

Black History is the issue

history
 Canadian history
 Canadian content
 1605—Samuel de Champlain
 sitting in class soaking this in
 70 students believing
 not questioning
 history and eurstory not
 MYstory or
 OURstory
 nor
 HERstory
 profs eyes sliding
 over
 me us them
 MYstory OURstory
 HERstory
 THEIRstory
 negated
 erased
 ignored
 whitewashed
 eurstory serving as
 whiteout for
 OURstory
 failing
 his/eurstory because
 I write
 Mattieu DaCosta
 beside 1605
 instead of De Champlain
 in angry red your notation reads
 ?X
 speaking up in class
 fighting for recognition of
 MYstory
 OURstory
 HERstory
 THEIRstory
 TRUEstory and
 PROPERstory
 you all still
 don't get it
 Pat yourselves on the back
 February has come and gone
 so has Black history
 what did you learn?
 Martin Luther King?
 That peaceful guy?
 Malcolm X?
 The Black Panthers?
 Really, what have you learned?
 The 2 or 3 great black inventors?
 whatsernames?
 what about that great Russian
 composer who turned out to be
 Black
 didn't that just rock your world
 whatshisname?
 judging from your reaction this
 must be
 breaking news ?
 what about Hogan's Alley?
 the underground railroad?—I'm
 talking what really happened
 not the fables and bedtime stories
 you were told
 Canada's history of slavery?
 What's this? you didn't know?
 Oh wait—okay okay I get it
 you thought this was the States right
 Oh racism doesn't exist? unnhunh
 What exactly did you learn in
 Canadian history
 judging from your blank look
 not much, eh?

so Black history went by
 congrats to you for renting
 Malcolm X and
 Amistad
 not good enough by far
 maybe if you were lucky
 some prof devoted a lecture to
 Black history
 though I highly doubt it
 chances are eurstory was what was
 taught
 for those of you in classes
 learning about
 MYstory
 maybe you're learning
 though it must be hard to read when
 your eyes fill with
 tears of misguided
 (self) pity
 it must be hard to hear when
 you're all screaming and
 wailing about how you're not
 responsible
 how we should move on
 move up
 pull ourselves by our
 bootstraps
 forgive and forget
 it must be hard to understand
 now
 since you don't understand
 past
 let me tell you
 we can't move on
 when we're
 held back
 we can't move up
 when we're
 beat down
 we can't pull ourselves up
 by our bootstraps
WHEN WE HAVE NO BOOTS
 I won't forgive—till you admit
 full responsibility
 and I sure won't forget when what
 you've done
 last week
 last year
 last 300+ years
 is done to me
 today
 It must be hard to
 pat yourself on the back
 when you're trying to
 pat me on the back
 at the same time
DONOTTOUCHME
 till you understand your privilege
 till you see
 till you learn
 do not tell me eurstory
 let me tell you
 MYstory
 let us let them let her
 You let Black history come and go—
 you had no clue
 March 21st is coming
 have you a clue?
 Do you know what March 21st is? you don't eh?
 oh sure it's the Day for the Elimination of Racism
 but it's a lot more
 Still don't know?
 Do you understand now?

—by Junie Desil



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LOST: BROWN BARDOUR JACKET. Please call 822-2561. Glen Peterson, Faculty (History).

Announcement

NEXT MEETING OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST STUDY GROUP is Thursday, March 25, 4:30-5:30 in Buchanan B226. Topic: "Modern Communism". Also Annual General Membership Meeting.

Miscellaneous

PLEDGE AND DIDN'T LIKE IT? START YOUR OWN FRATERNITY! Zeta Beta Tau is looking for men to start a new Chapter. If you are interested in academic success and an opportunity to make friends in a non-pledging brotherhood, e-mail zbt@zbtinternational.org or call Mike Simon at (317) 334-1898.

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TWEENS

HUMAN ARTS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Watch out for some good music emanating from the Gallery Pub next week—UBC's Amnesty International group is holding a coffee house fundraiser there on Thursday, March 25th. \$3 cover gets you into a night of terrific talent and supports Amnesty's human rights work.

THURS MARCH 25
\$3 COVER CHARGE

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TUES MARCH 30
7:00pm

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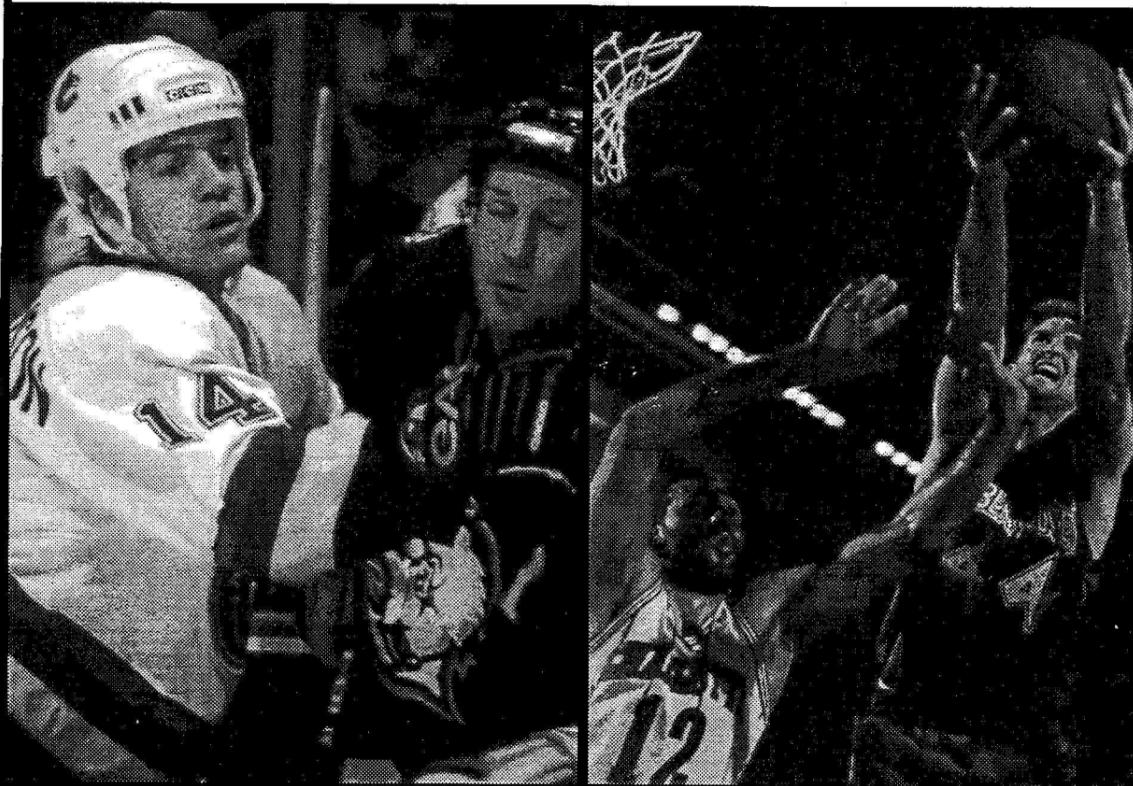
MARXIST LENINIST

Next biweekly meeting of the Marxist Leninist study group will continue on the topic "modern communism". Also, the annual general meeting.

THURS MARCH 25TH
4:30-5:30pm
BUCH B 226

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THE FIGHT FOR THE FUTURE BEGINS



IN THEATRES ONLY - MARCH 31



Racism...something about the name

Racism is an ideological defense of specific social and political relations of domination, subordination and privilege. So the next time this claim is made...check yourself. The issue of privilege is something that has to be taken into consideration before one goes off on a tirade about equal opportunity for all. Examining the societal dissemination of power reveals apparent concentrations and monopolies by some folks in this false-democracy state. This is a precursor that must be acknowledged before anyone says that we are all equal.

Who controls the media and the power of representation? Who makes the final call on what is the "official curriculum"? Who is the

market that buys up the commodities known as our culture? Whose tradition is the staple of this liberal-occupied land? Who has the power to establish profiles of alleged criminals? Who has the power to *invisibilise* the rich legacies of *our* stories?

Some of us can't be as at ease as others in society because some of us must deal with more impediments in our attempt to live our lives. Respecting our words and voices is something that doesn't happen in our rights-riddled world. Look at the words of our people. Listen to the voices of *our* people! Policies aren't worth the paper they are written on if they have no material support. Tradition cannot be a scapegoat for

continuing with business as usual. Change only comes with change. As it stands now things are pretty stagnant, so spare the contemporary "achievement of equality" rhetoric.

The area of land we call UBC is stolen territory: eighty-plus years of "tradition" based on squatting. The Musqueam Nation of Coast Salish territory are the rightful proprietors of this land to whom this institution of higher learning is indebted. We must [un]learn those a lesson who feel otherwise. Our realities persist with or without rose-coloured lenses. Equality of condition is not a fact with respect to our reality. Figured into any analysis must be reality...*

race is the issue a ubyssey special issue

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the ubyssey

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Awright, now's the time to call our shoutouts, pay respects to the people who built this house... I'm gonna call up to the mic the Krew: Queen o' bass: Sarah Galashan, Beats Barnabata: Douglas Quan, Sugs Daddy: John Zaozimy, Masta Rec: Bruce Arthur, Wax Docta: Todd Silver, Styles Busta: Cynthia Lee, Sure Beats: Ronald Nurwiah, Supafly: Jaime Tong, Killa MC: Kara Mosher, On the wheels o' steel: Gurpreet Singh, DJ skills: Chris Nolan, Maestro: Dale Lum, Big Daddy: Federico Barahona, Masta Rhymes: Jose Velazquez, Iam Masta: Richard Lam, SSW: Benita Bunjun, Bomb Squad: Emanuel Adjer-Achampong, Rhythm: Rupinder Sohal, Surprise MC: Beatrice Achampong, Diva of Soul: Sarah Maxwell, Stage Rippah: Mwalu Peeters, Rhymes Busta: Kyra Pretzer, Man with the Flava: David Nandi Odhiambo, Tracks Layah: Janie Desil, Ready Crew 1: Dionne Woodward, Ready Crew 2: Irfan Dhalla, On the automatic: Indy Bath, R.A.W.: Marcy Moore, Uptown Posse: Zoë Bridgeman, Peggy Lee and May Farales, Microphone Commando: Lyeen, Steady Beats: Eva Maximes, Electronica: Ulrich Rauch, Scratch Patrol: Begum Verjee.



I recently had the opportunity to talk to a relatively new organisation on campus which calls itself the Vancouver Coalition To Save Mumia. Mumia Abu-Jamal is the former Black Panther and award-winning radio journalist convicted and sent to death row in the early 1980s for murdering a white Philadelphia police officer. But many feel that he had an unfair trial. The Vancouver Coalition is just one of many groups that have been set up to promote awareness about Mumia's case and its present urgency. The following is an excerpt from an interview with Coalition spokesperson Drew Johnson.

by Chris Nolan

When did your group start up?

It came together in early December. There was a demonstration at the Peace Arch, and on the way back a car full of people were talking about how to extend this, because this is obviously a very significant year for Mumia.

What has been the effect in the past of having demonstrations and showing public support?

The closest example is that Mumia is still alive. He was slated for execution in '95. When he was granted a stay of execution, three days before he was supposed to be executed, that wasn't because the government suddenly had a change of heart. That was because the government realised that if they did kill him—there was enough attention to it already based on the work of activists like what we're doing here—people would be very displeased, to put it mildly. So the fact that Mumia is still alive speaks to the fact that this type of mobilisation works and is pretty much the only venue left because the government is really not complying.



So this is pretty much THE way to go at this point?

Well, of course, they have to proceed on the legal side and they're going to try to get it to the federal Supreme Court, but there was new legislation passed in '96 drastically reducing the chances that he'll ever get a federal appeal or a federal panel to oversee or call for a new trial. So, we can't count on that since this is, many people believe, a political case based on Mumia's past involvement. But [freeing Mumia] is only going to be a political consideration if the government will respond. That includes people taking their rights into their own hands and speaking up.

What events do you have going on in the near future?

The organising campaign is working towards April 24 which is Millions for Mumia at noon at the Vancouver Art Gallery [on a Saturday]. That's Mumia's birthday and it's also in concert internationally with a bunch of demonstrations that are going on that day. In the meantime we're obviously tabling a lot, we're going to be showing films. We're showing one at Harbour Centre SFU at 6pm on the 26th of March. That would be *Mumia: A Case For Reasonable Doubt*. There's a third one at UBC April 7 at 12:30 in SUB 209. ♦

Mumia Abu-Jamal

ALL THINGS CENSORED
Mumia Abu-Jamal

by Mwalu Jan Peeters

In April 1994, the Prison Radio Project travelled to Huntingdon State Prison's Death Row in order to work with prisoner of war Mumia Abu-Jamal, and record a number of essays that were to be aired on National Public Radio's news program, *All Things Considered*. These essays never made it to the public's ears. In May of 1994, as a direct result of pressure from the Fraternal Order of Police and then-Senator Bob Dole, National Public Radio fired Mumia from his position as a regular commentator, just hours before his first essay was to be aired. The ten essays recorded for the program are now locked in NPR's vaults, the words kidnapped and held captive, much like the man who voiced them.

Two years later, in 1996, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections banned all journalists from recording, videotaping, or photographing any inmate in a state facility—one more step in the march towards the complete dehumanisation of the men and women in prison. In the case of Mumia and the other people on Death Row at SCI-Greene, PA, the media ban is another brick in the wall being erected between them and any

contact with the outside world.

The barriers already include a forbidding location eight hours away from the friends and families of most prisoners, a daily regimen that consists of 23 hours of solitary confinement, with one hour set aside for exercise or a shower (one or the other—never both), and a limit of two ten minute phone calls per month. Visits, allowed once a week, are completely non-contact, and are preceded and followed by a full cavity strip search. Having already eliminated these people's physical presence, the system now wants to take their voices and images from us, attempting to completely erase them from our consciousness before murdering them in the dark.

All Things Censored consists of 18 of Mumia's essays, (one read by William Kuntzler, eight recorded in 1993, one from the NPR sessions in 1994, and eight from 1996) recorded before the media ban was put in place, as well as comments from some of Mumia's supporters and loved ones. They contain poignant criticisms of the racism, classism, unchecked materialism, and institutionalised injustice that characterise much of the day-to-day operation of today's world. While the written script alone is compelling, actually hearing the words come from Mumia's lips adds a whole new dimension to the pieces.

Right from the start, as you hear his voice echo from the plexiglass walls of the visiting cubicle where the recordings took place, Mumia's words are infused with a renewed sense of urgency. Hearing Mumia speak helps restore the personhood that the prison system attempts to strip away, making the listener more cognisant of the man, the living, breathing being behind the message. His quiet passion and unwavering tone bespeak tremendous strength, fortitude, courage—he continues to reveal truths while the walls around him conspire to kill him for it. His ability to stay grounded in reality, to maintain his outlook and perspective and concern, his love, in this poisonous environment amazes me. As Cornel West comments on the CD, his soul is still intact.

The fact that Mumia is able to cope with the frustration, disgust, and rage with the system that he must be experiencing and continue to put in work should be a motivator for us all. Not only does he maintain hope, he continues to relentlessly work to demand justice. We must do the same. We cannot relent in our struggle, we have to keep on pushing for freedom for Mumia, and for us all. To paraphrase Ramona Africa's words on this CD, we're going to fight with everything we've got to free our brother and bring him home...and that will only be the beginning. ♦

The work of Amanda Ocran and the Women Students' office continues

by Chris Nolan

Amanda Ocran received her master's degree in Political Science at the University of Guelph before moving to the Vancouver area as a doctoral student in political science at UBC from September 1990 to April 1993. She then worked as a PhD candidate in Geography until her death on July 12, 1998. Her studies focused on the use of immigrant workers for cheap labour. As one of the first people in Vancouver to do research on home workers, she worked on exposing the appalling pervasiveness of home workers in industry and the inhumane conditions under which they work.

Home workers are people contracted by manufacturers to perform high volume labour in their own homes for minimal pay. Such workers are usually paid by the piece rather than per hour, thereby circumventing minimum wage laws. Further, manufacturers are less than accurate about reporting the use of home workers, making it hard to ascertain the exact number of home workers in the Vancouver area, for instance.

According to a 1996 *Vancouver Courier* article, Amanda interviewed 135 home workers, and found that only one was making the equivalent of minimum wage. One woman was making only 90 cents an hour. Further, these women are often deceived by manufacturers into believing the work they do does not entitle them to minimum wage and benefits.

Many home workers are immigrants and a large majority are women.

Amanda's work involved, in part, making connections between these women's social and economic positions as a result of their race and gender, and the agenda of an industrial process which seems to take advantage of the marginal position of women of colour in the labour market. As Amanda said in a 1997 interview with the *Vancouver Sun*, "Home work is exploitative. It grabs female Chinese and Indian immigrants who are bursting with promise and traps them in an isolating cage they cannot escape."

Besides her dedicated and compassionate research, Ocran was also very active in the Graduate Students' Society as a student counsellor.

The Amanda Ocran Memorial Fund was initiated in December 1998 by the Women of Colour Mentoring Network, part of the Women Students' Office, after Amanda's death. This fund was established in memory of Amanda's commitment to social justice and change and will be used to provide support to women students of colour at UBC.

After Amanda's death, when people wanted to donate in her memory, her husband suggested that the money be given to the Women of Colour Network. He believes giving the money to an organisation which reflects Amanda's interests is one way to keep Amanda's work visible and her spirit alive. The Women of Colour Mentoring Network is the only formal program at UBC which offers support to women of colour on campus, whether students, staff or faculty. Therefore, it seemed only natural to establish the fund through them.

Begum Verjee, a counsellor at the Women Students' Office, recalls meeting Amanda through their joint involvement with WOCESE (Women of Colour for Empowerment, Scholarship and Equality), a local community support group. "She had a very strong presence here at UBC as a woman of colour. The fund particularly speaks to her experience as a black woman on campus and what that was like for her, and also as a researcher and advocate for social justice, but the fund also speaks to the support she provided to other students of colour and in her activism, especially in educating faculty, students and staff...so she was very involved as an activist on this campus."

Benita Bunjun, coordinator of the Women of Colour Mentoring Network, has a similar regard for Amanda's commitment. "Amanda's gone and we don't want her to be forgotten. She did a lot of work for the UBC community, and she shaped a lot of the UBC community for a lot of women." With regard to the present political cli-

mate at UBC, Bunjun notes that there is a lack of mentors for women of colour on campus, and a lack of support for the few mentors there are. Given this situation, she underlines the significance of the Women of Colour Network.

Women of colour on campus who wish to play a mentoring role do so as volunteers. Their work is completely unpaid, Bunjun points out. This is true of mentoring at UBC and in the community at-large. "They therefore find it very difficult to do the mentoring because of being overworked, being already marginalised in whatever their occupation is." She also considers the difficulties these women face taking care of themselves, combating the discrimination they experience in their own lives. "Therefore, finding mentors in any marginal group is very difficult because you are constantly disempowered." She asserts that those mentoring are not able to do so in the way they wish to because of lack of time, space and support from the institution.

Verjee states that as a result of the mentoring program being run on a volunteer basis, mentors have to come in on their own time. This makes it difficult for mentors, for example, who have children. Often women of colour hold two jobs. Accessibility issues for these mentors, therefore, is a problem for the program as a result of the limited resources which necessitate the volunteer status.

Both Verjee and Bunjun speak of the significance of spaces on campus such as the Women of Colour Network as a place where support and strength can be nurtured. "We're working, we're organising, we're living...we're working towards empowerment," says Bunjun. Verjee adds, "we're sharing, we're educating, we're getting educated...there's a lot of sharing, there's a lot of information that's exchanged in these spaces and it's really vital to our well being."

The mentoring program has been around for three years. For the first two years it was funded by the Teaching, Learning and Enhancement Fund. They didn't get funding last year but they've managed to carry on doing the work in the space provided by the Women Students' Office. Both Bunjun and Verjee mention the difficulty in getting funding for the Women of Colour Network. "I appreciate the Women Students' Office for having created a space for the Women of Colour Network to continue and that this opportunity I took and made what I could out of the Network. It is the only organisation that has given such a space," says Bunjun.

As for last thoughts on Amanda Ocran and other women of colour, Bunjun says, "For women of colour who are very active anywhere in the world, whether it be on this campus or any countries in the world, in any other schools, universities, villages, who struggle and fight for their rights, for services, for respect, as we do this resistance work or fighting work, it does affect us. It affects our well-being, whether it be our academic well-being, our health, emotionally, physically...a prime example of that is Amanda Ocran's death and how all of these stresses took a toll. And we know from research that our health does get affected as we fight any barriers in society."

There will be an event entitled "A Tribute to Women of Colour and Indigenous Women in Our Community" which will take place on April 9 in Thea's Lounge at the Graduate Students' Society at 7pm. It will be open mic with music and a time to pay tribute to women in the margins whose contributions to the UBC community are often invisible. This event welcomes the UBC community to honour these women. Also, there will be a workshop on March 23 called "Mentoring For and By Women of Colour." The hope is that this will bring an awareness to the need for mentors.

For more information on the Women of Colour Network, the Amanda Ocran Memorial Fund and donating to that fund, or the events on March 23 and April 9, please contact Begum Verjee or Benita Bunjun at 822-2415 at the Women Students' Office. ♦



IN MEMORY OF Amanda Ocran, the UBC Women of Colour Mentoring Network has established a memorial fund.

"We're organising, we're living...we're working towards empowerment."

**Benita Bunjun
-coordinator of the Women
of Colour Mentoring Network**

When your tan is permanent

When your tan is permanent, the checkout lady at Safeway seems to always ask you how you enjoyed your vacation down South.

When your tan is permanent, people around you always compliment you on your beautiful skin colour.

When your tan is permanent, your beach volleyball partner never seems to be able to get as brown as you.

When your tan is permanent, the cold winter months of Montreal don't seem so long.

When your tan is permanent, you don't get treated as a lesser citizen.

When your tan is permanent, you become a spy.

When your tan is permanent, you're often mislabeled as Spanish or Portuguese.

When your tan is permanent, the world wonders how you could be your father's daughter.

When your tan is permanent, your black side of the family calls you a "sell out."

When your tan is permanent, you walk into a room of black peers to only realize that their eyes are looking right past you.

When your tan is permanent, you are privileged...

But because my tan is permanent, I am divided into two worlds that have no room for a girl like me.

—Sarah Maxwell

by May Farrales

MAY IS A MEMBER OF THE PHILIPPINE WOMEN CENTRE OF BC (PWC) AND THE FILIPINO-CANADIAN YOUTH ALLIANCE.

Below are excerpts from her recent presentation to the first Filipino-Canadian Women's National Consultative Forum, held in Vancouver this March 11 to 14. May was part of the panel on Systemic Racism and Immigration.

Along with this panel, the Forum also discussed issues that revolved around human rights, labour and migration and violence against women. The Forum was organised by the PWC and it drew together over 100 delegates from BC, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

Being a young Filipino woman in Canada can be a very confusing experience. Yet, while our experience puts before us many obstacles and challenges, many of us have found inspiration, strength, true meaning in our efforts to unravel this confusion through out true service to our community.

As we try to comprehend the present situation of our community in Canada, we should realise, that our community cannot be separated from what is happening in the Philippines. As the economic and political crisis in the Philippines intensifies, we also see the intensification of the out-migration of millions of Filipinos. Because of its lack of basic industries and its backward and feudal distribution of land, the Philippines has been left fragile and too feeble to absorb and support its ever-expanding labour force. As a result, the Philippines has a long-standing practise of exporting its people. So, everyday, with no choice but to survive, thousands of Filipinos are forced to work and live abroad in countries preying on the cheap labour of thousands of desperate Filipinos. Therefore, our community's history and its present status in Canada can be seen more clearly in the light of what is happening in the Philippines.

As for myself, I was born in Canada and was raised here. My parents migrated from the Philippines in 1973. My experience as a Filipino-Canadian youth in trying to deal with the challenges that this has posed me echoes many of the stories of other young Filipinos.

On Systemic Racism

WE ARE AFFECTED BY BOTH PERSONAL AND SYSTEMIC RACISM. AS YOUNG FILIPINOS, WE ALL HAVE OUR OWN PAINFUL STORIES IN WHICH WE EXPERIENCED PERSONAL RACISM.

From the name-calling to being physically beaten up because of our skin colour—we all have these kinds of personal stories.

But collectively, as a community, we also grapple with experiences of racism. Not only do we experience personal forms of racism, but also even more severe and harder to grapple with is systemic racism. This is the systematised oppression of our community embedded in Canadian institutions as perpetuated by certain policies the government propagates. This systematised oppression invades practically every aspect of our life—economic, political, cultural and social.

Given the harsh impacts of racism on our lives, in Ugnayanng Kabataang Pilipinosa Canada/Filipino-

Canadian Youth Alliance, we see it as our responsibility to try to understand systemic racism and its root causes, to analyse it for what it is and how it is affecting our community.

In the area of education, the school system proves to be a bastion of systemic racism. We see racism existing at various levels, as the school curriculum broadcasts Eurocentric histories and values, ignoring the contributions of the Filipino community to the development of Canada, and the issue of

A large part of our anti-racism work also involves linking up with youth of colour and other marginalised and exploited sectors of Canadian society so that we may act in coordination against racism and racist incidents. Last May 1998, 14 Filipino youth were brutally attacked in Squamish, BC by a group of 30 white youth.

racism is not adequately addressed in the schools.

There are the painful stories of newly arrived Filipino youth being belittled by the racism in our education system that tells us that we're not smart enough or good enough for Canada by not properly accrediting them for the education that they have received in the Philippines, and bumping them down grades upon their entry into the school system.

On Anti-racism Work

COMBATING SYSTEMIC RACISM THROUGH EDUCATION IS ONE WAY IN WHICH WE IN UGNAYAN ARE FIGHTING THE RACISM THAT IS CRIPPLING OUR COMMUNITY.

We are continually engaged in educating ourselves, other Filipino youth, and other Filipinos in our community about racism, its root causes, its impacts, its role as a divisive measure among exploited people, and how we can come together to fight against it. We have regular workshops and studies on systemic racism, we've also held a conference under the theme "Unveiling the Myths of Racism," last May 1997 which gathered over 30 youth of colour and challenged us to share our experiences with racism and to take action as marginalised youth of colour.

We've produced a facilitator's handbook on how to conduct anti-racism education work. And our *Youth of Colour Combating Systemic Racism* report serves as a strong

resource that allows the stories of Filipino youth and our experiences to be heard, our analysis of racism to come out, and provides us with a blueprint for community action against racism. All our anti-racism work in Ugnayan is initiated and implemented by Filipino youth. Out of our own efforts and willingness, we have become our own educators and our own activists against racism and for our legitimate rights here in Canada.

A large part of our anti-racism work also involves linking up with youth of colour and other marginalised and exploited sectors of Canadian society so that we may act in coordination against racism and racist incidents. Last May 1998, 14 Filipino youth were brutally attacked in Squamish, BC by a group of 30 white youth. As others turned a blind eye to this incident and blamed the horrific and premeditated attack on a stew of ignorance and boredom on the part of local youth, we took action and called for an immediate investigation into the incident as a racist crime.

We responded immediately with a statement, denouncing prominent citizens' claim in Squamish that racism was not an instigator to the heinous attack. We were able to have the position of Filipino youth clearly stated as newspaper, TV and radio media broadcasted our position across the province—as a result, the incident could not be

easily swept under the rug.

We also brought out the reality of racism that Filipinos face and our analysis of the issue, during last year's Communities Against Racism and Extremism rally that mobilised a broad number of people against racism. From this, we were able to gain support for our anti-racism campaign from other community groups.

And finally, we launched a petition and letter writing campaign to the Attorney General of BC who also happens to be the minister responsible for multiculturalism in BC. Yet, apart from contacting us, no other positive action has been taken up by the government. We also held a youth of colour sharing in order to address this incident and to further deepen our analysis of racism as marginalised youth of colour. We also held a community forum for Filipinos in Vancouver to begin discussing the issue of systemic racism and its attacks on our community. Through all these efforts, we managed to gain local, national and even international support for our call for justice for the youth of colour who were attacked. While at the same time, continually deepening our understanding of systemic racism, our community, and how we can actively fight against it.

Through these means, we are actively engaged in encouraging the Filipino community to speak out and share their stories and experiences, painful as they may be, for the sake of the future of our community—it is important for us as youth to share our stories and hear our history. It is important for us as youth to hear this history, to share our experiences, to understand our roots, to understand what our community is going through, and to be active in changing and improving our place in Canadian society and to move towards our community's genuine equality in Canadian society. ♦



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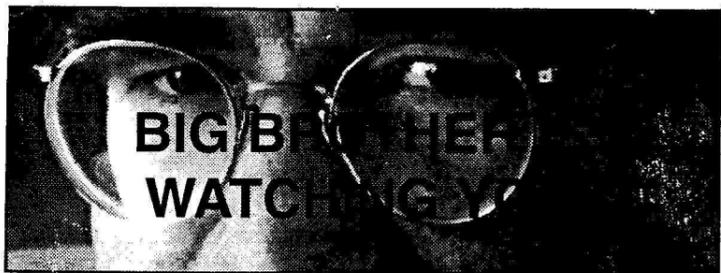
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heads in the clouds (the ubyssey)
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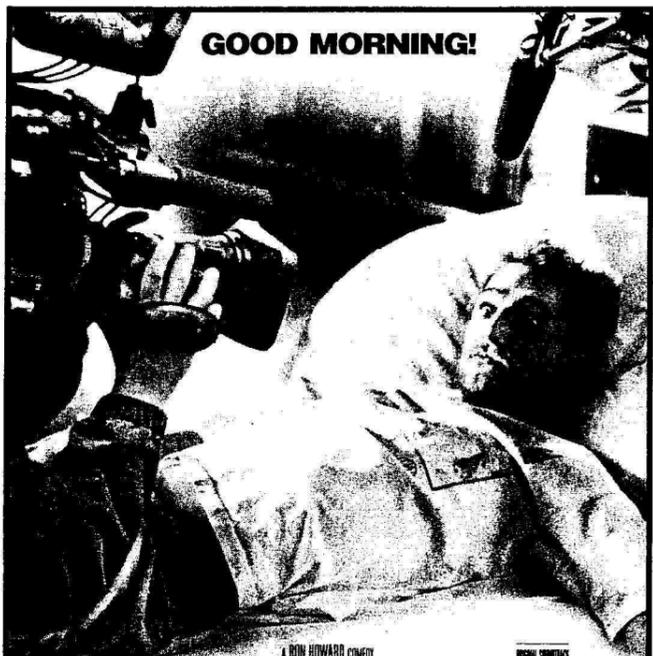
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IF NOTHING REALLY CHANGES

Emmanuel Adjei-Achampong

sexism? ... racism?...heterosexism?...classism?...ableism?...ageism?...

I still think nothing has really changed.
 There are still tears in our eyes
 and our hearts are still heavy with sorrows.
 I know of your pains,
 yet I can't fully understand it
 because I haven't lived
 your individual experiences,
 if I ever say I do,
 then, you know nothing has really changed.
 And if I ever accuse you of reverse discrimination,
 then you *really* know, nothing has really changed

Sisters and Brothers of the same fate,
 just the fact that we have survived thus far
 is a tribute to our strength and love for humanity
 or maybe, we just always knew that
 nothing was really going to change.
 Yet, I still think we're warriors.
 As a matter of fact, I know we're warriors.
 Because it takes
 a warrior
 to stand up and continue fighting,
 in the face of adversity without losing their soul,
especially when nothing really changes.
 Although our eyes are flowing with tears
 and our hearts are heavy with fears,
 our struggles will never be forgotten,
 nor DENIED;
 our passions
 will never die.
 Our fires will forever burn in the hearts of our children
 and our children's children.
 Sisters and Brothers,
 of diverse genders, colours, creeds, sexualities, abilities, ages...
 Together, we can look to our past
 for courage;
 approach the present
 with resistance;
 and continue to search for a future
 of humane-ity.

Such Pain

There is such pain
in my soul.

I desire to sing
so sweetly,
that the sun would be
moved
to shed tears.

I desire to cry
so loudly,
that it would awaken
Gabriel's golden
trumpet
to sound.

And although
my voice and tears
would conspire to
open
the gates of heaven,
and destroy all that
remains
of hell,

My soul will feel
no less pain.

—B. A.

A South Asian Journey

by Rupinder Sohal

Once upon a time in the year 1980, South Asian was born. Born into a free world or, it should be said, into this free Canadian country. This newborn babe was not like other children or like other South Asian children. Everyone—the Aunties, Uncles, Nannies, Nannas, and especially Mummy and Daddy—all said, "South Asian, you are such a good kid." Now, South Asian was not a goody-two-shoes or anything like that. It just happened that whatever South Asian did always managed to make it look like a Sadhu.

For example, in elementary school, South Asian had no problem getting high marks. Straight A's all the way. But South Asian never left anyone behind. South Asian tutored anyone and everyone anytime. In fact, South Asian would even leave aside studying for the final exam if someone was hurt or sad. But, even then, the marks were straight A's. (Not many knew, but South Asian honestly did train hard.) South Asian just seemed to have it made. What more could anyone ask for? This kid always wanted to do the right thing. Didn't want much. Really only wanted one day to have a best friend. And it didn't ever seem so at first, but satisfying this particular want was going to be a lot tougher than it had appeared. South Asian was to soon find out that no one really shared it's perspective—or even understood it.

Then things changed in high school. But they changed so slowly that South Asian almost didn't notice. First, it started with the kids. The kids began to ask weird questions. "Are you a boy or a girl?" Again and again they asked. The teachers <<ital>>never said anything. South Asian never responded because the question sometimes frightened South Asian. Sometimes, though, South Asian would come to school wearing a T-shirt with small red printing which read "Resist Gender Socialisation."

The teachers made it even worse. They began to teach all the wrong things.

The peoples of South Asian descent were all called

Hindus; North America was the First World, India third; Indian is a hard language to speak; When the British came, they did many good things; In history, a lot of the people that did heroic things were European, not Bengali, Nepali, Punjabi, Sri Lankan, Tamil, Hindu.

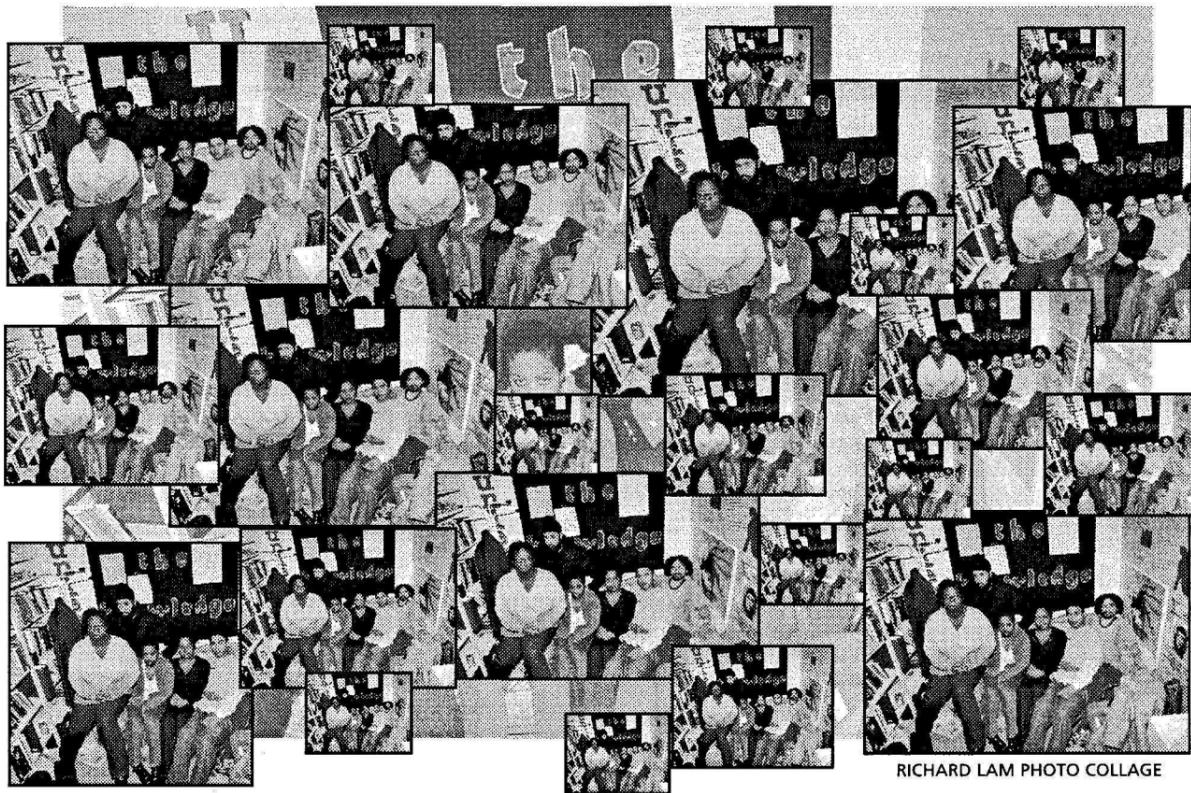
The kids also taught South Asian a few things: that the South Asian peoples were called Pakis; that they were really dumb—if only the Hindus would kill their cows, open up a McDonald's and make their country look cleaner. And the TV also taught South Asian that the peoples of South Asian descent eat with their hands; mothers threw their newborn daughters into trash cans; India and Pakistan were both terrorist countries that wanted to bomb each other; Sikhs were stabbing each other with their daggers at the Gurdwaras because the furniture didn't look right. And there was a whole lot of other factual information that South Asian read, memorised and learned. Sometimes the funny feeling came right away, but other times it took time when it learned Africa is a really big country. South Asian wasn't sure and didn't say anything.

South Asian tried to research, but it was really hard to find the right books, the right teachers, or the right friends. Finally, one day South Asian's license plate was changed so that it read "Beautiful British Colonialism." Instead of eating roti, sabhji and samosas on Multicultural Day, South Asian ate these foods every lunch hour. South Asian tried to start up a special week of the month to be called Eurocentricism Awareness Week. South Asian wanted to do a whole lot more, but it was hard and people's fear confused South Asian.

Finally, high school graduation came and passed. South Asian still aced the quizzes, the exams, but somehow the marks were just a little lower. At first, when the other students got the scholarships, awards and bursaries, South Asian was a bit puzzled. But soon after South Asian quickly recovered and learned.

Today, South Asian works full time in the summers and part time during the school year to pay for tuition. They also found more than a friendship. ♦

Resource closet...er...centre?



RICHARD LAM PHOTO COLLAGE

by Gurpreet Singh Johal

Colour Connected is supposed to be a centre on campus where students of colour, First Nations, and allies can come together and find themselves in an atmosphere of comfort and empowerment. Unfortunately this is not possible given the current size and location of the CC office.

For starters, the location of the centre is an area of the SUB that I never knew existed. How is someone unfamiliar with the building layout ever supposed to find it on their own? Secondly and most important is the size of the office. It is approximately half the size of the Pride office and about a quarter of the size of the AMS Women's Centre. So the only centre for students of colour on the entire campus can hold no more than five students at a time. Comfort in a closet is not my idea of providing a service to marginalised groups on campus.

Colour Connected has demanded a better location from the AMS for the past three years. Yet each year a new Director of Administration has come in and said, "I'll look into

it." This has translated into the office being shuffled from a small, difficult-to-find location to a two-seater-office location and back to the small, difficult-to-find location. Quite frankly, we are tired of being disrespected and trivialised by being treated on like footing with the Big Rock Beer Gardening Club. If the AMS council can recognise the sig-

nificance of allocating resource funds to resource groups to help bolster a diversified image of itself, why can it not get beyond the tokenising efforts of addressing our concerns?

PERSPECTIVE OPINION

The mandate of Colour Connected cannot be effectively utilised until the space needed for the people it has been established to serve is received. As the only institutional space on campus for students of colour the AMS should be proud of its initial efforts in allocating funds towards our initiatives and ashamed of current attitudes in addressing the failed fulfillment of one of our essen-

tial objectives. UBC, in its incorporating behaviour may never provide funding for support for an institute for anti-racism studies and institutional space for such a centre. It is therefore imperative that the AMS get its act together to address the concerns of its constituents. Students of colour need adequate space in the building. A room that holds less than three percent of a resource centre's membership is not going to cut it. Recognition of the discrepancies that exist between established centres and those transient ones such as ours is a start.

Distinguishing between not only the needs of resource groups and those of clubs but also the ability to separate the two on procedural matters is fundamental. Yet underlying any of this is the need to identify the concerns of Colour Connected as unique and address them without further alienation. We, as students of colour, are already marginalised on campus. Current AMS efforts have only tokenised our concerns and have perpetuated struggles we continue to fight every waking moment. ♦

Identity in Motion: Racism & Assimilation

I once had an accent
and then I assimilated
My point of entry
towards assimilation
began with giving up my accent;
my British accent, that is.

Fitting in; disassociating.

I was made to feel shame.
shame about my dress, food,
values and belief;
I became a racist towards
my own cultural heritage.

I tried to run away from myself;
I disassociated from my true self,
my true identity.

I altered my dress, food, lifestyle,
value, beliefs, attitudes—my culture;
I fooled myself, no one else
into believing that I was 'white'.

The racist '70s
made me feel unworthy.

The 'white reference point';
I felt I was nothing without it.

I feel lost.

No grounding in my culture;
I ran away from it, remember!
The patriarchy, the sexism.

No grounding in the white western
world;
I am not white,
No matter how I dress or talk;
No matter what I eat or believe;
The white western world
is also patriarchal and sexist;
And, it is racist.

My body,
you look but don't see
or understand or inquire;
do you care?
Based on the colour of my body,
you think, without inquiring
that I once had an accent
—ad Indian accent, you think.

Yes, I gave up an accent;
I could not have given up
an Indian accent;
I never had an Indian accent;
I cannot give up what I never had.
I gave up a British accent;
Ironic that I would give up a British accent
aren't the British the perpetrators
of the 'white reference point'?

Wouldn't my British accent
have been a 'valued' colonised
commodity?
—if only I had known!
Running away from my Indianness;
how does one run away from oneself?
I've stopped running;
the confusion has begun to settle in;
Who am I?
How did I get here?

—Indy Batth

the significance of March 21

by Colour Connected

On March 21, 1960 a crowd of Africans converged on the police station at Sharpeville near Vereeniging in the Transvaal. Other crowds were collecting around other police stations in South Africa on the same day, which had been designated a day of protest against the apartheid pass laws. Robert Sobukwe, president of the Pan-Africanist Congress, had asked the members of his organisation to leave their reference books at home and to go to police stations and risk arrest for this breach of the law. They were told to conduct themselves quietly and to eschew violence. There is not even proximate agreement about the size of the crowd at Sharpeville or its intentions or its actions.

Official statements put the number of demonstrators at 15,000 to 20,000. They allege that crowds carried firearms and other weapons and attacked the small force of 75 policemen who were on duty. Witnesses, however, estimated the size of the crowd at 3,000 to 4,000 and described it as good-natured, cheerful and unarmed. They alleged the police had fired first, without a warning volley, and continued to shoot as the crowd turned and fled.

There was a similar scene at Langa in Cape Province. Altogether that day 72 demonstrators were reported killed and 180 wounded. The government at once promised judicial inquiries into these happenings and two judges were appointed to investigate and report. Meanwhile, Sharpeville had become a household word in five continents.

Since 1966, the United Nations has designated March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and it commemorates those

demonstrators who were killed and wounded in 1960 during their protest against apartheid. In 1989, the government of Canada began to support the UN declaration with its annual March 21 campaigns. In addition, the United Nations has declared the years from 1993 to 2003 as the "Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination."

Color Connected acknowledges the need to remember Sharpeville and the significance of March 21. However, we feel the need to create awareness year round, as our experiences cannot be encapsulated into a one day-a-year event. March 21 should be a time to reflect over the past year's activity of anti-racism work. It should be an opportunity for those in power to put weight behind speeches made at marches and rallies. We as a society cannot move forward through lip service alone; nor can we negate international conventions that legitimise our grievances. ♦

FINDING THAT CHILD INSIDE ME

Students in the cast. So what they that's wrong with this picture?

... that ultimately leads to cynicism. She'd expected more. An expectation I recognised in the collective anger expressed by the aforementioned community groups towards the Abbotsford school board. A group that responded by defending *ShowBoat* as unoffensive. Stating that the use of "ethnic make-up" was, in their estimation, perfectly acceptable.

I've tried to see things from their perspective. Perhaps some of them watched the recent presentation of *Show Boat* at the now defunct Ford Centre. Perhaps they left the theatre entranced by its show-stopping tunes and lavish production value. Perhaps they were drawn to the idea of recreating a similar experience up on the Yale secondary school stage. Perhaps.

I don't share the enthusiasm I imagine has driven their desire to stage the musical. But this quibble because of my own predilection for a different aesthetic, finding work by writers such as August Wilson or Lorraine Hansberry to have more merit. A more pressing concern, however, is the sensitivity. It is my contention that their choice, however well intentioned, divorced the use of "ethnic make-up" from its larger context.

Painted faces—centre stage—remain for me a poignant and painful reminder of the minstrel show. Troupes jiving and shucking in black face during an era of racial segregation. Playing out the myth of the happy darkie. A mask put on to eradicate another face. The one which denied as it jigged and clowned. Denied. Denied to the public that anything awful was going on.

—David Nandi Odhiambo is the author of *diss/ed banded nation*, recently published by Polestar Books. This article originally appeared in the Vancouver Sun. It's reprinted with the author's permission.

Past present future
I take a look back and see a Little Black Boy.
I look back further in time
and finally realize the crime.
Born in a different world
filled with Afro-curls
where one has an identity -
it is a lasting and beautiful entity.
The little boy smiles
for miles...and miles...
Miles and miles
he travels to a strange, stolen land.
His innocence unravels.
He metamorphoses
from a Little Boy
to a black boy.
Now, he lives an outside existence,
an existence
cut from his essence.
Lost in a strange, stolen land;
lost in his own destiny.
Severed from his roots,
the Little Boy denies his Afrocentricism,
through years and years of tears.
With the passage of time,
he metamorphoses from a Little Black Boy
to a young Black man.
He still lives a teary and weary existence,
an existence that embarks
him on a continual journey
into a whirlpool of inner tears.
Slowly and slowly, the tears start to unravel
into a stream of reflections,
reflections of the Little Boy
who smiled for miles and miles.
The young Black Man suddenly stops
and looks in the stream of reflections,
in an attempt to mimic that Little Boy's smile,
but all he could do was cry.
Smile? he asks.
Why should I?
WHY?
When I am lost in this strange, stolen land,
miles and miles away from home,
miles and miles away from my Mother,
AFRICA.

—Emmanuel Adjei-Achampong

The doctor walks in.
She's groggy, but awake.
The doctor picks up the chart at the foot of the bed.
He looks at the chart, and then he looks at her.
He looks at the chart again. He leaves.
A different doctor walks in. Same thing:
Looks at the chart. Looks at her. Leaves.
She knows what they are thinking.
"Yes, that really is my baby" she wants to tell them.

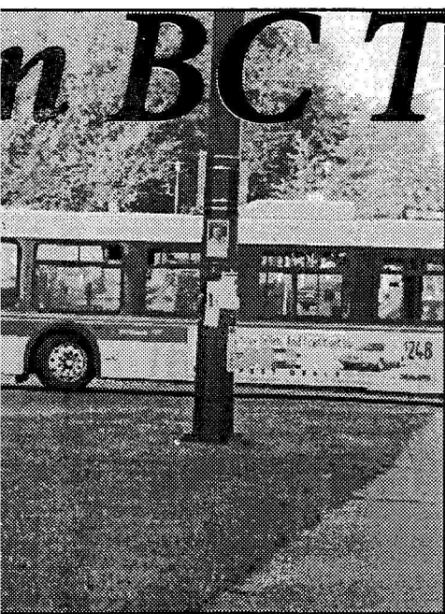
It's parent-teacher interview day.
She's excited to hear about her daughter's progress.
She sits and waits for the teacher.
Looks at the pictures on the classroom wall.
The teacher walks in. A big smile immediately comes to his face.
"Mrs. Ramsay!" he exclaims.
"No, not Mrs. Ramsay!" she answers.
When she tells him who she is, he looks puzzled.
He looks at her again.
"Yes, she really is my daughter" she wants to tell him.

It is the week before the first year of university.
We go to the bank and wait in line.
The teller calls "next";
We walk up to the counter; I get there first, followed by my mother.
The woman looks at me. Looks at my mother.
"Excuse me ma'am, but you'll have to wait in line for the next available teller," she says.
"We are together. I am her mother, okay? She is my daughter".
This time, she says it out loud.
"Calm down, mom!" I tell her. Calm down.

Finally, off on my own for the first time.
Life is full of textbooks, projects, and three-hour labs.
A classmate comes by my room for some help with a lab report.
He sits on the bed, looking at my pictures on the wall.
I rustle through my binder for some papers.
As he comes across a picture of my mother,
I see his look of confusion out of the corner of my eye.
After a long, hard, look, he asks.
"That's my mom," I tell him.
He looks at the picture. He looks at me.
He looks at the picture again.
"Yes, that really is my mother," I want to tell him.

I regret that day at the bank, when I told my mother to "calm down";
I understand now how the world works. How people think.
Colours have to match up with colours.
Black comes from black; white comes from white.
I cause confusion.

in BC Transit by Marcy Moore



at this sticker here." Once again, he took the bus pass out of my hand as if it was his. To examine the fast track sticker he slowly pulled out his glasses. I was at the front of the bus for a good two minutes this time. After he finished looking at it, he said to me "Make sure you turn the bus pass around slowly next time so I can see the fast track sticker." I guess I had to go slow because he's so old and he has slow reflexes. I hate it when he holds me up like that because it's embarrassing, and it gives the impression to other passengers that I'm trying to rip him off.

From a sociological standpoint, I believe that I was harassed because the bus driver was asserting his white privilege. He is a member of the most privileged group in society—whites. White people define the societal norm. This bus driver relies on his privilege so that he will not be oppressed.

Because I am not privileged in this society, I am seen as the other—I am judged by the norm of whiteness, which is the expression of white privilege. Members of the privileged group benefit by their affiliation with the dominant group. White privilege is invisible and it derives from the power system of white supremacy.

To explain these events, I think that it is possible that this driver sees all blacks as criminals and therefore I'm trying to rip him off. I also think that I was a victim of ideological racism because I have seen him harass other people of colour about their fares. This type of racism functions to maintain the power and privilege of whites at the expense of people of colour. The only white people that I have seen him bug are teenagers, when they don't show him their Go Cards. Therefore, by harassing people of colour consistently, he maintains his whiteness.

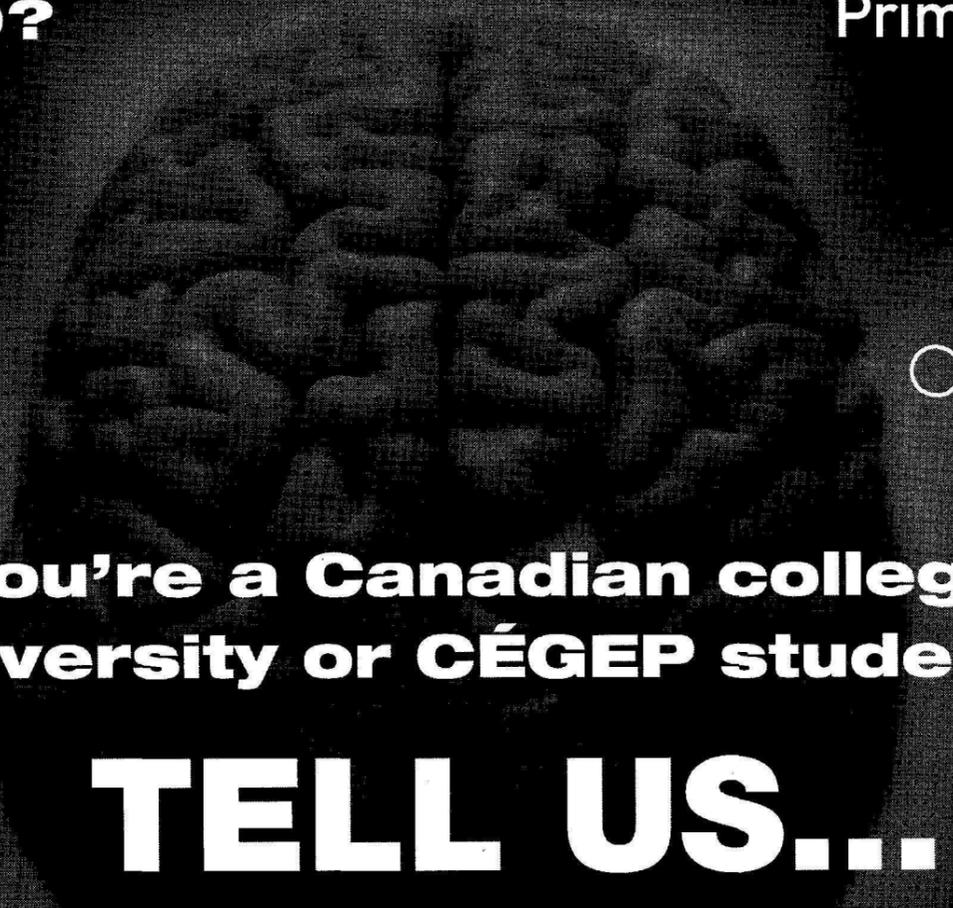
Because blacks are misrepresented in the media as deviants, he probably assumes that I am a deviant as well. The driver probably feels that it is necessary to do this form of over-policing in order to intimidate me and make me feel powerless. By making me feel powerless he becomes more powerful. It is through my oppression that his patriarchy is sustained. ♦

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Try if you may,
For without,
An understanding cannot be conveyed.

by Gurpreet Singh Johal

See what I see,
Taste what I taste,
Listen to what I hear,
Take a whiff of what is perceived to be liberal bliss,
Feel what I feel,
Try if you may, to be what I am,
Come.

The path appears rather universal, like any other.
Soon you will realise the direction you're heading simply isn't to Rome.
Upon the first step the scenery begins to shift.
Be not afraid, there is no problem with your vision,
Directional signs do not inform you of holes in the sole.
Nor does your education let you deal with everything that's left out of the text.

I ask you if you can handle being the one,
Who must speak for all of what you are thought to be.
An expert,
The token,
An exotic,
The Spokesperson,
No, no you can't go back to yourself, you've just started this journey,
Solitude and silence are your only guides, but have no fear,
Come with a quickening does the corporate technology,
Commodifying your perceived essence and
making the shadows disappear.

The seduction of the fetish is something
that isn't an issue,
For only those who can afford to invest in gluttonous consumption.
But what do you feel now that you have to deal with reality,
In such an environment where stability is a scarcity,
Feeling kind of low given your material condition,
I guess it's an opportunity for you to revise your privileged education,
Having it contend with your neglected historical position.

But take a couple of more steps on the shifting plane of my domain,
How does it feel having to struggle,
To prove to everyone you are not simply mental rubble.
That othered feeling, what is it you ask?
Unsettling a little, how's your stomach feeling?
That "oh that's called paranoia" mental instability.
It comes within streams of a fragmented identity.

The emotions are furious, they come in an instant,
Rage is what drives you to self-destruction.
Soon you'll have to recognise it before it begins to subsume.
Those shoes a little tight, your feet a little blistered?
After a while the numbness will begin to settle.
Do not become comfortable with this false satisfaction,
For the pain is still there,
The wounds still fresh,
How can they heal when they're continuously exposed to atmospheric infection?

Is your head getting dizzy, from exposure and hypersensitivity?
Your legs getting heavy from the load on your shoulders?
Well, you see, the only way you can know is if you experience,
A fraction of an instant is not enough time to realize the extent of,
Your decentered presence,
Your marginalised existence,
Your newfound invisibility,
In such a free, liberal, land of equal opportunity.

Streams of consciousness flowing from within
"What about the weight of racialised tradition centering around European hegemony?"
Hush! Don't try to rock the boat of this country's fine model minority.
How come the 'West' is the cornerstone of modernity?
"Shh! Don't even try to bring in your backward Oriental fundamentals into our new identity."

How do you feel just given a glimpse,
Tidbits of oppressive sentiments,
A microcosm of an unjust existence,
The world just isn't the same when it doesn't revolve around you,
When the tides shift can you handle the truth?

So, please come again, whenever you may,
Want to ask me how does it feel,
Why am I bitter or
Do not wish to speak?
I cannot give justice to explain it in words,
They are the worst forms of communication because there are no metaphors that can illustrate my experience,
There is no written language that is not open to interpretation or subject to misrepresentation.
So when you do feel the need to probe me again,
Please,
Come.
See the world through my eyes.

—Gurpreet Singh Johal

East of what?

East Indian—a misnomer to say the least. Whose identity does this term represent? Whose reality is reproduced every time this term is used? Some words that are used to identify people are hardly ever questioned. We live in a society that exists within the realm of common sense—a realm that is so normal that it is rarely criticised.

Some people bring up the argument that it is political correctness that has led to people being so sensitive and edgy over what they are labelled. To address this concern we must first and foremost understand the issue of respect—respect for an individual's self-worth. If you do not let a person solidify their personal being, how can you consider yourself respectful of human dignity?

Second, we must have a clue in life. This is a process that many of us leave to nature to just work itself out. Unfortunately, having a clue involves a process of education—of becoming informed instead of simply being opinionated. Being open to constructive criticism and willing to always keeping personal channels of learning open is a necessary prerequisite for this to work.

The term East Indian is indeed used not only by those who are perceived to be "of that type," but also by the public (academics and politicians included). Yet what does "East Indian" mean? The question that beckons an answer is East of what? Britain—no spot of tea or crumpets for

what does "East Indian" mean? the question that beckons an answer is, East of what?

me, thank you. Britain is not the center of the universe, so why should it be the central point of significance for East or West Indians? The Dutch East India Company, the Dutch East and West Indies also have role a to play in the creation of these terms. Yet, just because a Greek imperialist named Alexander labeled the South Asian subcontinent India and some idiot thought he was in India when he reached the Western Hemisphere in 1492, why should we continue to reproduce historical mistakes in the present?

Britain was a coloniser that had a significant hand in creating the Orient—the mystical Far East. East and West Indians, Native Indians, all are faulty labels of bad history and ignorant individuals. The lack of recognition given to the 500 First Nations of this continent is absurd. To call them Indians is to negate their rich, diverse national histories, and is intellectual dumbassness. To call someone whose lineage traces back to Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, or Tibet "East Indian" is to completely and utterly dismiss their social basis and historical background.

Can you imagine how someone with a rich German, French, or Spanish notion of identity would feel if they were called British? The word Indian is nation-state specific in contemporary language. Lose the East and West prefixes because to some of us, Britain was nothing but a bunch of looting, selfish thieves. I use harsh words because the extent of resource extraction that occurred far exceeded resource input into the former colonies in South Asia. Also, now that the issue has been explored, the continued denial and refusal of returning stolen goods to rightful owners is downright selfish.

I guess the Golden Rule is a selective practice in this case. Two examples will be sufficient to illustrate my point. The first is the flamboyancy of British royalty to continue to parade around with the crown jewels and never for a second hesitate to think that giving back the jewel of India to the owners is the just thing to do. The second entails the refusal

The term "East Indian" connotes the perpetuation of a colonial mentality with a Eurocentric basis.

of British museums to return human remains used as exhibits to the Haida nation for proper burial and respect for human life.

For these reasons I cannot be party to having "East Indian" as a signifier for my identity. The term "East Indian" connotes the perpetuation of a colonial mentality with a Eurocentric basis. It is based upon historical error and ignores the lived existence of millions of South Asians who are not Indian. People of South Asian descent can acknowledge a shared diasporic experience with others of South Asian descent and may not necessarily have their lineage trace back to the same nation-state.

The use of the geographical terrain known as South Asia is much more inclusive of the nation-states that are found in the region. The term itself does not lend itself to affording such a privilege to the likes of Britain. Terms such as West Indian and Oriental must also be addressed and debunked because they also lend themselves to perpetuating similar forms of Eurocentric bases of identity. While overcoming the use of these labels will prove difficult at first, it must be addressed in order to progress and find equal footing in society. ❖

The Guessing Game: A Haiku

"So, umm...what are you?
No wait, let me guess: Spanish?"
No. Thanks for playing.

—Kara Mosher

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Hey YOU
cannot speak
YOU...CBC*
YOU...banana
YOU...Honger
YOU...Ch*nk

why not go home
why come here anyways

go back to...
too many
so loud
all you...
stick together, drive obnoxious, stinking
wealthy, buy
us up,
loser, loner, refugee
so lucky to be here

HA h -ache!

*Canadian born Chinese

—Peggy Lee

ART-IVISM Hits UBC

by Emmanuel Adjei-Achampong and Rupinder Sohal

"The best one yet!"
"Beautifully presented"
"Very moving"
"Thank you for sharing this beautiful work, very enlightening."
These were just a few of the comments kindly bestowed on "ART-IVISM," an independently organised art display in the SUB Art Gallery.

Headlined by Hari Sharma, a sociology professor at Simon Fraser University, the artistry presented spanned four decades from 1958 to 1999. Sharma's photographic exhibition consists of images taken from all four corners of India (from the northeast to Gujarat, and from the Kashmir Valley to the deep south). These photos are divided into many thematic units and supplemented with insightful and enlightening poetry.

"Still photography, by definition, stills the piece of reality it captures in a split-second. Plucks away a slice and freezes it. But it is a slice from a universe in which nothing is naturally still, frozen, stationary, quiescent; or random, unconnected," says Sharma.

"The 'still' photograph is thus more than a slice, more than a split-second. Contained in it are elements of the universe of which it is a part. The words I write, which often read like 'poems,' are meant to establish the link between the particularised elements and the ever-dynamic larger universe."

In addition to Sharma, other artists also contributed to the success of ART-IVISM: Kirk Moses, Roy Husada and Raman Gill.

Moses provided the display with colourful and picturesque computer-generated images inspired by his imagination. Husada added a beautifully-crafted painting of an angel, and Gill donated a very thought-provoking female portrait to the display.

ART-IVISM will conclude this Friday with an hour-and-half-long fiesta of free food, music and poetry beginning at 12:30pm. Students are invited to come out and partake in the festivities as well as meet Sharma. ❖

For the first time ever.

Words From Wolverine

by Chris Nolan

The following is a press statement from Wolverine made January 28th, 1999:

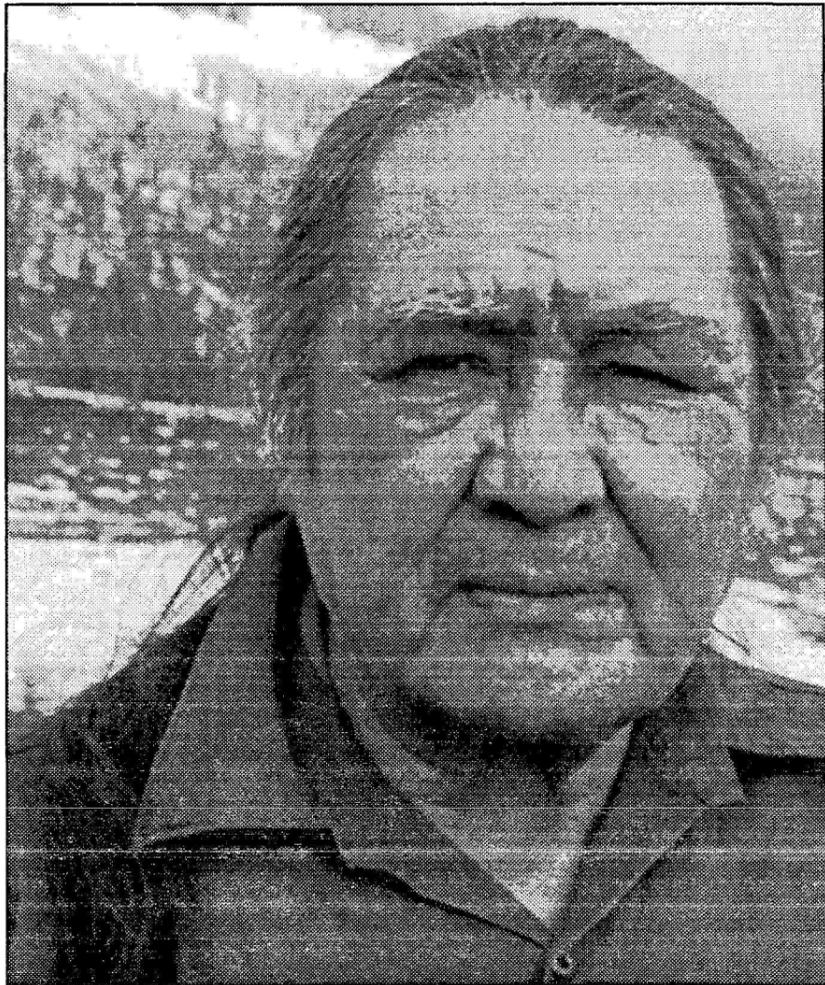
“Although I am granted parole, I am not free. Shuswap Territory is not free. Lil’wat Territory is not free. Turtle Island is not free. Mother Earth and her peoples are not free.

From the militarised Mayan villages of Chiapas to the continuing cruel and inhuman imprisonment of our brother Leonard Peltier—who was handed over to the clutches of the FBI by British Columbia and Canada 23 years ago—to the crooked treaty theft of Nisga’a and other lands of sovereign indigenous nations—we are still being attacked by the coloniser. We are all still not free. Gustafsen Lake is not over.

We stood on law—they stood on fraud, force and racist terror. Lies told by governments, police, courts and media must be exposed in a full and open public inquiry. Both British Columbia and Canada have so far refused this. With good reason—they have much to hide.

I want to thank all of those who continue to fight for truth, justice, self-determination and our sovereign national rights to be free peoples on free homelands. The oppression must end. We will never forget Oka and Robert (Lasagna) Cross; we will never forget Dudley George; we will never forget Gustafsen Lake. The struggle will continue.

Freedom!”



THE WOLVERINE was released on parole on January 28th. He is currently living in his home in Adams Lake. DALE LUM PHOTO

Wolverine urges us to make the links; not to believe that these injustices only happen in the United States. So examine the case of Wolverine, of Gustafsen Lake. More Canadian forces were sent there, to assault non-violent protesters, than were sent to the Gulf War. 77, 000 rounds of ammunition were fired. Tank assaults were launched against peaceful First Nations protestors. We need to hold Canada accountable for such acts. ♦

positions to elect **editors:** *coordinating, culture (2 positions), features, news (2 positions), sports, copy/national, photo, production*
coordinators: *cup/volunteers, letters, research, online*

eligible to vote todd silver, federico barahona, julian dowling, bruce arthur, john zaozirny, sarah galashan, richard lam, dale lum, douglas quan, jamie tong, ronald nurwisah, cynthia lee, duncan mchugh, sara newham, naomi kim, jo-ann chiu, lisa denton, nick bradley, vince yim, nyranne martin, daliah merzaban, michelle mossop, tom peacock

others scott hayward (c), jeremy beauline (ccc), wolf depner (c), tara westover (ccc;mm), irfhan dhalla (ccc;mm), jamie woods (cc), janet ip (cc), megan quek (cc;m), philip lee (cc), robert faulkner (cc;m), john mendoza (c), nathan kennedy (c;m), mike crema (c); john alexander (mm), joe clark (mm); alan ward (m), heather kirk (cc;mmm), jason steele (cc;mmm), andrea milek (ccc), coralee olson (c;m), george belliveau (ccc), monique steveson (c), janet newman (cc)

c—editorial contributions • m—staff meetings attended

screenings:

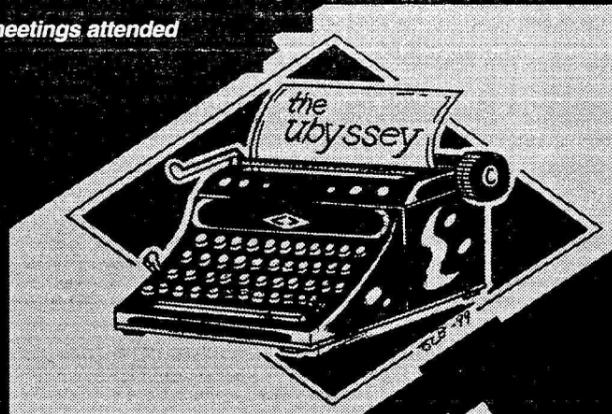
friday, march 19-21

all candidates forum:

wednesday, march 24 @ 12:30

voting:

march 29 - april 5



This list includes all of those who have contributed to *the Ubysssey* since Jan 1. If your name does not appear, or there is an error, please contact Federico to clarify any problems. In order to vote in editorial elections you must have contributed at least three times to *the Ubysssey* and have attended three of five consecutive staff meetings since Jan 1. You must also be a member of the UPS.

editorial elections

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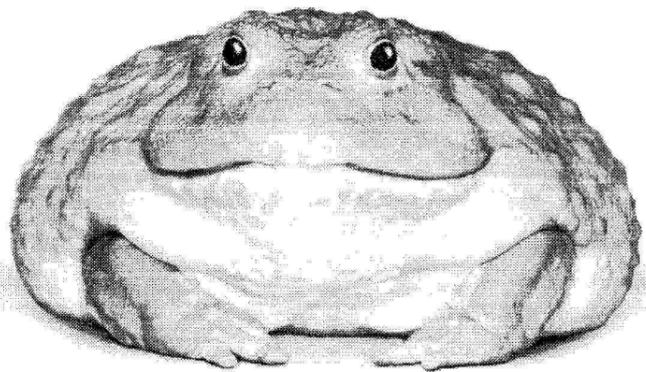
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New data in the affirmative action debate

William G. Bowen and Derek Bok—*The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*

by Irphan Dhalla

Ever since Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on a cold New Year's Day in 1863, black Americans have been advancing towards equality with whites. Progress has been neither constant nor comfortable, but there is no doubt that festering wounds inflicted by centuries of enslavement are slowly healing.

Over the last three decades the proportion of black doctors has doubled; that of lawyers and engineers has tripled. Black representation in the US Congress has increased tenfold, and the total number of black elected officials has multiplied 25 times. These are astounding numbers, and describe a success story worth rejoicing. Yet equality remains beyond the horizon.

Selective universities (those where many applicants are turned away) have been primarily responsible for the racial diversification of the American elite. Starting in about 1965, universities began accepting qualified blacks even if they had lower grades and test scores than rejected white applicants. These matriculants have gone on to form the backbone of the black professional class.

Despite broad societal approval of racial diversity, affirmative action has never been fully accepted. Opposition to affirmative action in university admissions has mushroomed in the wake of Dinesh D'Souza's 1991 bestseller *The Illiberal Education*. D'Souza, a Reaganophile who moved to America from India at the impressionable age of seventeen, has helped convince many Americans that preferential policies hurt blacks and whites alike.

The "reverse discrimination" cries peaked in 1996, with California voters affirming a decision by the University of California Regents barring admissions officers from taking race into account. In the absence of hard statistics, D'Souza and his ilk have been making assertions that until now, could not be challenged: affirmative action causes minorities to self-segregate, exacerbating racism on campus. Beneficiaries of affirmative action often struggle in vain, ultimately failing to meet overly ambitious standards. Preferential policies should use socioeconomic status rather than ethnicity as the primary criterion. These are bold, sometimes tempting claims, but difficult to rebut without reams of data.

Well, here comes the data. Derek Bok and William Bowen, ex-presidents of Harvard and Princeton respectively, have undertaken a massive project: analyse the records of sixty thousand students (half of whom entered university in 1976, half in 1989) at 28 selective colleges and universities, and try to figure out what the consequences have been. With the help of an army of researchers, Bok and Bowen have published the results of their mammoth study in *The Shape of the River*.

Bowen and Bok begin by explaining how admissions decisions work: universities must "decide which set of applicants, considered individually and collectively, will take fullest advantage" of the offered education. Those expecting admissions decisions to be

decided solely "on the merits" are to be sorely disappointed. Just as a basketball coach does not necessarily pick the five most gifted players for his team, a prestigious university does not always admit the highest achieving students. Among other factors, selective universities must also consider potential for leadership or excellence, probability of contributing to the university community, and the advantages of a diverse student body. Only then can the university's educational and social goals be met.

Test scores and grades are also a flawed predictor of performance, especially in the United States where school quality varies drastically and a stubborn black-white gap persists in SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores. The search for the cause of the gap has been as successful as the Bre-X exploration of Busang—discussions of the gap usually end in a blaze of amateur sociology. Bok and Bowen argue, "[These scores] are useful measures of the ability to do good work...but they are far from infallible indicators of other qualities...such as a deep love of learning or a capacity for high academic achievement."

Within the study's sample, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores above 1100 (out of 1600) "provide no clue about the odds of graduating" after controlling for external variables like parental income. Socioeconomic status is a much larger factor, but the most important determinant is the school's selectivity. Blacks entering the best schools, especially the beneficiaries of preferential treatment, are much more likely to graduate than blacks entering less selective schools, even if test scores and grades are taken into consideration. This invalidates the argument that beneficiaries of race-sensitive admissions policies are out of their league, and suffer self-confidence crises as a result.

Scores of tables and graphs reinforce Bowen and Bok's conclusion that race-sensitive policies have been a boon to the black community. For example, blacks who graduated from the selective institutions earn almost twice as much as the average black university graduate. These blacks are also far more likely to lead civic activities. It is no shock that blacks in the 1976 cohort are still fervent supporters of affirmative action. What is a surprise, however, is that whites who were rejected from their first-choice college believe in racial diversity as much as their classmates.

Bowen and Bok also discuss whether class-sensitive policies would be an improvement. They come to the conclusion that they would not: blacks are more impoverished than whites, but there are still far more poor whites than blacks.

Many believers in affirmative action hope that it is a temporary remedy. The theory is that the test-score gap will eventually disappear, and preferential policies will someday be unnecessary. Unfortunately, Bowen and Bok do not say whether their statistics support this claim or not and consequently do not predict when we can expect a level playing field. *The Shape of the River* is essentially a look at the past—Bowen and Bok, perhaps afraid of taking more risk than they already have, make no forecasts at all. This diminishes the strength of the book.

More disappointing is that *The Shape of the River* will not find the wide audience that *The Illiberal Education* did. It will be read by lawmakers and university administrators, but the humourless tome is too chock-full of statistics for it to become a *New York Times* bestseller. And the public will remain, for the time being, ignorantly opposed to race-sensitive admissions policies. ♦

My love for you is great
Blessed with such grace
Towards you; I feel no hate
My little African Princess
I can't wait for you to blossom
already, you've grown bosoms
remember when you were just a little
baby
You looked so happy
The world has soured you
Stolen your innocence too
remember how you cried
when you were alone, terrified
remember all the joy
You felt as a child
Now you are getting old
I pray everyday that you
Grow up strong and confident
although it is not evident

at the present day and night
Continue to have faith
good things come to those who wait
remember the tears we shared
was so glad you cared
can never repay you
Only hope I can be there for you
You are my heart and soul
Talking to you makes me whole
I wish you were still a child
I wish you kept
that childlike smile
Remain strong and positive
and I know you'll survive
You are a sister and a best friend
til the very end.
Much love.

— Emmanuel Adjei-Achampong

the truth is out there

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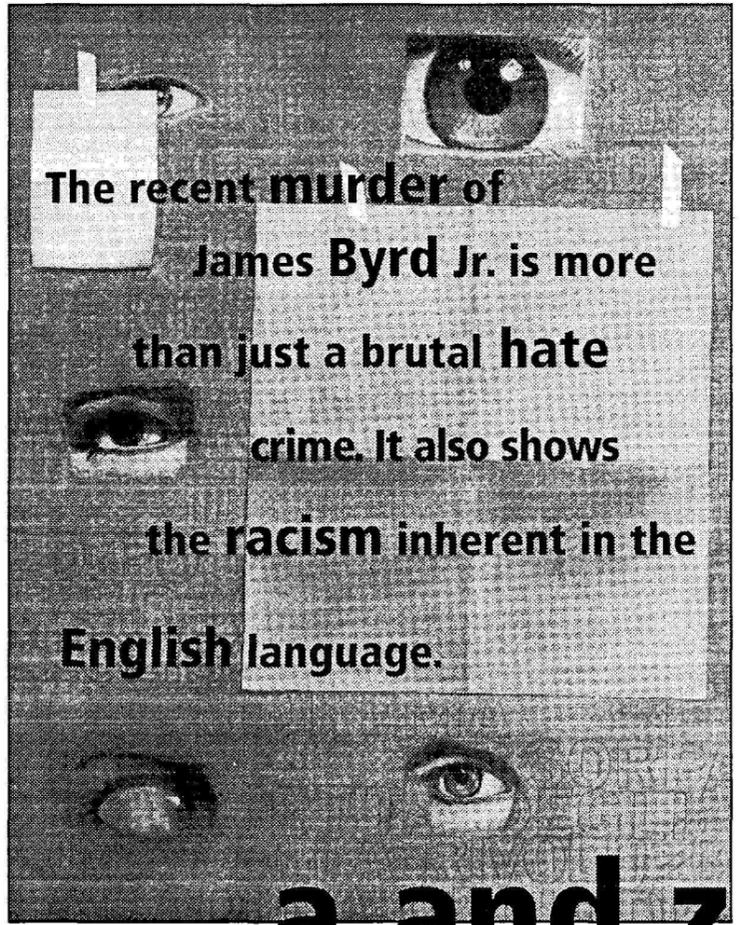
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The recent murder of
**James Byrd Jr. is more
than just a brutal hate
crime. It also shows
the racism inherent in the
English language.**

a and z

Between

by Eva J. M. Maximea

When we study English we study words. We ask which words are most effective to communicate our message, and why they are chosen. We choose them to stimulate visual, auditory, emotional and visceral reactions. Before there was racism as we know it today, we had language and we had economics. Language facilitates economics and without language—well, currency is language too—and Africans were reduced to a form of currency in the context of chattel slavery.

The powerful dominant group fights dirty, using tools such as racism to maintain the status quo. There must be an underclass, disenfranchised and ostracised, for capitalism to function, with a small percentage of people controlling the vast majority of the world's property and resources. Once colonialism took root in the colonies, the ideology of 'white' racial superiority became the single most important shackle of the Imperialist ideology.

James Byrd Jr died to remind us all that nigger is not just a nasty thing to call someone. Nigger is the name of the most powerless, brutally devastated human being we can't even imagine. James Byrd Jr died on June 7, 1998, the victim of three white males, of whom the first to be convicted is John King. King is a man who proudly bears tattoos depicting Nazi-type SS lightning bolts, as well as a large patch of the Confederate Knights of America—a white supremacist group—on the side of his stomach, underlined with "Aryan Pride."

The murder of James Byrd Jr is euphemistically referred to by media and popular discourse as the 'Dragging Death.' Black rights advocates have insisted on naming this murder a "modern day lynching." Media coverage, while relevant, tends to exoticise the issue at hand. "[W]e have an isolated incident. Guys who are not our kind of people did some stupid stuff," said Jasper County Sheriff Billy Rowles.

This is hardly a sensitive analysis, but the point is that while that particular form of violence is relatively iso-

lated as an incident, the attitudes that make it possible are not.

In a police affidavit, Shawn Berry, one of the accused, is characterised as a reluctant participant in the grisly violence. "When Berry asked King what he was doing, King replied, 'Fixin' to scare the shit out of this nigger.'" Berry claims that King told him "You're just as guilty as we are. Besides, the same thing could happen to a nigger lover..." Herein lies the context of this brutal slaying.

At a trading card website, the "Jolly Nigger Toy Savings Bank" trading card is depicted, and described as "one of the most outrageous examples of nineteenth-century white attitudes toward blacks that you'll see on a trade card." The fact that we are looking at the head of a black man caricatured and objectified as a repository for coins goes without comment. The objectification of black people, especially through the use of dehumanising, pejorative language is acutely grim at another website entitled "Aherne the Nigger Butcher." The title of the site says it all, and it should stand testament against those who continue to believe that words such as nigger live in a sterile vacuum, out of context and without the capacity to incite real harm.

The historical and contemporary usage of pejorative language by the dominant society plays an important part in the perpetuation of racist stereotypes and attitudes. When racism works and exists in business and in our institutions, it is largely silent. When racism arises casually between workers, school children or pedestrians, it is usually first expressed through pejorative language, a form of violence in itself.

The English language itself is also culpable in Byrd's death because of its culturally-based racial bias. If a thing is naturally white, it can be seen to be superficially unsullied, while a dark, coloured object can obscure stains. Europeans, specifically the English, have been wont to refer to themselves as white-skinned peoples, even outside of and prior to the context of African exploitation.

see next page

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2. Promoting activism and awareness in an academic, cultural, political, recreational or social sphere.

The award is open to all returning UBC students, graduate, undergraduate and unclassified and consists of a \$3,000 award to be paid in October. Any member of the campus may nominate a student.

For more info contact
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the ubyssey
The 2nd annual Ubyyssey Community Contribution Award

a and z CONTINUED

English has developed as a language that associates the 'colour' white with favourable qualities such as innocence, virginity, purity and honesty. Conversely, black is conceptualised as symbolic of all that is in opposition to white. When people are conceptualised as being opposite in their innate qualities simply due to skin colour, reason has gone by the wayside. Who benefits from this?

The higher up the ladder of racial privilege you travel, the less likely you are to have a 'colour' attributed to your skin's complexion. Light-skinned peoples in conflict are said to have ethnic differences (i.e. Semites, Croats, and Serbs). The characterisations that go along with the colours that describe race have a significant impact on this dynamic. It is interesting that the English speaking Europeans found Asians to be yellow-skinned (cowardly, sickly), Native Americans to be red-skinned (hostile, hot-blooded, savage), and Africans to be black-skinned (devilish, evil, dishonest, and opposite to white).

Martin's *The Egg and the Sperm*

and Marlatt's *Difference (Em)bracing* centre on a feminist analysis of the anthropomorphization of animate and inanimate objects, and these readings have led me to interrogate the words 'black' and 'white.' This has been particularly interesting in light of the visual concepts that they represent, and their relationship to the literal definitions of the words black and white. James Byrd Jr's murder is only one example of the far-reaching social consequences of these pejorative language constructions.

The oldest English language treatises on African-European contacts (Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, Winthrop Jordan's *White Man's Burden*) cite the culturally based negative associations with the 'colour' black, as fundamental to the engendering of discriminatory practices inflicted on African peoples by Europeans. The characterisation of African peoples as 'black-skinned' was certainly convenient for the dehumanisation of a population needed to labour and mine the resources found in the colonies. If African people had been char-

acterised as brown-skinned, which in reality, we are, this would have been less effective. Brown has earthy, productive, fertile qualities attributed to it, and so black was a far more effective choice for the juxtaposition of Europeans. White has so many virtuous qualities attached to it: clean, pure, innocent and honest. White things seem to beg anthropomorphization.

Genetically, anatomically and socially humans are more similar than we are different. Capitalist forces used language to emphasise and embroider racial differences into this oppositional concept in order to facilitate the rape and exploitation of the colony's resources and people. They tried to structure a society wherein the underclasses have only token mobility, and would remain a visibly marked, self-reproducing, exploitable labour force.

Here we are, four hundred plus years later, living in a society which takes the ingrained attitude that there is some real sense to be made of the conception of whites and blacks in an oppositional relationship. A relationship in which one group is naturally innocent, neutral and standing on a higher moral ground. Unfortunately for our karma as a species, this plan is not only immoral but also unworkable. ❖

English has developed as a language that associates the 'colour' white with favourable qualities such as innocence, virginity, purity and honesty. Conversely, black is all that is in opposition to white.

My Place

I know my place
it is behind closed doors
away from the crowded room

I know my place
it is separate from others
so as to not be found a disgrace

I know my place
it is where no one goes
but it is called my home

I know my place
it is second you know
for the first one is not for me

I know my place
it is an enormous wall
built to keep me out

I know my place
it is a separate one
which divides me from the rest

I know my place
it is looking in
wondering if I shall be called

I know my place
it is knowing this
that I have no place where I belong

-Lyeen

The Rain Falls

The rain falls
as if the world
will come to an abrupt end.

The heavens throw down
their spears,
as if to mock
the thunderous skies.

And I, a mere mortal
have not
the strength to silence these rains,
and save my soul
from the clenches of hell.

-B. A.

Old Man

Nature with all its beauty
does not have the compassion,
to cripple an old man's sane legs.
To make people observe as he wheels,
longing to reach his destination.
To make him witness,
visions of untainted reflections.

I now know where nature's
strength lies,
In the weakness of her children.

-B. A.

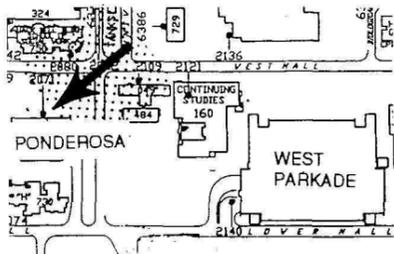
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Think
About It.
UBC

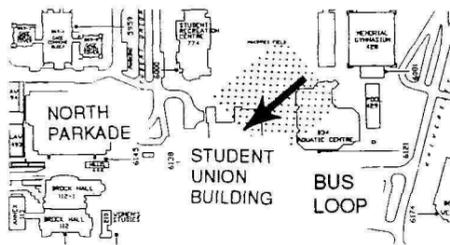
Public Information Meeting

on the
Comprehensive Community Plan for the
UBC Campus

Thursday, March 25, 1999,
12:30-2pm, Ponderosa Room,
Ponderosa Building, 2071 West Mall



Tuesday, March 30, 1999,
7:30-9pm, Rooms 214-216,
Student Union Building,
6138 Student Union Blvd.



The Official Community Plan (OCP) for UBC provides a vision and goals for future development, broad land use designations, and objectives for more detailed planning. The purpose of the Comprehensive Community Planning process (called Area Planning in the OCP) is to interpret those policies and objectives as a framework for development approval. This will be the first of three public meetings and will focus on issues and options.

For further information, visit the Web site www.ocp.ubc.ca or call Jim Carruthers, Campus Planning and Development, 822-0469.

SANDRA BULLOCK BEN AFFLECK

He went from the eye of the storm,
into the arms of a hurricane.

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