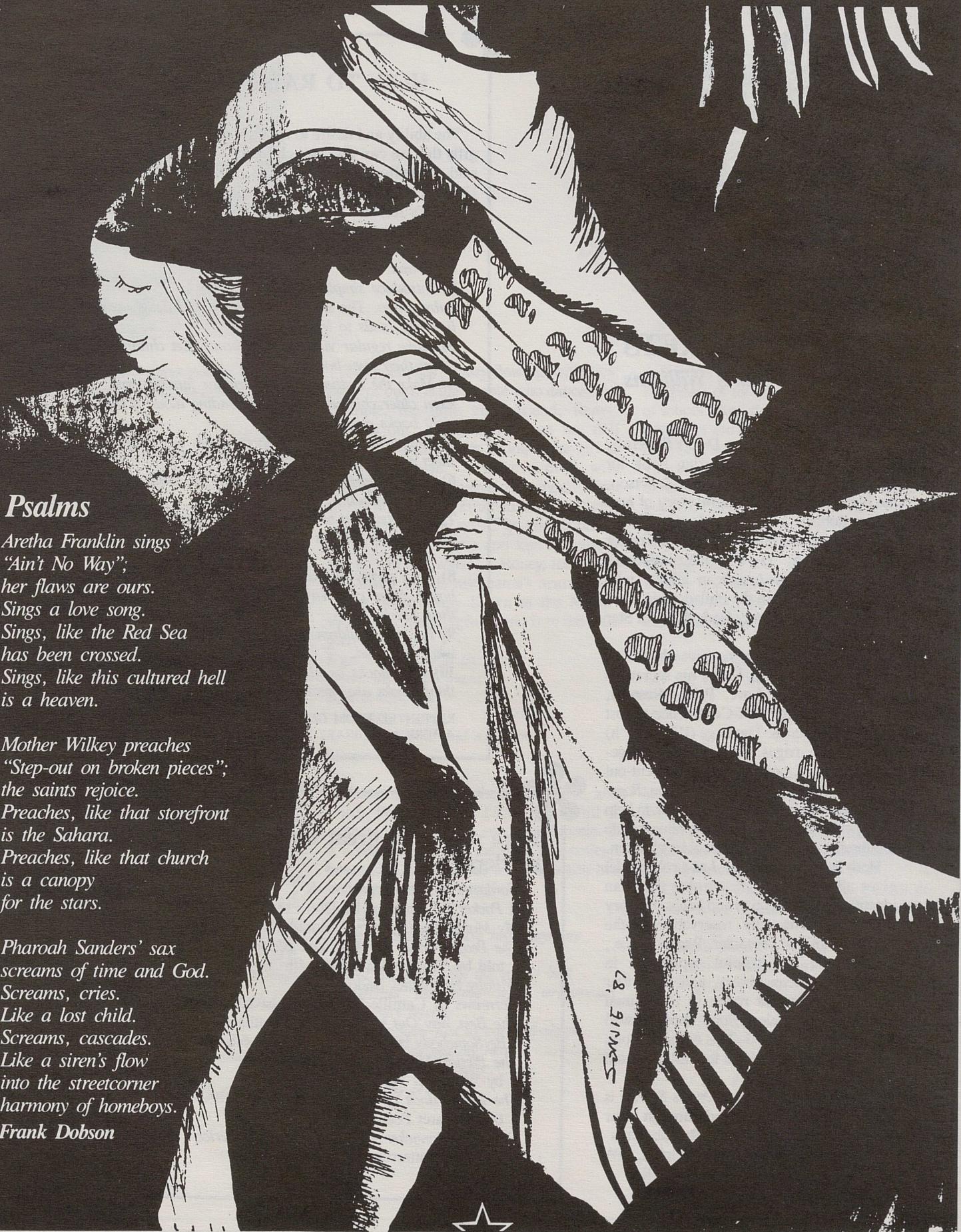
Marcus B. Christian

*I ply with all the cunning of my art
This little thing, and with consummate care
I fashion it—so that when I depart,
Those who come after me shall find it fair
And beautiful. It must be free of flaws—
Pointing no laborings of weary hands;
And there must be no flouting of the laws
Of beauty—as the artist understands.*

*Through passion, yearnings infinite—yet dumb—
I lift you from the depths of my own mind
And gild you with my soul's white heat to plumb
The souls of future men. I leave behind
This thing that in return this solace gives:
"He who creates true beauty ever lives."*

The Poetry of the Negro 1746-1970
Edited by Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps
Doubleday & Company, Inc.
Garden City, NY





Psalms

*Aretha Franklin sings
"Ain't No Way";
her flaws are ours.
Sings a love song.
Sings, like the Red Sea
has been crossed.
Sings, like this cultured hell
is a heaven.*

*Mother Wilkey preaches
"Step-out on broken pieces";
the saints rejoice.
Preaches, like that storefront
is the Sahara.
Preaches, like that church
is a canopy
for the stars.*

*Pharoah Sanders' sax
screams of time and God.
Screams, cries.
Like a lost child.
Screams, cascades.
Like a siren's flow
into the streetcorner
harmony of homeboys.*

Frank Dobson

5/21/87





ROGER ROBBIE DISCOVERS DR. J'S SECRETS

Review by Marti Williams

Roger Robbie Discovers Dr. J's Secrets by Herb Rogers, Jr. is a coloring book for children. Illustrated by Robert L. Jefferson, the book offers a meaningful story of how Roger Robbie, a raccoon, learns Dr. J's secrets to success. Dr. J is the nickname for Julius Erving, II—the internationally respected African-American athlete who recently retired from the Philadelphia 76ers and who played in every Basketball All Star Game since 1976.

The story, done in rhyme, gives the reader examples of how Dr. J uses his secrets in every day living. Love, Pride, Respect, Responsibility and Self-Confidence re just a few of his secrets. The large (11" w x 14" h) book offers pages for coloring, large-lettered cut-out posters, a song and cut-out paper dolls of Dr. J and his wardrobe. *Roger Robbie Discovers* is an excellent book to help young children learn important values while reinforcing those concepts in older children.

Herb Robers' use of Dr. J as a role model gives all children someone that they can identify with, look up to and keeps the story interesting. The only reservation is the choice of animal character. Raccoon (i.e., coons) have a distasteful application in African-American history, and the critter itself is a notorious rogue in the animal kingdom. Nonetheless, *Roger Robbie* is well written and illustrated. This coloring book is exciting, fresh and ideal for children from 3-13.

Roger Robbie Discovers Dr. J's Secrets is \$5.99 and can be ordered through your bookstore or from Roger Robbie Creations, P.O. Box 5657, Philadelphia, PA 19129.

HOW TO RAISE A READER

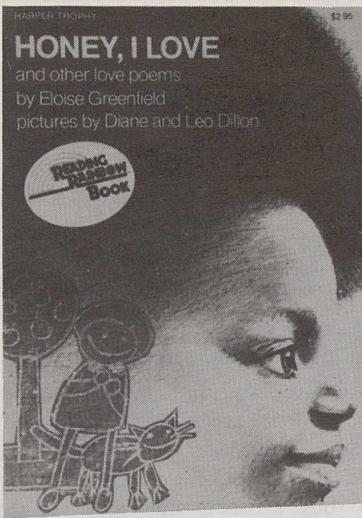
The ability and desire to read are among the most precious gifts that we can give our children. As Ludwig Wittgenstein said, "The limits of my language are the limits of my world." Here are some hints on how to make the world larger for our children's future.

- 1) Read to your new baby: greeting cards, the newspaper, cereal boxes. It's the sounds that are important.
- 2) Introduce simple picture and story books as the baby grows. The shapes and colors will delight, and listening leads to learning.
- 3) Make regular visits to the library. Let children select their own books.
- 4) Make the bedtime story a regular family event. Even older children will enjoy reading aloud if the right books are selected.
- 5) Remember poetry! The short verses are perfect for short attention spans.
- 6) Have children read aloud while you cook, iron, sew, sort laundry.
- 7) Use television to encourage reading. Read more about people, places or things that interest your family on TV.
- 8) Keep plenty of reading materials around the house. Store children's books on low shelves within their reach.
- 9) Let your children see you reading. Talk about what you read.
- 10) Give books as gifts. Let your children know you think books are special.

REPRINTED FROM *GET A HEAD START AT THE LIBRARY*, AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Here are more great books for young readers:

- Corduroy* by Don Freeman—K-2
A Pocket for Corduroy by Don Freeman—K-2
My Mama Needs Me by Mildred Pitts Walter—K-3
The People Could Fly-American Black Folktales
 told by Virginia Hamilton—4th-7th
Willaby by Rachel Isadora—K-3
Cornrows by Camille Yarbrough—1st-3rd
The Best Way Out by K. Follis Cheatham—4th-6th
I Be Somebody by Hadley Irwin—4th-6th
The Picture Life of Jesse Jackson
 by Warren J. Halliburton—3rd-6th
The Ebony Book of Black Achievement
 by Margaret Peters—4th-7th
Benjamin Banneker - Genius of Early America
 by Lillie Patterson—4th-7th



Honey, I love and other poems by Eloise Greenfield with pictures by Diane and Leo Dillon

This small book immediately welcomes you into the world of a delightful black girl. Every page is animated by Greenfield's poetic images and a lovely child who recognizes and lives out her identity with family, friends, music, and "Harriet Tubman," who establishes the child's feminine consciousness and a racial memory older than the girl's years.

Art work by Diane and Leo Dillon capture in rare beauty (for those without eyes to see) the girl's Afrikanoid features. Each page depicts her and her nappy hair in a glorious, freedom-expressive range of lovely hairstyles. Also the Dillons give us the artists' impressions of what the young girl sees in a style reminiscent of the drawings of a child.

We find harmony & warmth throughout *Honey I Love*, like "Aunt Roberta," who would "sit and dream/All wrapped up in quiet/and old sweaters." Yes, this book unmistakably feels and tastes of sweet LOVE.

In the poem, "Honey, I love," she says:
*I love a lot of things, a whole lot of things
 Like
 My cousin comes to visit and you know he's from the South
 "Cause every word he says just kind of slides out of his mouth*

The poem has an easy flowing rhythmical pattern, but it is the people who dance. For example, the little girl's friend, Renee, "comes out to play and brings her doll without a dress." This prompts the girl to become creative: "I make a dress with paper and that doll sure looks a mess." Then there's her mother sitting on the sofa, "sewing buttons on my coat/I go and sit beside her...I hold her arm and kiss it 'cause it feel so soft and warm...Honey, let me tell you that I LOVE my mama's arm."

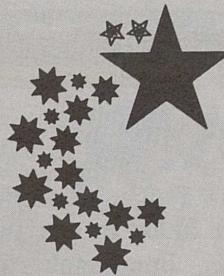
The poem "Way Down in the Music" shows how meaningful music is to the little girl. She says:

*I get way down in the music
 Down inside the music
 I let it wake me
 take me
 Spin me around and make me
 Uh-get down*

This is the music of the Jackson Five, and Earth, Wind and Fire. Like water is full of wetness, these poems are full of music. It is a song even when the little girl noticed how much distance has crept between her and her brother, "Reggie."

*It's summertime
 And Reggie doesn't live here anymore*

*...
 Spends his time with the round ball
 ... Spends his time with arguments
 and sweaty friends...
 ... Comes here just to eat and sleep
 and sometimes pat my head
 ... Thinks he's Kareem
 And not my brother.*



Honey, I love and other poems by Eloise Greenfield

She has "Fun" laughing at the squeaking pedal of the piano in her singing class at school. And there are the "Things" she bought at the store or the time she went to the beach and built a sandhouse. When they were gone, she "Went to the kitchen/Lay down on the floor/Made me a poem/Still got it..." And when she's not making poems, she finds time "Rope Rhyme."

*Get set, ready now, jump right in
 Bounce and kick and giggle and spin
 Listen to the rope when it hits the ground
 Listen to that clappedy-slappedy sound*

*...
 That's what jumping is all about
 Get set, ready now,
 jump
 right
 out!*

Every parent I know—and don't know—should "jump/right/out" & buy this book; if not for your child, buy it for yourself, then pass it on to the first child you see in your neighborhood. Or just buy a copy and forward it to SHOOTING STAR REVIEW. Sandra & I know a lot of kids who would love to have a copy.

When a child (or adult) closes this book, she or he can look in the mirror and sing:

*I love
 I love a lot of things
 A whole lot of things
 And honey,
 I love ME, too.*

Rob Penny is a poet, playwright and co-founder with August Wilson of the Kuntu Writer's Workshop at the University of Pittsburgh.



IMANI

(ee/manee)=Faith. To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

*It was lonely
and at Christmas, having the blind
dream of Santa Claus
Mama would take me to sit on the
white man's knee—
I used to wonder, how he could like me
much less bring me a gift
when everything else white we knew
called us nigger.
Besides, he brought very little anyway
most of the time, none of the things I'd
asked for—
if I hadda known it was daddy all that
time
I would have loved him even more, just
for shattering that dream*

Kabira was thirteen years old. She lived in Harlem where children's voices are heard from block to block and double dutch is jumped at the fastest pace and, like the sign in the school yard on 135th near Lenox Avenue says, "Harlem, we play the best ball."

Kabira was born in Harlem Hospital, like most of her friends. She lived on the tenth floor of one of those highrise apartments and was one of the few teenagers who actually paid attention to the younger set. She was the best jacks player, and she could spin a top faster than anybody on the block. She told stories better than Miss Evans at Countee Cullen Library. She sat on the fire escape with a dozen or so kids listening up while story after story poured from her.

One chilly Saturday afternoon, just a week before Christmas, Angelica, Shawn and Tyrek were hanging out near the neighborhood's main candy store. Everyone's mom told them to stay away from that small building with palm trees painted on the front because folks said that it was a drug store, and not the kind that filled doctors' prescriptions.

When Kabira came down from her apartment, she said Hello to Angelica and Shawn.

I've got to buy some soap powder. Anybody want to come with me, Angelica asked?

Tyrek smiled at Kabira and said, "I'm going to play some ball."

"I've got to get home," said Shawn. "Denise is coming to braid my hair."

"Okay, I'll walk with you," smiled Kabira. "My Mom wants me to get the paper so she can check the Lotto numbers."

While Angelica bought the soap powder, Kabira went to the newsstand. "Afternoon, Mr. Ansari," she said politely.

"Why, afternoon to you Miss Kabira!"

What a kind man, Kabira thought. He's even kind to the kids who are always trying to rip him off while he's talking to a customer.

As she walked away, Kabira looked at the Post's headlines. What a terrible thing, she thought! This paper always has some story about somebody being murdered, tortured, missing, robbed or caught doing something criminal. And the way they write the headlines...you wonder even if it's all true. Kabira reads the Post headline out loud: BOY TEN HOLDS MOM HOSTAGE FOR XMAS TREE!

She read below the photo of an angry-looking black boy:

Ten year old Clifford Graham says that he will hold his mother hostage until she agrees to buy him the \$35 Xmas tree that they saw on 7th Avenue. Police are negotiating with

the boy for the safe release of the mother. Neighbors say that Ms. Graham was laid off from her \$98.78 per week job three months ago. The mother had told some of her friends that she would not be able to buy presents this year for the children's Christmas as she had always done in the past.

Angelica caught up with Kabira. "Come on," she said. "I've got to hurry home."

"You go ahead," Kabira said. "I'll see you tomorrow."

Christmas, Kabira thought as she walked, it seems to make people so unhappy. Mostly because people can't afford to buy presents and things. She looked for her mother's favorite numbers in the Lotto listing. What happened, Kabira thought, to the real meaning of Christmas?

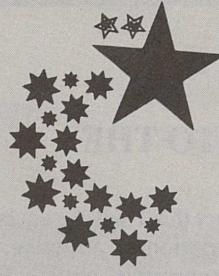
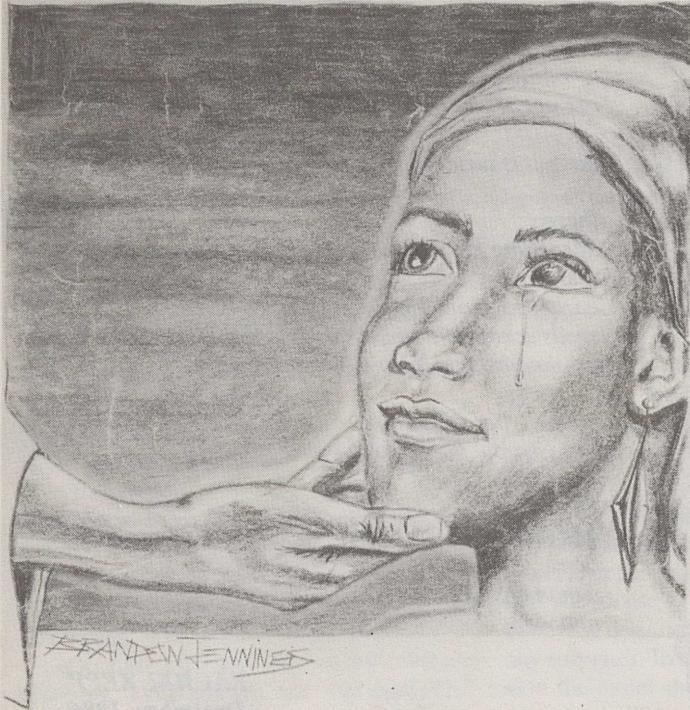
Just the other day, old Ms. Granby's apartment was robbed. They took her social security money, a pair of gold earrings, even the turkey that Ms. Granby got from the senior citizen's center. Whoever broke in left a message written with soap on the bathroom mirror: Merry Xmas, see you next year. And last week, Janice ran away from home because her mother couldn't buy a pair of \$75 boots from Favar's Department Store. Now why, Kabira wondered, would people do things like that at Christmas?

HOPE

*It is
essentially
this—we must prepare them,
generations that we have made,
to win.*

by Kim Rounds Foster

**This Publication Is
Made Possible
In Part Through
A Grant From The
Pittsburgh Foundation.**



Kabira's Dream

By Rosemari Mealy

We need to create something different. Those who want to can continue to celebrate Christmas. But this new celebration wouldn't depend on buying stuff. It could even start at Christmas and continue for many days. There could be workshops like Ms. Martells art class at school where people make their own pretty gifts to give to friends. People could come together in each other's homes, at libraries and other places. They could visit people like Ms. Granby, Aunt Esther, Grandma Myrtle, Uncle Gus and Mr. Reds, the poor man who fell in the snow and lost his legs after they found him last winter. We could even take presents to the people living in the armory, Kabira dreamed. The young people would sing, have plays and do magic tricks. There'd be plenty of dancing and even a bazaar. Auntie Alice could serve peas and rice, and Momma could sell her great pies and serve those sweet fried bananas that Ms. Rojas calls plantains. Oh! Kabira looked at the darkened sky, I'd better get home fast.

Kabira cut through the park and took the avenue route. That way, she could make a quick stop at the "Famous Harlem Bookstore." They always had great books and posters, and it was always crowded. Some adults had braids and beads in their hair and wore loose, colorful clothing. One day, Kabira thought she recognized one of those famous African leaders in the store. Just the

day before, the *Post* headline had screamed, AFRICAN TERRORIST VISITS HARLEM.

Even if Kabira did not have money to buy anything, she could read the books and put them back on the racks. Those who worked in the store greeted all the visitors as "Brother" and "Sister." Una, the beautiful Black lady who owned the store, seemed to know everybody and could tell in a second where everything was.

The children's books were on a little table so that smaller kids could reach them. There were books in the store that were not in Kabira's school and neighborhood libraries. In one year, Kabira read and remembered over 67 stories.

On this day, Una greeted her, "It's good to see you again Kabira."

She always remembers my name, Kabira thought. She is the only person besides my Mom who ever told me that my name was beautiful.

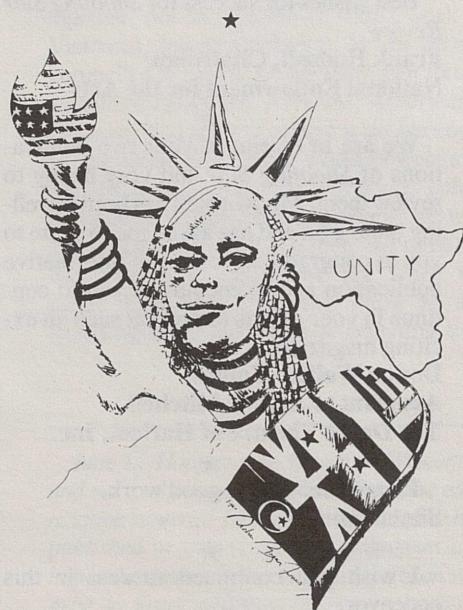
Una gave Kabira a handful of beautifully designed, colored cards that said:

Celebrate KWANZAA
December 26-27-28-29-30-31-January 1
An alternative to the gift-buying season
A celebration of Unity
4 p.m. until
The Odetta Community Center
FREE

Kabira's face glowed. KWANZAA-KWANZAA, she kept repeating to herself.

Una asked softly, "Do you know what KWANZAA is?"

"I, I think so," said Kabira. "I have been dreaming about it for a long time."



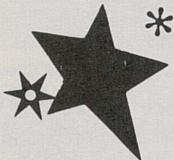
Rosemari Mealy is a community activist, freelance journalist and talk show host on WBAI Radio in New York.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I woefully regret that I will be unable to renew my subscription to *Shooting Star Review*. When I subscribed initially I was under the impression that the publication was to be by, for and about African-Americans. A written means of expression for African and African-American writers that emanates from their experience with a dominant Western "Civilization"—REAL CULTURE. Such is not the case. Having an advisory board, board, or any governing body constituted with any non-African and/or non-African-American is unacceptable in my view. I totally resent the fact that (once again) non-Africans and/or non-African-Americans have anything whatsoever to do with what is published as an expression of African-American culture.

B.E. Barnes
Pittsburgh, PA



Thank you for your work... Well wishes. Joy!
Maya Angelou

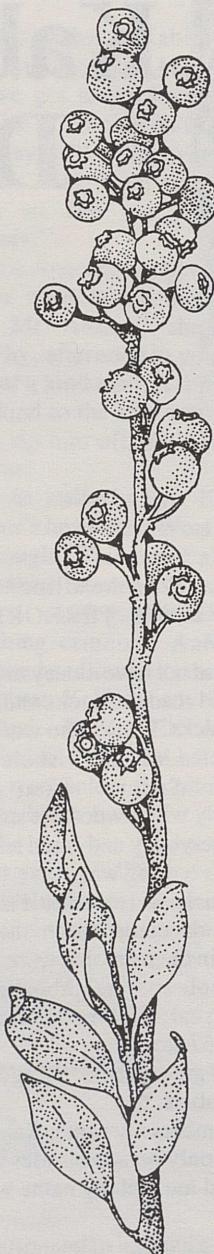
★
Best wishes for success for *Shooting Star Review*.
Frank Hodsoll, Chairman
National Endowment for the Arts

★
We are in receipt of your two publications of *Shooting Star* and very happy to review them. Mr. Mitchell has been travelling quite a bit and has asked me to write to you to congratulate you on an informative publication and to encourage you to continue in your efforts to present such an exciting magazine.

Donna Walker-Collins
Assistant to Arthur Mitchell
The Dance Theatre of Harlem, Inc.

★
Please keep up the good work.
Sonia Sanchez

★
I wish you continued success in this endeavor.
Marjorie B. Broderick
Assistant Dean
Temple University



my kwanzaa poem
"bring fruit," he said, "and a poem"

imagine a land where lions range untethered
a continent where dreams
are not of white christmases

there it is turning summer

there
deepening greens margin fields of gold
there
early fruit ripens to sweet juice
seeds scatter the wind and all is in motion
for the forthcoming yield of harvest

places where the summer news is silenced
this is about all we can be sure of

this
and an item in our winter paper where we read that
there
a man has wrestled a lion with his bare hands
and won

RACHEL ZEPP
December, 1986

SHOOTING STAR REVIEW gratefully acknowledges the contributions of these artists whose work appears in this issue:

★ Dedra Rojean James was born in Brooklyn, NY and graduated from the High School of Art and Design as well as the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. She hopes to own and operate a graphic design company.

★ Brandon R. Jennings is currently a graphic artist with the New Pittsburgh Courier. He was born in Pittsburgh. Following a lifelong interest in the arts, he graduated from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh in December, 1985.

★ Charles Ernest Epps began entering art exhibitions as a child, and won awards while in elementary school that encouraged him to continue in this career. Charles' strengths are in his ability to creatively capture the beauty in nature and living creatures by using all facets of color and design. He currently works in Pittsburgh's Joseph Horne Department Store in Advertising and freelances cartoons and editorials. He is also talented in wood and clay sculptures, charcoal pencil, pen and ink, acrylic, airbrush, chalk, watercolor and oil paint.

★ Shaihou Omar Njie is a photographer, tailor/designer, painter, muralist, dancer, choreographer and percussionist. He was born in Banjul, Gambia, West Africa and speaks five languages: English, Wolof, French, Mandinka and Swedish. He was Co-Founder of the *SeneGambia Sun Newspaper* and currently works as a photographer for the *New Pittsburgh Courier*. Njie recently opened a designer shop in Pittsburgh called Makitaara where fabrics are hand-painted and then cut and tailored into clothing.

R A C I S M

Jane L. Hoppen

This stuff isn't stopping. Who you fooling? Yourself maybe. Maybe. Actually the stench of it never went away—not after the Civil War, not after the Emancipation Proclamation, not after Martin Luther King, Jr. not after Vietnam, not after Watergate, not after the nuclear accident at Chernobyl. Look around—the longest running show. Sure, it's more subtle now: housing, education, economics, Bernard Goetz blowing away Black youths. But the surface scum and all below remains, and buried things explode.

I'd hate to generalize, but for the sake of argument, I will: This United States is not a pluralistic society. This is still a White supremacist society led by a White patriarchy. Don't sit shaking your head thinking I'm wrong; I'm not.

Let's just say that I've been eavesdropping. Let's just say, too, that now I'm going to tattle a bit. Being White, I hear what the other Whiteys say—usually behind your backs. Like when anyone Black earns a promotion and all the Whiteys roll their eyes and say Equal Opportunity strikes again.

A few weeks back I heard a young man telling a young woman a story about himself and a buddy and a trip they made to Ohio for Christmas. On their way back, he said, they got caught on the freeway, the ramps and overpasses clogged with snow and ice and the freeway itself a hazard. They snaked along, he said, like Who the hell needs to see Ohio in slow motion? At one point they were about eight lanes from a McDonald's, he said, the golden arches just visible, so he climbed out of the car and crossed the freeway to get him and his buddy some chow and to relieve himself in the can. When he got back and while they ate, he said, a huge Nigger-lady got out of the black car ahead of them and walked around the rear of it to the back door on the passenger's side. She opened the door, cocked it open, he said, and she stood behind it, pulled down her drawers, squatted, and took a leak right there on that snowy interstate. Shit, he said, I knew Niggers had no shame, but that Nigger-lady blew my mind. Now, you and I both know that if that had been a White lady caught in that traffic jam, trying to piss the only way possible, he wouldn't have taken it so seriously. He would've thought it a joke, a

smart move. It's all a matter of perception. Isn't it? It's all a matter of color, primitive beings that we are.

Then there's the time a Black friend took her black-and-white television to a pawnshop and the owner told her he wasn't taking any televisions because of lack of floor space. She called me. She told me she needed that twenty-five dollars—I well know that feeling—and that if I took the television I might have better luck with the White man behind the counter. I did. In fact, the man wanted to know if twenty-five dollars was enough. He sure did.

And my friend asked How do I know this doesn't happen when I apply for a job? I told her she doesn't, and she might as well believe it does because then there won't be any surprises. In this country the lighter the skin the easier the ride. White Americans are more willing to accept outsiders than our own Black brothers and sisters. Sure we would. Look at the Koreans, Vietnamese, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, Cubans, Filipinos. They come here and are given a better start than our Black counterparts have ever dreamed of. The lighter the skin the easier the ride.

The general lack of understanding of poverty among White people is incredible. On a Phil Donahue Show, they see a Black woman with sixteen children who lived in a welfare hotel in Washington, D.C., and they see all Black people. They rant heatedly about lazy Black people not wanting to work, taking their taxes, enjoying the easy life. The general lack of compassion for Blacks is incredible.

White Americans forget real history so quickly, and somehow they expect the Black race to be up and running, in tune with White America. But White Americans need to start looking realistically at the total scheme of things. Slavery didn't end, as a matter of speaking anyway, until late in the nineteenth century, and as Blacks were slowly, very slowly, given their freedom, they were also given homelessness, selflessness, joblessness, hate, prejudice, despair, poverty, lynchings—a package deal.

They started from zero. In the 1960s they started from zero. And that's the difference, because in the 1960s most White Americans didn't know what zero was; they had long ago surpassed it. The American space was theirs, and their roots were sturdy, strong.

When will racism end? It might begin to deteriorate when good Blacks and good Whites join together in a necessary alliance; when the nonracist Whites can find the nerve to tell their racist White brothers and sisters to shut up, grow up, open up. It is not enough for nonracist Whites to be nonracist, to not laugh at racial jokes or to not partake in racial slander and prejudice. They must learn to speak up and to be as strong and blatant as the racist Whites.

When will racism end? It might begin to deteriorate when Black actors and actresses can star in any role, not just those written specifically for Black characters; when the welfare system is redesigned and no longer perpetuates the cycle of those born into poverty; when all capital punishment (that sly route to genocide) is outlawed; when the Whiteys stop saying I'm not a racist, I've got a Black friend...

When will racism end? My own unfortunate theory is that we will rise above the color issue only when we are forced to fight together, not as a nation (it didn't work in Vietnam), but as a universe. When we are compelled by world situations to join forces as nations (Russians, Africans, Americans, Chinese, Japanese) to protect what we know as our world from other-world powers and threats, then perhaps we will forget color, nationality, gender. Then, perhaps, we will all be equal entities. Until then, we must not fool ourselves, saying we are when we aren't. Let's let Big Brother know we are watching him, just as he is watching us.

Jane L. Hoppen was raised in Wisconsin and currently lives in Virginia where she edits aviation material for the government. She has published in several literary magazines and hopes that, one day, enough compassion will exist to foster peace.



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