

Welcome back, Brothers and Sisters!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

AFTER A long year in hibernation, collective consciousness and spiritual renewal amongst our people are on the 1996 priority list.

It is important to keep in mind that as Afrikan people, we are in a position where we must constantly be aware of and keep in touch with each other. No one Sister or Brother should stand alone on this campus, in this country, or in this world.

These are some of the key concepts that we hope to put forth with this edition of the Afrikan Heritage Month Supplement. Ideas will be explored, new voices will be heard, and feelings will be expressed, all in the spirit of the upliftment and liberation of Afrikan people.

We hope that our opinions will generate lively discussion and tap into some of the fertile minds here at Dalhousie and in the larger university community. If anything, the sheer act of giving a voice to the many Black aspirations, questions, interests, and frustrations is, in itself, a monumental step that must be recognized by all. We do not expect a consensus on all views put forth; however, we must realize that for any progress to take place, the respect and togetherness of our people are non-negotiable elements that must be present.

Over the coming weeks we invite you to embrace Mother Afrika by embracing each other. Share in the richness of our Heritage through the exploration of artwork, poetry, essays, discussions, and celebrations that will be highlighted in February and also throughout the year. Remember, good things come in small packages. With this in mind, perhaps the greatest gift we can give each other is ourselves.

We hope to hear from you soon!
Yours for FREEDOM.

— Tandiwe Nyajeka.

Harambee Fest

Harambee Fest — held throughout February — is a time for people to come together. The intention of the Black Canadian Students Association is to organize a festival that all students of Dalhousie can participate in, as well as learn and appreciate the diversity of Black Culture.

Harambee Fest will include activities that are designed to inform the student population of the rich diversity, great accomplishments, and historical background of African people from around the world.

The itinerary for the festival will include a main party held on the last Friday before reading week; film nights every Wednesday for the month of February; a fashion show; opportunities to sample a variety of different foods from different parts of the world; and, information booths to be set up in the SUB lobby.

The purpose of Harambee Fest is to celebrate Black cultures around the world by highlighting aspects such as their food, clothing, and music. The primary goal of the scheduled activities is to promote unification through greater appreciation and understanding of the Black culture. It is hoped that all students of Dalhousie University will participate in the activities of the month in order to accomplish this goal.

HARAMBEE PARTY Friday, February 16, 8:00 p.m. — 1:00 a.m.

Fashion Show • 8:00 p.m. — 8:30 p.m.

Musicians • 8:30 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.

Food can be Purchased • 8:00 p.m. — 12:00 a.m.

Cover charge • \$4.00

Information Booths

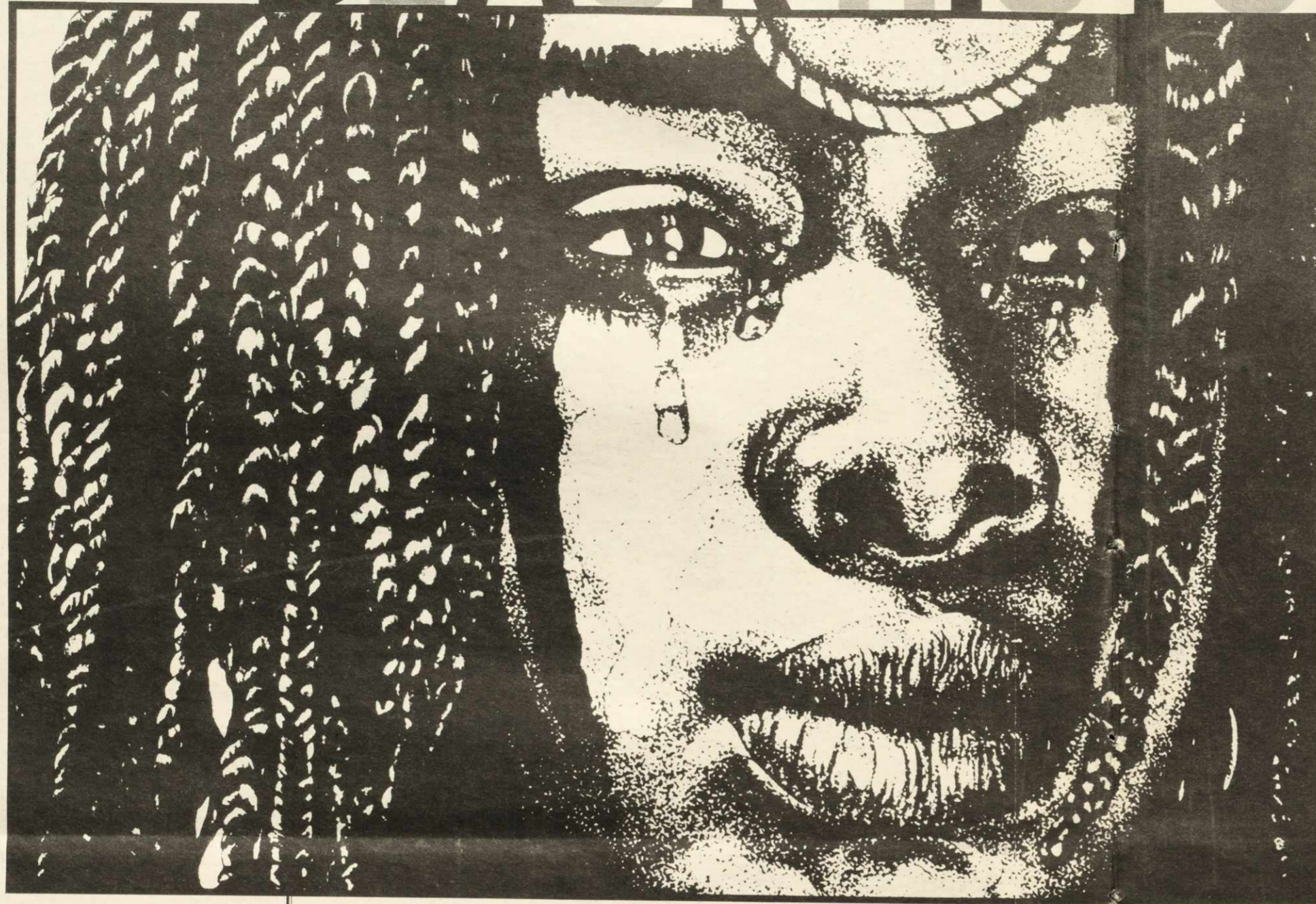
February 13, 15, 20, 22, 27, 29
Noon — 3:00 p.m.

Film Nights

February 14, 21, 28
5:30 — 8:30 p.m.

Symposium

March 16
10:00 a.m. — 9:30 p.m.



A Ghanaian drummer



where black children are finding it increasingly difficult to identify Black role models, and the government is cutting programs designed to aid Blacks and other minorities in this stolen land, the interracial couple is growing in strength.

I can only surmise that the task of facing each day knowing beforehand that it will be a struggle is too great a psychological burden for many Brothers to confront. This robs future generations of a Black female/Black male unit which is so desperately needed in our communities.

This is what we have before us — turncoat Brothers within our midst who are too afraid to fight against a system that daily denounces their right to be a human being. This is a painful reality for many sisters and a devastating loss for the future...so we lose on at least two crucial fronts.

In a world where bureaucratic bigotry and racial hatred are the norm rather than the exception, the Black female/Black male unit must rise, hand in hand, and become the vanguards in the struggle to eradicate these societal poisons. Only when this goal is achieved can a world be brought into existence where a person can love another of a different race based upon — and I paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. — "the content of their character" and not "the colour of their skin." — Colwyn Burchall Jr.

Thoughts on Jungle Fever

"Brother, why are you checking that white girl, with all these fine sisters around here?"

"Look man, I don't have to explain nothing to you. Anyway, love ain't got no colour."

This exchange took place between a young brother (lets call him "Toby") and myself at Jerry's, a bar notorious for its interracial liaisons. Implicit in his comment is the widely-held belief that love is colour-blind and that if two people love each other, the level of melanin — or lack thereof — should have little significance.

I determined that the statement made by "Toby" could only be true in an ideal society. In such a society, peoples of Afrikan descent and peoples of European descent would be able to love each other without being constrained by a blood-soaked history of racism, which perpetuates social inequality and self-hatred. The politics of race would never rear its ugly head in matters of the heart. However, such a society is not in existence ANYWHERE

in this world. We are instead besieged daily by capitalism, homophobia, classism, sexism, and racism, all of which serve to distort our perception of ourselves and others. Racism (which can be defined as the ability of one group in society, namely whites, to coercively control the life chances of another group in society, namely blacks, for their exclusive benefit) ploughs through the lives of every Black person with maniacal glee. It is an enemy against which every Black person must defend him/herself if he/she is to realize his/her humanity. Indeed, fighting against the scourge of racism is the ONLY way in which Black Humanity can ever be realized.

As such, we NEED each other as soldiers on a battlefield need each other. We need the compassion of our Brothers and Sisters who must share living space in a land where racism is as pervasive as the air we breathe. We need strong Black families and repositories of Black love and inspiration where Black children can be protected

A conversation with a Bermudian brother

I was recently in conversation with a young brother when the topic of racism was brought up for debate. During the ensuing discussion, he made the point that "...those who fought were often persecuted and suffered greatly because of the stance they took. It just doesn't pay to be a martyr for the cause." I listened to this brother and gave him the following reply:

"THE STRUGGLES that we undertake today are not for our benefit, but for the benefit of future generations. We must always remember that the luxuries we enjoy today were only made possible through the tojan efforts of innovative Afrikan men and women who sacrificed much to ensure that the future would be better than the present.

For example, had it not been for the Committee for Universal Adult Suffrage, you, as an Afrikan Bermudian, would have been denied your right to vote in our last election. Had it not been for the Progressive Group, you would have been denied entry into virtually all

of the island's hotels, restaurants, and theatres. These and other luxuries are taken for granted — the challenges faced and overcome by the heroes and heroines of a bygone era in Bermudian history are not given the respect and appreciation that they deserve from those who presently benefit."

"Yes, it is true that fighting against the racist power structure of this island is, at best, incredibly difficult; yes, it is a savage truth that progress for our people has always been a slow and painful process; and yes, the sacrifices that must be made will be great. However, this does not mean that the battle should not be waged. We must fight as Sally Bassett fought; as Black Matthew fought; as 'Buck' Burrows fought; as Dr Gordon fought; and, as the Black Beret Cadre fought."

"This is the legacy that is upon the shoulders of all Afrikan Bermudians living today, whether we like it or not. We can choose to fulfil our duty to our ancestors and join the struggle for the upliftment of the Afrikan Bermudian, or we can betray our people and continue to wallow in dehumanising silence and paralysing fear."

"There are no other choices in this matter. Which shall be your choice, brother?"

ALTHOUGH THIS conversation appears to be specific to the island of Bermuda, it nevertheless has a message which must be heard by all.

Every Black person on this campus has been blessed with the opportunity to attend this institution because our ancestors dedicated their lives to the preservation and upliftment of their progeny. We are here because of Richard Preston, Dr. Carrie Best, Dr. William Oliver, and Delmore 'Buddy' Daye; we are here because of Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; we are here because of 'Bussa,' Marcus Garvey, Maurice Bishop, and Walter Rodney; and, we are here because of Jomo Kenyatta, Patrice Lumumba, Winnie Mandela, and Dr. Frantz Fanon. Their collective achievements (and those of countless other Afrikans throughout the world) constitute a liberation doctrine which we would be fools to ignore.

The question that we all must answer now becomes apparent: will we embrace our glorious legacy and use our learning to destroy all forms of racist domination still standing in our way, or will we instead choose to blindly pursue the poisoned dream of material success and become the 'hewers of wood and the drawers of water' on the international plantation of capitalism?

These are the only options open to us, that is, FREEDOM or DEATH.

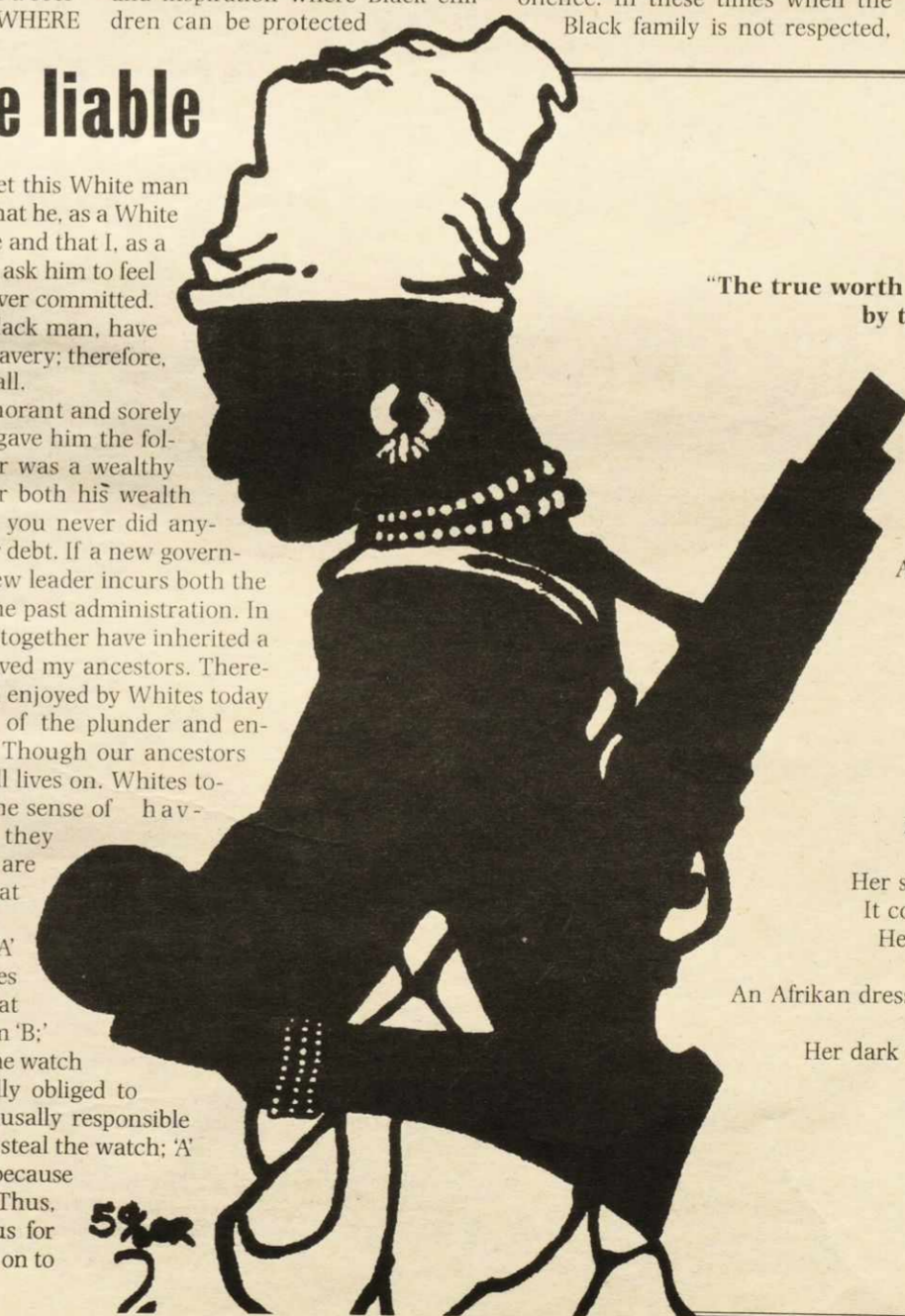
Which shall be your choice, Black People?

Whites are liable

The other day, I had to set this White man straight. He was telling me that he, as a White man, never enslaved anyone and that I, as a Black man, have no right to ask him to feel responsible for crimes he never committed. He also added that I, as a Black man, have never experienced physical slavery; therefore, I should keep quiet about it all.

Well...I listened to this ignorant and sorely misguided White man, and gave him the following reply: "If your father was a wealthy landowner, you would incur both his wealth and his debts, even though you never did anything to make that money or debt. If a new government comes to power, the new leader incurs both the debts and the successes of the past administration. In the same way, Whites living together have inherited a legacy: their ancestors enslaved my ancestors. Therefore, one can see that wealth enjoyed by Whites today was made possible because of the plunder and enslavement of my ancestors. Though our ancestors are both dead, the legacy still lives on. Whites today are responsible, not in the sense of having done anything (since they never enslaved me), but they are responsible in the sense that they are liable."

To put it another way: 'A' steals a watch from 'B' and gives it to 'C.' 'C' does not know that the watch has been stolen from 'B'; however, if 'C' discovers that the watch has been stolen, he is morally obliged to return it to 'B.' He is not causally responsible (keep in mind that 'C' did not steal the watch; 'A' did). Instead, he is liable now because he knows that it was stolen. Thus, Whites today should repay us for the legacy created and passed on to them by their ancestors.



Poem

"The true worth of a race must be measured by the character of its woman!"
— Mary McLeod Bethune

Black Woman

Her skin is as Ebony
Black and berry smooth
She is a vision of beauty
As she moves through the room

Her skin is a Map
It tells of a Place
Expressing its Beauty
Reflecting my Race

Her skin is a Flag
And she holds it high
Because she is very Proud of it

Her skin identifies her to a Heritage
It connects her to a Unique people
Her skin is the essence of Beauty

An Afrikan dress with many braids in her hair
Done to perfection
Her dark form moves through the room
as people stare in silence

admiring her

BLACK BEAUTY

by Lillian Glasgow