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WHAT SHALL I TELL MY CHILDREN WHO ARE BLACK?

BY MARGARET BURROUGHS

WHAT SHALL I tell my children who are black
Of what it means to be a captive in this dark skin
What shall I tell my dear one, fruit of my womb

Of how beautiful they are when everywhere they turn
They are faced with the abhorrence of everything
That is black.

The night is black and so is the bogeyman.

Villains are black with black hearts.

A black cow gives no milk.

A black hen lays no eggs.

Bad news comes bordered in black, mourning clothes

Black, storm clouds, black and devil's food is

Black...

What shall I tell my dear ones raised in a white

World, a place where white has been made to

Represent all that is good, pure, fine and decent,

Where clouds and dolls are white, and heaven

Surely is a white, white place with angels

Robed in white, and cotton candy and ice cream

And milk and Sunday ruffled dresses

And dream houses and long sleek Cadillacs

And angel's food is white... all, all... white.

What can I say therefore, when my child comes home

In tears because a playmate has called her black,

big-lipped, flat nosed

And nappy headed? What will she think when I dry

her tears and whisper, "Yes, that's true but you

are no less beautiful and dear."

How shall I lift up his head, get him to square

His shoulders, look their adversaries in the eye,

Confident in the knowledge of his worth, serene,

Under his sable skin and proud of his own beauty.

What can I do to give her strength that she may

Come through life's adversities as a whole human

Being unwrapped and human in a world of biased

Laws and inhuman practices, that she might

Survive. And survive she must! For who knows?

Perhaps this black child here bears the genius

To discover the cure for... cancer or to chart

The course for exploration of the universe.

So, she must survive for the good of all humanity.

She must and will survive.

I have drunk deeply of late from the fountain of

My black culture, sat at the knee and learned

From mother Africa, discovered the truth of my heritage,

The truth so often obscured and omitted

And I find I have much to say to my black children.

I will lift up their heads in proud blackness

With the story of their fathers' and their fathers' fathers'

And I shall take them back to the times of

Kings and queens who ruled the Nile, and measured

the stars and discovered the laws of mathematics.

On whose backs have been built a wealth of two continents.

I will tell him this and more,

and his heritage shall be his weapon and his armour;

will make him strong enough to win any battle he may face.



And since this story is so often obscured,
I must sacrifice to find it for my children,
even as I sacrifice to feed, cloth, and shelter
them. So this will do for them if I love them
None will do it for me, I must find the truth of my
heritage for myself and pass it on to them.
In years to come I believe because
I have armed them with the truth, My children and
Their children's children will venerate me.
For it is the truth that Will make us free!

AFROCENTRIC PERSPECTIVES

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Pottier, Wells win election

by Gazette staff

Peter Pottier and Hilary Wells swept the polls two weeks ago as Dalhousie students elected the highly favoured Presidential team.

Pottier and Wells humbled Mike Zelle and Ralph Bastarache, the only other team in the race, winning 1198 votes to 423.

"I feel good (about the victory) of course," said Pottier. "Most candidates were a little disappointed with voter turn out," he added.

Approximately 16 percent of eligible students voted, considerably less than last years record turn out of 28 percent.

"15 percent of the students at Dalhousie chose who they wanted. Its unfortunate more students don't care," Bastarache said.

Voter apathy was equally high in the Board of Governor elections, where Tom Digby and Brian Hill emerged victorious from a field of five candidates.

In the only other race Dave Pringle beat Stavros Vrettakos. All

other positions were taken by acclamation.

Interest in the entire election process was low as few students bother to attend the pre-elections forums.

Under represented groups and affirmative action hiring policies were an important theme in this years elections, and Pottier said he hopes to address this next year.

He said council plans to recruit members of groups on campus who have traditionally not been involved in student government.