

UHURU!

Freedom!

A Publication for Intelligent Activism

October 1997

"It is important not only to have the awareness and to feel impelled to become involved, it's important that there be a forum out there to which one can relate, an organization, a MOVEMENT."

--Angela Davis

Want to meet people? Want to be involved? Wondering what's going on? Then come to the weekly Black Student Alliance meetings on Monday evening at 8 pm in the Memorial Union!

UHURU! is in need of contributors and layout/technical assistance. Interested persons should contact Meron Wondwosen (mwondwos@iastate.edu) or Lynn Wellnitz (lmwelln@iastate.edu), or call the BSA office at 294-9891.

UHURU! will publish essays, poetry, news articles, music, film, and book reviews. Submissions for publication in UHURU! should be given to Meron Wondwosen, President of BSA (BSA Office in the Student Activities Suite).

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THE DRUM

The drummer narrates the tale of a struggle, a resistance in our midst....

BSA meeting. 9/29 rally. APAAC gathering. CURV sit-in. LGBTAA meeting. AIRO pow wow. VSA & APAAC 24-hour sympathy fast

what's that you say? you can't make it because so and so is having a skating party or that your favorite t.v. show is on.

I wonder what Harriet Tubman would do. I know she didn't know any sell outs. With the general, you hesitate one minute and you're dead the next.

you say but that was more than a hundred years ago, things aren't that bad now.

You're right. They're worse. We got a little progress and we let our guard down.

but IT'S JUST A BUILDING you say. it's not like it's out and out racism...

Listen to the beat of the drummer:

In 1997, there is still no Asian-American studies program. In 1997 there is no commitment to diversity at ISU. In 1997 the number of tenured faculty of color is astoundingly low. In 1997 a student was hospitalized from a hunger strike and in this dire situation some of you remain conspicuously silent as we struggle.

The call is for resistance and the response is Action!

but you ain't hearin dat. you ain't gonna go to no meeting for no movement. you are afraid of what teachers might think of

you. you might lose your job. And you gotta get paid so you can get you the \$120 shoes and yo BMW.

But a beemer can't drive you away from racism. and guess what? wearing Nike won't help you climb out of poverty. By the way, a sister in some African country got 10 cents a day for makin' yo phat gear.

Get real brotha'.

Your freedom ain't found in no shoes!

What's that? you're free? you ain't no slave?

So why you still thinking like one?

Listen to the beat of the drummer:

*You see, I knew some REAL men and womyn who wore some tight gear They didn't take no sh*t from anybody, protested against injustice, carried guns unto the California Senate floor and they changed laws, protected their communities went to meetings wrote poetry, read Mao and Nkrumah and they handled their business.*

They were called Freedom Fighters.

The Drum beats in the courageous spirit of Activist/ Human Rights Advocate sister Betty Shabazz.

For: Allan Piña Nosworthy:

"Don't look so sad. I'm no stranger to danger. I have lived with danger all my life. I never expected to die of old age. I know the power structure will not let me."

--Malcom X

POETRY

My Voice Goes Unheard

by Tara Simpson

Can't tell by the way I look
With my ample curves,
carmel complexion,
light eyes,
naturally nappy but relaxed hair
I mean the last time
I checked
I was anatomically correct
But to look at me you'd never know
That yet and still
my voice goes unheard.

It is like a rising
in the depth of my soul
so deep, pushing desperately to be free
A prisoner of my own
mind,

body,

and soul

Some have said it's cute
But it's not
Simply because my voice goes unheard

Some say I will outgrow it
but I've yet
to see that miracle
I get down on my knees
and pray
Lord, please give me my voice back
I've yet to receive my blessing

The voice I hear, feel and know
is loud, soft,
eloquent, in control,
smooth and free
but you'll never hear it
because my voice goes unheard

you'll never understand
my daily, hour, minute
down to the tiniest fraction
of a second
struggles that go on
within because of my unheard voice
It's locked up deep down
in my heart, in my chest,

caught in my throat
never to be heard
Substitution has become
my unwritten law
in times of love, hate,
lust, kindness,
anguish, pain

and expression
But oh when i sing
my voice is filled with
so much passion
It races to freedom and embraces
with all if its strength
but my voice cannot sing it's way into
existence

Sure I can express it with my
talented hands or with the
words I write
But you will never know
voice that I know because
it will forever be unheard.

**Response (to the poet for whom I
always write)**

by f. selassie

you called to me in a verse once asking me to
take you to our land
you summoned me in a rhyme
this one time
to show you the mansion floor

it's been 500 now
you remembered

but I swear I've waited longer

to love you
across continents and ages

to return you, stolen soul
to a place you can call
your own

to a feeling of belonging
so foreign to you.

*And we've been here too long
you sighed*

and as you wandered lost
with others who resembled you
I know you searched for me
in every hand you held
every lip you kissed
because everytime you touch me
I long to take you home.

GLoRy of the reVoLutiOn by jUmOke

we be the gainers of these spoils
redempteers be rulers that will toil

befuddled with memories never to be ignored

no need to conquer territory already explored

preserved has been the destiny of evil future
and past.

no more be we singing freedom at last.

no hypocrisy of loving each other unda a mask

justice be a sword admired for its task.

virtue be the splendor visible in our work.

majestic be our unity assembled throughout
the earth

no more be we niggas or bitches never to
pronounce.

wisdom replenishes beauty in once

deaf

dumb

blind

my people

no longer beg at anytime.
swiftness be the speed of our stride.
exemplified in this most glorious rise.

CrUsH by jUmOke

girl i saw him,

he was soooooooooo fly
so black
so tall
so beautiful
so strong

when he smiled and spoke my name
i blushed

when he asked how was i doing,
i answered, "fine"

when he sat in class and took notes
i admired

when he looked tired from a long day
i wished to rub his back

when he spoke before many in such an
articulate way,
i was proud

when he married a white woman
i was hurt

KRhYme by jUmOke

i used to love him
but now i don't

i used to see him
but now i don't

i used to cook for him
but now i don't

i used to walk with him
but now i don't

i used to work for him
but now i don't

i used fight for him
but now i don't

i used to talk to him
but now I don't

he used to beat me
but now he won't

cause i killed his ass.

Nowadays

by jUmOke

nowadays you love straight hair
tight clotheswearing
body piercing
fat asses shaking
lexus jeep driving
money making
Polo wearing
nose job getting
rough sexing
ignorant talking
never schooling
forever losing
syphilis getting
fast tongue talking
eye rolling
gat controlling
Lil' Kim Acting
sob story telling
devotion.

Twinkle, Twinkle

by Wendell Mosby

I am me.
Me is I.
I am all man.
This man be Black.
Black as the galaxy.
The galaxy is I.
Alone in space.
Space filled with twinkling stars.
These stars are me.
My blood, my history,
and my People.
People that have overcome
very difficult obstacles.

So I

Could have and enjoy my SPACE.
My space to do as I want.
I am so grateful
to my stars.
My stars guide me
when I feel alone, but
alone I am not.
The stars are me and I am those stars.
Stars that tell the tale.
The tale of my heritage,
my legacy.

Especially my future.
My children's future.

I will do my part
to insure that twinkle of my star
will shine bright.
Bright enough to guide my children to
a brighter future.

Twinkle, twinkle
little star I do
know where
you are . . .

Peace of mind

Nicole Meek

As I sit alone in this room that seems so larger
than life
I think about all of the things that have taken
place
Life can be so troublesome.
Everything just keep piling on and on
when I think I have dug a peep-hole to see out
of
More and more ingredients from this big
garbage disposal
keep falling upon my already damaged mind.
Love, hate, happy, sad, Hell who can tell
which is good or which is bad
As I stumble through this maze of confusion
called my life
I close my eyes and open them very quickly
Praying that this moment of bewilderment will
pass
How can one continue to proceed when there
seems to be nothing left
No heart cause it has been crushed so bad that
my own mother can't recognize it
No feelings cause of the frightening thought
that they could hinder me
No thoughts cause they are drowned out by the
commotion of the world
No self cause it has been ripped in so many
direction that even Humpty dumpty's men
couldn't put it back together again
when will peace settle in

"The fact that I write at all reveals the
utter failure of their intimidation tactics --
as does the fact that you read."

-- Mumia Abu-Jamal

SHORT STORY

One Lost Moment

by Randall Duval

6:26 PM

"Breath . . . in . . . out . . . in . . . out," the doctor calmly said, looking her directly in the eye. He put his hand on her shoulder and said, "Focus on me . . . look at me." She looked into his pale blue eyes set on a serene face then nodded her head. Her feet were flat on the bed and beads of sweat rolled down her brown face and down her dark legs.

"I want to push doctor."

"No, no. Not yet, just keep breathing and looking at me. Come on Vanessa. I know it's hard. Keep breathing . . . in . . . out . . . in . . . out . . . That's it, there you go, that's right." The doctor turned to the nurse and said a few things, then turned back to Vanessa.

Vanessa clenched the railings on each side of the bed. Her veins looked as if they were going to tear through her skin with each pulse. "Doctor!" she screamed. "It's coming!"

"Okay, okay. Let's see." He eased her legs apart, slapped his latex gloves on, then slid two of his fingers into her. Vanessa gritted her teeth and leaned forward in pain. When the doctor took his fingers out she eased back onto the inclining bed. He pulled off his glove and threw it in the trash. "She's fully dilated," he said to the nurse.

Vanessa looked at the clock then looked around--her eyes searching, but not finding. Both hands of the clock were now directly over the "6"--four minutes. "Can I push doctor?"

"Sure can," he said with a smile.

"We just have to wait for the next contraction. When the next contraction comes I'm going to start counting . . . don't stop pushing until I reach ten, okay?" She nodded at him again. "Just keep breathing how we practiced for now," he said while wiping her forehead.

"In . . . out . . . in . . . out . . . in . . . out" Vanessa thought as she was breathing, then a rumble in her stomach and her sides crashed in and began moving toward her center.

"Okay Vanessa push! One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . . five . . . six . . . seven . . . eight . . . nine . . . ten . . . Okay, okay, try to relax. There it's over. Breath normally Vanessa."

Before she could get anywhere close to a some kind of feeling of comfort her sides crunched in again, this time the bottom of her back also pushing in.

"Okay Vanessa push! One . . . two . . . threeally pulled it off the week before--he thought it was detachable. Red lights flashed on his windshield. He looked over his shoulder to see a black and white, then it happened, the sirens went off.

18:04

"Aah come on. Not now. Please, not now," he said as he shook his head. He flicked on his left turn signal and pulled over sharply, not like how they teach you in driver's ed. As soon as he stopped he threw the car into to "P" and had slammed the door on his way out.

"Stop right there sir, stop right there," the officer said, giving the halt signal with his left hand while his right hand moved over his holster.

"Officer, my wife's having a baby . . . I need to get to the hospital," he tried to explain.

"All right fella, just calm down Can I see your license and registration?" the officer said in no particular rush.

"My what!? My wife's having a baby!" he said while pulling out his license and registration. He handed it to the officer, looking deep into his blue eyes and wrinkled face. The officer handed the documents to his partner, a baby faced, lanky, brownstone of a man with a military fade. "Look them numbers up Willie." As Willie took the documents he looked over his superior's shoulders at the tall dark skinned man who now had his back turned to the both of them.

The first officer walked casually back to the red Yugo. "You know why we pulled you over James?"

"No."

"Your tags are expired."

"What? Come one. My wife's pregnant . . . I don't have time for this. Look, I'll take care of them as soon as possible, but I need to get to the hospital!"

"Hold on now. Take it easy. I know you'll take care of it James, but I'm still . . .," and as he was saying that he noticed a brown bag protruding from underneath the passenger seat, "but I'm still going to have to give you a ticket," he said, turning a suspicious eye toward him.

"All right. Give me the ticket and I'll be on my way."

"You 'sweatin' pretty hard there James . . . look pretty nervous. You know you were also going fifty-five in a forty zone?"

"Like I said, my wife's having a baby. I need to get to the hospital."

"You're not lying to me are you boy?" he asked as he signaled Willie to get out the car.

Silence. James hesitated then answered, "No, I ain't lyin'."

"What cha got in the car?"

"Nothin'."

Blue eyes looked over to Willie then said, "Step aside James."

"Step aside!? For what?"

"You gonna be a problem, James?"

We just gonna take a look in your car . . . you don't have a problem with that do ya?"

"Look in my car? For what? You got no right . . . no warrant."

"Warrant? What you hiding James?"

"Nothin'."

"Besides James," he continued, "I don't need a warrant . . . I got probable cause. I smell hemp."

"Oh come on, this is bullshit."

"I don't smell nothin' sarg," Willie said, a little unsure of himself.

"Willie . . . put him in the back of the unit," the sergeant said without looking in his direction.

"Yo fuck this!" James exclaimed looking the sergeant in the eyes.

The sergeant began walking to James when he pulled out his night stick. Putting it to James' face he said, "Don't you be a problem to me! Get him outa here Willie."

"Sarg . . ."

"Don't you know you to follow orders boy?"

"Yes sir."

Willie took James and put him in the back of the car, slammed the door then sat in the front passenger seat.

"Well, thanks for yo help, brother." No response from Willie. He just gazed at his superior who now had his head in the car. The sergeant open the passenger side and was looking under the seat. He pulled the brown paper bag from under the seat. He opened it and smiled at himself a little. Trash, they was just trash in the bag. He looked on the dash board to see a picture of James and women with a protruding stomach. Both Black men watched as the sergeant closed the red Yugo door and began approaching the car. The sergeant opened the back door and helped James out. "Looks like we was wrong

Willie," he said. "Your free to go James." He handed James his license and registration.

James . . . that's it Vanessa . . . four . . . five . . . six . . . seven . . . I see the head Vanessa . . . nine . . . keep pushing. Come on Vanessa just one more big push. Puuush! There we go . . . there we go . . . it's a boy . . . All right . . . Hey Vanessa, have you thought of a name yet?"

"Yeah," Vanessa said, smiling and crying at the same time. "Joseph, after his granddaddy," she gritted between pushes. . .

6:00pm

A tall dark African American man hunched over in his red Yugo leaned on his horn as he spread through stop signs with his hazard lights blinking. Wind whistled at a pitch so high it burned his ears--the window couldn't close all the way no matter how tight he tried to roll it up.

Far off in the distance he could see tall white building. He looked at his watch--18:02.

He wiped one sweaty hand on a leg of his black pants, then the other hand on his other leg, both leaving streaks of sweat. Habitually he checked in his review mirror, but it wasn't there, he had accident snatched the items out of his hand and stared down Willie as he was walking toward his car. He slammed the door of his Yugo as he got in, only to find a ticket on the passenger seat. He shook his head, started up the car, crumpled up the ticket and threw it out the window.

Back at the police car, the sergeant looked at Willie and said, "You drive." Willie got out and got in in the driver's side, and pulled out.

James watched the police car make a U-turn then peeled out for the hospital.

He looked at his watch--18:22. Even though he was speeding it seemed at if he was going in slow motion. Every time he looked at his watch it was changing but the white building was not getting a whole lot bigger. It seemed out of his reach. He slowed down for a four way stop as he passed through a residential area. A blue and white sign pointing to the hospital gave him hope. He looked at his watch--18:24. He could see the right turn coming up that would take him directly to the hospital.

He could see the doors of the hospital now. His hand clenched the steering wheel even tighter. He slowed down a little. People

were making their way from and to the hospital parking lot. He pulled up to its entrance. A valet came out. James threw him the keys, and shouted, "Marshall," as he ran to the automatic doors which did not open soon enough. He almost had to push them apart with his body as he squeezed his way through.

He looked to the receptionist to his left. "My wife is having a baby."

"What's your name sir?"

"James Marshall."

"And your partner's name?"

"Vanessa Marshall."

"Please sign here . . . Thank you . . . she's on the third floor."

He ran to the elevator and hit the "up" button three times. It was taking too long so he took the stairs. He saw the number [2] then [3]. He flung the door open and was running down the hall. His left eye caught a glance at the babies in the view room. No Black babies were there. "Nurse, where is my wife?" He remembered her from the Lamaze class. "At the end of the hall Mr. Marshall."

All of a sudden he heard the cry of a baby and it was as if a bullet had stopped him dead in his tracks. He leaned on the wall for support then rested his forehead on the wall. His knees began to bend, when the nurse came running. "Mr. Marshall, are you okay?" He had his hands over his eyes. She helped him to the room where his wife was. He fell to his knees at the side of his wife's bed.

She laid her hand gently on his head and said, "Babe, look at your baby boy." He looked into her eyes, her face was peaceful and happy. He made his way up to her and laid his head on her chest. "Look at him," she said again, wiping the tears from his cheeks. He looked into the boy's eyes, and said, "Thank you, Father," then took him into his arms.

Meet the BSA Cabinet

Name: Randall Duval

Cabinet Position: Vice President

Year/Major: Senior/English and Secondary Education

Hometown: Durban, South Africa

Why are you involved in BSA? I want to serve the African American community.

Hopes to accomplish: I want to revolutionize the Vice President spot by making it a more active position.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., John Horse.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: Writing and pocket billiard.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: You can do all things, that means anything, through Christ.

Name: Shantel Brown

Cabinet Position: Treasurer

Year/Major: Junior/Accounting

Hometown: Chicago Suburb

Why are you involved in BSA? I'm concerned for the young people on campus and the direction of the African-American race.

Hopes to accomplish: I hope to keep BSA out of deficit and to have some exciting programs with much involvement.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): First I have to give honor to the All Mighty and also my mother Dorothy Brown. I have to thank Yasmin Blackburn and Abigail Williams for my success at Iowa State.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: Black Student Alliance, Delta Sigma Theta, Iowa State Recruiter, Business Council, Accounting Club, and just being myself

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Study and what I mean by that is learn your limits and create good time management skills.

Name: Felicia Whitsett

Cabinet Position: Secretary.

Year/Major: Senior/Child and Family Services.

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois.

Why are you involved in BSA? I wanted to make a difference.

Hopes to accomplish: to be a sufficient secretary.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): Mother, Sister, and Camille Cosby.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: Football recruiter. Loves kids. Felicia is a caregiver at a child care center.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Go to class, learn how to study, trust God and give your life to him.

Name: Dashan Sardine

Cabinet Position: BCC Representative

Year/Major: Community Health Ed - Junior

Hometown: Miami, Florida; Brooklyn, NY

Why are you involved in BSA? For the continued development of 'People of Color' and our community.

Hopes to accomplish: Assist the Black Cultural Center to become a viable resource for the Ames community as well as the state of Iowa.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): All those who have preceded, so that we can continue (our ancestors).

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: My relationship with Christ; writing (poetry); dance; reading; caring for children.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Remember that those you surround yourself with frame your mindset. . . expand your horizon.

Name: Neakia Payton

Cabinet Position: Big 12 Delegate

Year/Major: Sophomore/Biology

Hometown: Bellwood, Illinois.

Why are you involved in BSA? I really enjoyed working with Big 8 last year and I chose to volunteer my time and leadership skills in order to continue the success of the conference.

Hopes to accomplish: I simply want to be successful in all my endeavors, academics, extra-curricular activities - whatever may come - that's my challenge for the year.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s) Maya Angelou - she has been able to put into words the struggle of African Americans - especially those of women.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: BSA, Campus Gospel Choir.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Trust yourself enough to make sound decisions because in the end you will always be accountable for your actions. To make sure the choices you make are authentically your own.

Name: Meron Wondwosen

Cabinet Position: El Presidente

Year/Major: Senior/Political Science, French

Hometown: Harar, Ethiopia

Why are you involved in BSA?

Because I want to be involved with organizations that are committed to making positive change and working towards the elimination of racism.

Hopes to accomplish: I hope BSA wins the best Black student government Award for the unprecedented two years in a row.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): Angela Davis and Assata Shakur are my favorite role models because they are the ideal womyn revolutionaries.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests:: writing poetry and reading and in my spare time insure that the ISU Administration never sleeps a restful night.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Never ever remain silent, join the movement and fight for liberation and during all that study and dance.

Name: Tara Simpson

Cabinet Position: Publications

Year/Major: Senior/Art and Design with emphasis on Fine Arts

Hometown: Oakland, California

Why are you involved in BSA? For the experience, to be involved, and to meet people

Hopes to accomplish: to get more people involved so that we can truly be a community.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): James Earl Jones, Maya Angelou.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: The New Beginnings Choir (Big 12); volunteering at Mary Greeley and the Octagon.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Don't be afraid to ask for help . . . there is always someone available if you look.

Name: JoLynn Putnam

Cabinet Position: Co-Director of Freshman Outreach

Year/Major: Sophomore/Early Childhood Education

Hometown: Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Why are you involved in BSA? Because I think it is important and it is one of the best ways to meet and get to know other people.

Hopes to accomplish: This year in BSA, I hope to accomplish the goals of establishing a successful Big Brother/Big Sister program, to get more freshmen involved in BSA, and to help BSA have a successful year overall.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): Toni Morrison, Oprah Winfrey and Maya Angelou.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: FCS Council member, President-elect (next year's president) for IAEYC (Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children), music, theater, and BSA

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Get to know people and have fun, but don't let your grades slip - you'd be surprised how one bad grade during one single semester will affect your whole grade point. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.

Name: Wendell D. Mosby

Cabinet Position: Co-Director of Freshmen Outreach

Year/Major: Sophomore/Apparel Design and Apparel Production

Hometown: Chicago Heights, Illinois

Why are you involved in BSA? To be a part of the solution and not the problem

Hopes to accomplish: Enhance the awareness of BSA to all freshmen and help them get involved in positive things, not bad ones.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s):

Muhammed Ali, 2Pac, Mother, and all those who have paved the way so that I could be here!

Extra-curricular activities/special interests:

Vice President - IAFCS, Vice President of Membership - Entrepreneurs Club, motivational speaking, meeting people, making money, playing with children, and educating myself on black history.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Set positive goals, meet new people, have fun, and get your education. Black Love.

Name: Brandon M. Tate, "BT"

Cabinet Position: Big 8 Coordinator

Year/Major: Junior/Mechanical Engineering

Hometown: Kansas City, Missouri

Why are you involved in BSA? To contribute to the upliftment of black students at Iowa State and the other Big 8 universities.

Hopes to accomplish: I hope to pass on ideas to Nebraska to help them host an impressive Big 8 Conference on Black Student Government. I also hope to help keep BSA in the forefront of active black student organizations.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): My father (Bailus Tate), Martin Luther King, Jr.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests:

N.S.B.E. Vice President, MacDonald House RA (Helser)

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen:

Develop and/or continue your relationship with God, study, ask questions, and develop a relationship with all of your professors.

Name: Nate Taylor

**Cabinet Position: Big 12 Delegate/
Publication Committee**

Year/Major: Sophomore/Graphic Design

Hometown: Rockford, Illinois

Why are you involved in BSA? To help, learn, and have fun.

Hopes to accomplish: Continue the strong and proud reputation of BSA.

Favorite African-American Role Model(s):

Malcolm X, Dr. King, Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou and many other great Black poets and artists.

Extra-curricular activities/special interests:

Art (painting and drawing), poetry.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Study hard because your education comes first.

Name: Jumoke A. K. Hodari

Cabinet Position: Big 12 Delegate

Year/Major: Junior/Chemistry

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

Why are you involved in BSA? To be united with my people for the upliftment and refinement of a strong positive community.

Hopes to accomplish: This year I hope to sharpen my time management and study skills and hopefully be eligible for a scholarship

Favorite African-American Role Model(s): My favorite Black role model is Minister Louis Farrakhan because I think he exudes principles of self-discipline and determination in his everyday life that most of us seem to neglect. He is a true soldier!

Extra-curricular activities/special interests: I love to exercise and build my physical and mental strength. Even though time doesn't always permit, I try to stay on top of my fitness goals.

Advice to Freshmen and Freshwomen: Pray. Stay focused and keep positive people around you. Value yourself first and reject negativity in all forms. Your character is strengthened the more you stand up for your beliefs in the face of opposition. Love, Peace, and Nappiness!!!

Not Profiled in this issue:

April Stovall--BCC Representative, Tynesia Hill--Assistant Treasurer, Jackie Sowell--Director of Programs, Xavier Allen--Director of Publications, Jamal White--Director of University Relations, Jay Berry--Advisor

"People were hung from trees for being Black. Today, people are beaten up and murdered for being gay and lesbian. Any Black person who can't equate being gay with being black is essentially denying that gay and lesbian Black people exist."

--Mandy Carter, activist

National Coming Out Day Events:



Wednesday October 8 1997
Coming Out Rally--12 pm-1 pm South of the Campanile
(Rain Location: Great Hall, MU)

LGBT Student Services Open Hous
1 pm-4pm, 210 Student Services

LGBTQA Alliance Coming Out Days Social
7pm-8pm Cardinal Room

Thursday October 9 1997
"Race Gender and Coming Out"
Sabrina Sojourner-Past Director of the Women of Color and Diversity Programs for NOW
8 pm -9pm, Sun Room

Friday October 10 1997
"Thought of a Novice Women"
Dr. Dierdre McCloskey
12 -1pm Sunroom

Live Music
Live Performances by
The Bone People
FREE--9 PM-11:15 PM, M-Shop, MU

Dance
The annual Coming Out Dance
11:30 PM- 2 AM, M-Shop, MU

Saturday October 11
National coming Out Day
Movie: Beautiful Thing
7 PM-9PM Carver 101

Monday October 13
Coming Out as an LGBT Ally: A Panel Discussion with ISU Staff, Faculty, and Students
3PM--4 PM Pioneer Room

First Annual Recognition Reception
Join us as we recognize people who have made a difference 4PM-5PM Pioneer Room
Tuesday October 14
Out on Campus: Battling Homophobia

Catt in Context

by Kel Munger

I find it heartening that students in defense of Carrie Chapman Catt are obviously taking the time to read her words; it is this examination of primary sources that all sides in the debate over the naming of Catt Hall have been calling for these last two years. However, I find it necessary to take issue with the claims made by the authors of "Catt's words taken out of context" (Daily 9/23/97).

First, they wish to put Catt's words into two contexts: the context of her life (which members of The September 29th Movement have never said was anything less than remarkable) and the context of her times. They express dismay that some of us include a third context, the context of our times, in the discussion (which seems reasonable to me, since the building was named in 1995 and not in 1920). But for the moment, let's take a look at Catt's texts in the context of her times.

The context provided by Hanson, Haseloff, Hale and Foster in their essay says, in part, that the racist argument of Catt's southern strategy was necessary because "She had to say this in their words, in a way that although unacceptable today, was acceptable in 1917." First, the assumption that it was acceptable in 1917 is mistaken; Catt's own choice of words for another audience, the readers of the NAACP's journal *The Crisis*, indicates that she knew this, for she did not use this argument with people of color (as is demonstrated by the excerpt quoted in Hanson, et. al.). Her use of one argument to win in one place, while thinking or saying something else entirely--sometimes called sophistry--is an example of politically expedient racism. By this I mean that the racist ideology may not have been part of Catt's personal belief system, but rather was a part of her rhetorical strategy--a base desire to "tickle the ears" of an audience in order to win.

The long list of groups who feared particular votes is most interesting because, in some of Catt's other "contexts," she attacked the "ignorant foreign vote," the "illiterate" vote, the "union" vote--in short, her politically expedient and unethical rhetorical strategy was such that anyone was fair game.

The context of Catt's times made it possible for her to consistently select a rhetorical

strategy of "worthy versus unworthy" binaries in her arguments; however, she personally made the decision about whether or not to engage in this practice. Her context does not free her from accountability for the consequences of her rhetorical and ethical decisions.

Her politically expedient racism is comparable to the strategy employed by George Wallace of Alabama, a man of fairly moderate racial views who adopted a rabidly segregationist and racist position in order to win the governorship of his state in the early 1960s. Although he did not believe in this racist strategy, he did believe that the good he could do for the White majority outweighed the damage that would be done to the Black minority. Alabama had great roads and no civil rights for people of color.

George Wallace in context meant police riots, bombed churches, and the imprisonment of African-Americans for attempting to exercise their Constitutionally-guaranteed freedoms. Dr. King wrote his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" in the context of Wallace's gubernatorial tenure.

Does this mean that Wallace's segregationist rhetoric caused the death of four little girls in a Birmingham church bombing? Perhaps not. Does it raise the possibility that his rhetoric created a context in which such horrific acts could occur? Absolutely. The relationship between the rhetoric of segregation and the practice of violence is clearly defined in several scholarly works.

To take this discussion back to Catt and her context(s): did her willingness to use the rhetoric of White supremacy to secure voting rights for some women (don't forget that the majority of African-American women in this country were prevented from voting until passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1964) cause the upsurge in lynchings and KKK activity that is a documented part of the context of 1917? Perhaps not. Did her willingness to play the southern strategy of White supremacy foster an environment in which such activities could, nay, would, occur? Absolutely.

The only way to read "White supremacy" as anything other than the repression and destruction of peoples of color is to read it through the lens of White privilege--a privilege that, among other things, denies it exists. The

context of Catt's times--and of ours--insures that those who have privilege will also have no reason to question the consequences of that privilege on those who are excluded.

To return to the analogy of former Governor Wallace of Alabama, who has recently undergone a public reconciliation with people of color: what differentiates him from Catt is that he has publicly, vocally recanted his politically racist actions and asked for forgiveness. Catt did neither. She made a vague statement that, when she was younger, she was "a regular jingoist," and a similarly vague statement that she'd never run for public office because of what one had to do to win at the ballot box. She never did anything that resembled renouncing her southern racist strategy or apologizing for it. In the words of author Osha Gray Davidson, who has written a book on one man's journey from racism to reconciliation, "There is a special circle of Hell reserved for politically expedient racists."

At least one person involved in the decision to re-name Old Botany in honor of Carrie Chapman Catt has referred to their decision as "politically expedient." It was that, in every sense of the word: the process excluded students, excluded people of color, and chose to ignore several of the contexts for Catt's words. Are people who support the decision to name the building for Carrie Chapman Catt racist? Probably not. Are they complicit in a system that, by practicing exclusion, creates an environment in which racism can thrive? Think about that carefully.

I call on President Jischke to re-open the naming process for Catt Hall, not in the name of political expediency, but in the name of justice and inclusion.

Kel Munger received two degrees from Iowa State University: a B.A. in 1995 and an M.A. in 1997, both in English. She was the 1995-96 Pearl Hogrefe Fellow in Creative Writing, and received a Research Excellence Award for her thesis, "Love, Death and Poetry: Epidemic Intertextualities in Chaucer's Book of the Duchess and Tony Kushner's Angels in America." Her poetry, fiction, and critical reviews have been published in numerous national journals, and her first volume of poetry, The Fragile Peace You Keep, was selected for the Minnesota Voices Project and will be published in 1998 by New Rivers Press (Minneapolis, MN). She is currently working on a Ph.D. in English and teaching at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

My first love

*She is my companion
my soulmate*

She inspires me to create

Together we are one

Understanding my thoughts

Feeling my emotions

And easing my pain

The passion I have for her can not be contained

When we are together we must touch

With the stroke of a pen we make love

Hands on soft canvases

Intimate visual massages

Tension Rise

Pleasure Cries

Creative Expression

Longing for Affection

Explosions of vibrant Color

Complete Devotion, there is no other

You will always be with me

An unbreakable bond

Throughout life and beyond

I thank God for blessing me with you

And with you I will stay true

By Nathan Taylor

