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THE SPELMAN

## SPOTLIGHT

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*The Voice of African-American Womanhood Since 1957*

## The Repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell': Civil Rights Triumph or Hindrance to Military Cohesion?

Faith Porter

Staff Writer

In a vote of 65 to 31, with eight Republicans joining Democrats, the Senate repealed the 17-year-old law, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." This Clinton-era legislation ended the practice of banning homosexuals from military service, and instead required that they keep their sexuality a secret, or risk being discharged. Senate's vote followed a review conducted by the Pentagon that found that repealing the law would present a low risk to military effectiveness, in spite of concerns among some combat units and the Marine Corps. The Palm Center, a research institute at the University of California at Santa Barbara, which studies issues related to gays and lesbians in the armed forces, made similar findings. Director Aaron Belkin said in a statement on the group's website: "It has long been clear that there is no evidence that lifting the ban will undermine the military, and no reason to fear the transition to inclusive policy... If the president and the military leadership quickly certify the end of 'don't ask, don't tell,' they will ensure an orderly transition with minimal disruption."

In spite of the findings of the Pentagon and the Palm Center, there are still fears concerning the army environment after the repeal. In a New York Times article published in May 2010, a 29-year-old lesbian in the Army National Guard expressed her concerns: "[ 'Don't ask, don't tell' actually allowed for a lot of protections. Getting rid of it completely without modifying it is kind of worrisome. The number of incidents against gays in the military is going to increase." In November 2010, roughly one month before the repeal



of the legislation, the chiefs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force all remained reluctant to end the ban. The comments of Marine Corps commandant, General James F. Amos, were heavily publicized.

Amos said that ending the ban in the middle of two wars could prove to be detrimental for Marines who, unlike other service members, share rooms to promote unity. "...when you talk of infantry, we're talking our young men—laying out, sleeping alongside one another and sharing death, fear, and loss of your brothers. I don't know what the effect of [the repeal] will be on cohesion." Those opposed to the repeal of 'don't ask, don't tell,' like Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, worry that "zero tolerance" policies toward anti-gay discrimination might keep those who oppose homosexuality on religious grounds from being promoted, or that same-

sex couples in family housing will prompt families to decline re-enlistment or request a change in station.

The repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" is also of significance to the Spelman community. Senior JeShawna Wholley, comparative women's studies major and Afrekete president, described her initial reaction to the law being repeal as joyous. While Afrekete did not have any programs specifically geared towards 'don't ask, don't tell' being rescinded, Pride Week occurred around the same time. During Wholley's time as president, Afrekete has operated through programming rather than politics. "I'd rather have a conversation about normalizing sexuality than 'don't ask, don't tell,'" Wholley said.

Wholley went on to explain that she attended a military academy in high school and knows homosexual members of the armed forces

who are now retired and who are still serving. She described military life under the policy as "suffocating and scary," and said that is one of the reasons she is no longer in the military. Like many other critics of 'don't ask, don't tell,' Wholley refutes claims that the policy protects homosexuals in service, saying that the idea is "ridiculous" and akin to saying that blacks were kept out of the military and women kept out of the office for their own protection. "People forget that blacks were once not allowed to serve in the military, and when they were they were forced to serve as cooks," Wholley said after expressing her confusion about homophobia within the black community. "If we allow one community to enforce policies on another [community] and to police them, then what's keeping the powers that be from policing others?"

"My fear is that it's going to be hard for people to swallow and there will be a reaction, [but] my hope is that the repeal of this policy will result in institutionalizing a change," Wholley said. Changes that she hopes to see include benefits for homosexuals regarding housing, children, and pay that match those of their heterosexual counterparts. "[The government] needs to implement policies that make egalitarian environments," she continued. "At the end of the day, everyone is risking their lives."

At the end of the day, the debate on whether or not to repeal 'don't ask don't tell' has come to a close. Now, the government and the armed forces must decide how to answer the questions they face in a post 'don't ask, don't tell' society.

## Chick-fil-A's Ethical Battle: Will Gay Marriage Dispute Stand in the way of Great Chicken?

Coressa Brown

Staff Writer

Recently, there has been major controversy over Chick-fil-A and its religious views, since the news has been aired about Chick-fil-A supporting anti-gay organizations. Many have expressed their outrage through angry blogs and interviews. Numerous individuals are now calling for a boycott of the popular restaurant. Chick-fil-A may be in for a major battle as its moral and ethical character is being called into question.

The situation began in early January when a local Chick-fil-A, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, agreed to sponsor a Family Life conference titled: The Art of Marriage: Getting to the Heart of God's Design. The event seemed harmless until it was made known that Family Life and the Pennsylvania Family Institute both adamantly oppose gay

marriage. This controversy was seen as a huge scandal for the restaurant food chain.

Dan Cathy, president and Chief Operating Officer of Chick-fil-A, issued a response to the comments on the company's Facebook page and website stating: "While my family and I believe in the biblical definition of marriage, we love and respect anyone who disagrees." This has done little to persuade people that Chick-fil-A is not a homophobic business establishment. Other reports have surfaced that this is not the first time that Chick-fil-A has used its religious views to as combative business tactics. It is said that during the hiring process, employees' marital status, civic, and church involvement are common questions during the interview. In 2002, a lawsuit was brought upon the company by a Muslim restaurant owner in Houston when he said

that he was fired because he did not pray to Jesus during a training session. Many people are starting to question whether Chick-fil-A is abusing their power as a powerful franchise as a means of "bullying" employees into a forced religion.

Cathy has vehemently stated that the sponsorship of Family Life was a managerial decision and not a corporate decision. However, the damage has been done. Over the years, the company's operators, its WinShape foundation and the Cathy family have donated millions of dollars to organizations that support their values. Organizations such as: scholarships that pledge to follow Christian values, tons of Christian-based foster homes and groups that work to ban same-sex marriage.

This entire conflict has left many standing at a crossroads. Select individuals have started

to take action in an effort to stop selling Chick-fil-A on college campuses, while others have chose to remain neutral. Customers love the food but do not love the idea of their money going towards organizations that support only Christian ideals and the banning of same-sex marriage. Although there has been talk of a protest, most have just stuck to angry blogging. It seems that many are upset but not to the point of wanting to take down an entire food chain.

Chick-fil-A has been known for its Christian values and great food with even better service. Only time will tell if Chick-fil-A will decide to adjust their morals or hire a better public relations team.

## Obama's Health Care Plan Deemed Unconstitutional



COURTESY OF UPI

Sylonda Lang

Staff Writer

After years of effort and months of debate, President Obama achieved a Democratic victory on March 21, 2010. He signed the pioneering health care plan, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, into legislation. Despite the bill being passed by

the House and Senate, it has met resistance from the public domain and become a central issue throughout America. The idea of universal health care coverage is unsettling to many. Some individuals are unsure of the government's ability to provide such a service to the people, while others are diametrically

opposed. Thousands of citizens fear that this bill infringes upon the rights of the people to exercise free will. Still, some believe in the power of the bill and its possibility to save lives.

One of the more immediate changes which will be witnessed within the health care system is that adults with pre-existing conditions cannot be denied health care coverage. More far-reaching measures include the commencement of several health care plans that differ from state to state. These new plans will target various segments of the populace including small businesses and individuals who are not offered coverage from their employers. This bill is estimated to assist 95% of all legal citizens which is approximately 32 million individuals.

Many college students may have been wondering how this will directly affect them. As a result of the Affordable Care Act, individuals under the age of 26 are allowed to remain a dependent under their parent's health insurance. This initiative is supposed to make it less expensive for young adults to obtain coverage. Prior to this act, children were removed from their parents' health care insurance at the age of 19 years old.

Though the benefits seem desirable, the health care plan still has a long journey ahead. The new social legislation passed by President

Obama has been deemed unconstitutional by countless officials including several judges and lawmakers. The issue is that the government cannot constitutionally require all Americans to obtain health insurance. Many argue that it is the decision of the individual to deny or purchase insurance. Numerous states have begun a journey to nullify the bill and have filed court proceedings to assist in the effort.

Yet, others oppose the bill. Former House of Representatives and Speaker of the House John Boehner stated, "By signing this bill, President Obama is abandoning our founding principle that government governs best when it governs closest to the people."

Obama's health care plan is being weighted on the scale of justice as the people attempt to decide whether the plan will harm or benefit America's thriving democracy. "This legislation will not fix everything that ails our health care system, but it moves us decisively in the right direction," Obama said shortly after the momentous vote was read. "This is what change looks like."

Contribute at

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## Twenty Pointers to a Better Interview

Chaz Kyser

Contributing Writer

You only get one chance to convince an employer to hire you. Avoid playing the “woulda, coulda, shoulda” game by following these 20 interviewing rules on all of your interviews.

**1. Arrive Ahead of Time:** Get good directions and plan to arrive at the place you're being interviewed at least 20 minutes early so you won't be 20 minutes late.

**2. Give Your Appearance a Double Check:** Take time to straighten yourself up before greeting the interviewer. Check your clothes, hair, make-up, breath and odor.

**3. Be Cordial to Everyone You Meet at the Company:** Briefly greet and be nice to everyone at the company because you never know just who has a say in your hiring.

**4. Make a Good First Impression:** Consider it showtime when employers first spot you. From that very moment they are sizing you up. Try to feel their vibe so you can make them feel at ease with you before the interview begins.

**5. Be Respectful of the Employer:** Don't forget whom you're talking to. Greet the people interviewing you with their last name until they tell you otherwise. Leave the slang at home and turn the cell phone or pager off—not on vibrate.

**6. Watch Your Body Language:** Your demeanor should exude confidence and enthusiasm, which can be shown in various

ways, including a firm handshake, eye-to-eye contact, good posture, and a sincere smile. Definite don'ts include excessive note-taking, watching the clock, fiddling your hands or feet, and looking at everything else in the room but the interviewer while talking.

**7. Have Extra Copies of Your Resume:** You may be required to interview with more than one person. Being able to hand them a crisp resume demonstrates your professionalism and thoughtfulness.

**8. Listen Thoughtfully to All Questions and Think Before You Speak:** Always make sure you understand a question before you go about answering it. People can tell when you're running off at the mouth while trying to remember what you were asked. Ask for clarification if you don't completely understand a question.

**9. Answer Questions Completely:** Try not to give simple yes or no answers. One of your goals is to show how well you communicate with others.

**10. Stress the Skills You Can Offer the Company:** Know the exact skills an employer is looking for and stress that you have these skills and enjoy using them. Also talk about any other skills you have that are not required for your position, but that you feel will make you more attractive to an employer.

**11. Stress Your Ability To Learn New Skills Fast:** If there's a skill you lack that an employer asks about then stress your ability to quickly learn that skill, possibly giving examples of

how you've learned fast in other situations.

**12. Stress Your Positive Personality:** Communicate with the interviewer how easy you are to work with, how positive you are, and how you're so very flexible, ect. The employer is looking for someone who current employees will get along with.

**13. Talk With Pride About Your Accomplishments:** Most employers believe that past performance is the best indicator of future performance. Make them realize how valuable you are by talking about accomplishments you're proud of.

**14. Be Prepared for Tough Questions:** While most interview questions are to be expected, some interviewers may surprise you with a curve ball. An employer knows when they've asked a hard question and probably just wants to see how you'll react. Impress them. When asked a question that makes you say “hmmmm,” stay calm, take time to think of a good response, and try your best to answer the question as if it didn't faze you.

**15. Tell Them Why You Want The Job:** Don't let the interview come to an end without telling the person interviewing you why you want the job and what it is that you like so much about the position. This further demonstrates your enthusiasm and that you aren't just applying for the paycheck.

**16. Have Any Work Samples Ready To Show:** Be ready to whip out work samples you've brought for the employer to review. Don't let the interview end without showing

the employer your work samples, even if he or she didn't ask to see them.

**17. Give Examples of How You've Handled Tough or Sticky Situations:** Show the employer that you can handle any job and how resourceful you are by relating stories of how you've handled sticky situations very well.

**18. Don't Undermine Yourself:** Never talk negatively about yourself or talk about what you can't or won't do, no matter how insignificant you think what you're saying is.


**19. Don't Badmouth Anyone:** Never badmouth a past employer or your former co-workers no matter how comfortable you feel while talking to someone interviewing you.

**20. Leave a Great Lasting Impression:** No matter how good or bad you think the interview went, the show isn't over until you're out of the employer's sight. Be as cordial and enthusiastic at the end of the interview as you were at the beginning. Communicate with the employer that you are genuinely interested in the position and that you'd very much like to work for the company. Make sure you shake the hand of everyone you've interviewed with. Take time to tell them how much you appreciate being interviewed, to find out when you should hear from them, and to wish them a great day.

Chaz Kyser is the author of “Embracing the Real World: The Black Woman's Guide to Life After College” (\$14.99). Purchase the book online at [www.embracingtherealworld.com](http://www.embracingtherealworld.com).

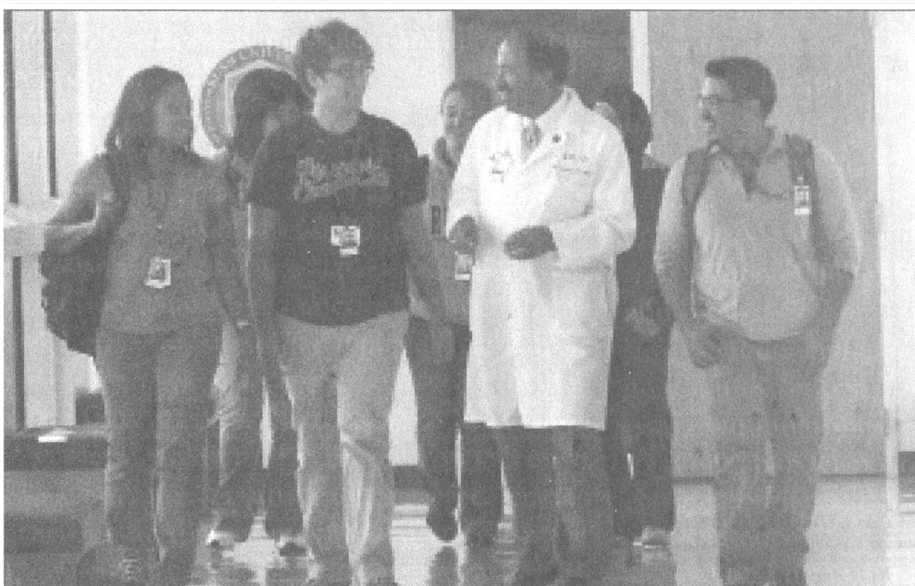
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# Former Mayor Shirley Franklin Provides Words of Wisdom for the 2011 Golden Key Inductees

Jasmine Leal-Taylor  
Editor-in-Chief



On Thursday, February 15th, the Golden Key International Honour Society held its 19th annual induction ceremony in the Albro-Falconer-Manley Science Center auditorium.

The intimate ceremony began with a warm welcome from Avante Smack, the chapter president. Smack spoke of success and how the women being inducted into Golden Key should strive towards excellence while uplifting their fellow Spelman sisters.

After Smack welcomed the inductees and their guest, Golden Key recognized three honorary members. The honorary members for this year included former president of the National Council for Negro Women and Spelman alumna Dr. Jane E. Smith, alumna Dr. Dorian D. Crosby and former mayor of Atlanta, Dr. Shirley Franklin, who also served as the keynote speaker for the ceremony.

Once inducted into Golden Key, Franklin

briefly addressed the inductees and charged them to "be fearless and to keep evolving." "We are never complete, [and] we always have to learn and push ourselves," added Franklin.

While Franklin encouraged the students to be their best academically, she also expressed that they should never be afraid to chase their dreams. She shared a story about her youth and how she aspired to be a dancer, and trained alongside Judith Jamison, but her fears held her back from pursuing a career in dance. Franklin hoped this story would provide everyone in attendance, courage to do become their best. Before leaving the podium, Franklin reiterated four points to being successful, which included honesty, integrity, perseverance and following your convictions.

Franklin, 65, is currently spending a year at Spelman as an endowed professor funded by Bill and Camille Cosby. She's lecturing on a variety of topics, including ethics, conflict

resolution in the workplace and images of women in the media.

Spelman's Golden Key chapter was founded on April 15, 1992 and has been an active organization on campus ever since. Each year they invite the top 15% of the sophomore class to join the honor society, however some students choose to defer their acceptance until senior year. This year 40 new members were inducted along with the three honorary members.

"I truly appreciate the words of Mayor Shirley Franklin to never give up on your dreams no matter what may come your way. It is a true honor to be apart of the Golden Key International Honour Society, and I will continue to strive to do my best in all that I do," stated senior chemistry major, Brittany Rhodes after being inducted into Golden Key.

## 'Steel Magnolias': Spelman's Latest Blossom

Margaret West  
Staff Writer

"Steel Magnolias" has perfumed the campus amid, the hustle and bustle of family weekend, and has beautifully manifested for all eyes to see. Spelman College Department of Drama and Dance has masterfully put on another world-class play for the Spelman community and their visiting families, February 17th through the 20th.

The heart wrenching, sidesplitting script was executed marvelously by the cast of the play. Set in Chinquapin Parish, Louisiana during the late 80's, six sassy women are bound together by their small city as well as their womanhood, and serve as family to one another under the roof of Truvy's hair salon. Truvy was played by Althea Williams, a senior drama major.

The story of Southern sisterhood was written by Robert Harling and turned into a film in 1989, which was played by a white cast. The talent showcased in this particular

production of "Steel Magnolias" is apparent. The actresses broke any color barriers surrounding the script and gave the audience a display of unbridled adaptability and finesse.

The witty southern humor and drawl colored the play and cushioned the plot well as the audience grew attached to the pretty in pink Shelbee, (Jasmine Matthews, C'2013), Clumsy southern saint Annelle (Angelica Harper, C'20), bitterly hilarious Ouisier (Constance Swain, C'2013), purehearted worrywart M'Lynn, (Jocelyn Mason-Saffold, C'2010), and the down to earth witty widow Clairee (Victoria Burwell, C'2011).

Each character in the play contributed beautifully to the overarching themes of friendship and sisterhood, unpredictability, and fulfilling life's purpose to the most enjoyable extent. The small cast and well developed characters made the plot easy to follow and created a connection between characters and audience. From the warm response from

the audience to the wit of the script, it was apparent there were connections made with characters.

The play gave a synopsis of the realities of life and the necessity of friends that are more like family to surviving it. The candid commentary on the Southern way of life, roles of women, fulfilling dreams, religion and its place, and many other topics gave the audience the fly on the wall perspective.

Despite the women's conformity to the mores of Chinquapin Parish, their conversation in this woman's sanctuary, the hair salon, was a view into the real opinions of women and the life they lead without the mask of tact and political correctness.

Truvy's desire for romance with her "sofa slug" husband, M'Lynn's interesting relationship with her two sons and husband, her worrisome bond with her daughter Shelbee, who refuses to let life pass her by paired with Annelle's simple means of living and Ouisier's forty year funk make for a plot that fosters connections with its viewers.

"Steel Magnolias" gives the audience member access into this tight knit family of friends, which is what makes it such a dynamic play. The Spelman College Department of Drama and Dance has been excellent in their selection of play and cast. Students studying Drama, or interested in it are acquiring extraordinary opportunities while under the direction Dr. Marion Wright and other talented faculty members and Alumnae.

Students in the play are gaining experience in their craft as well as improving and imparting the Arts to the Atlanta University Center. Observing this season of The Spelman College Department of Drama and Dance has been a fabulous experience, and more Spelman Sisters need to come and support.

For any inquiries about current and future productions by the department, swing by the Fine Arts building for information.

## A Healthy Spring Break

Kamilah Haynes  
Staff Writer

With spring break steadily approaching, students are gearing up for a fun filled weekend making sure to pack their bathing suits, sun block, and flip flops. However in the midst of all the excitement, don't forget to pack your common sense. You will need it from the moment you step off the plane until you make the loathsome trip back home. Read on to find out how you and your friends can minimize risks over spring break so that all you'll have to worry about is getting an even tan.

Before going anywhere, make sure you plan ahead for your trip. Be sure to secure all your valuables in your room or lock them in storage. Try to pack light, taking the things you know you will need and leaving all the excess baggage (those extra pairs of shoes and 7 pairs of earrings). By doing this you will decrease the likelihood of losing some-

thing and keep your luggage light. Make sure to pack your money, ID, passport, medications, cell phone charger, hygiene products, and some Vitamin C. The recycled air in airplanes makes it very easy to catch airborne germs and illnesses, so do your body a favor by drinking plenty of fluids, taking Vitamin C pills, eating well balanced meals, and taking multivitamins/ supplements.

Partying all night and flirting with new boys may sound like fun, but STD's and HIV/AIDS are not. The easiest way to protect yourself from these diseases is to use condoms, birth control, or whatever you and your doctor have decided upon. It is important to keep your body as healthy as possible, so choose protection every time. Protect yourself in the bedroom and on the beach. You and your friends should stay hydrated and use plenty of sun block. Too much exposure to the sun can lead to a nasty rash and or illness. Make sure have water bottles on you at all times and a sunscreen that suits your preferences.

While in a new and exciting place, it may be tempting to go off exploring by yourself. It is very important for students to travel in

groups everywhere you go. If your friends are still sleeping, find something to do until they wake up. Never travel alone, there is safety in numbers. Make sure that everyone on the trip has each other's contact information so that should someone get separated from the group, you will be able to reach her or her parents if necessary.

Consuming alcohol is normally a big part of spring break, but if it's not your thing do not feel pressured to try. You and your friends can still have fun in a sober state. If you all do choose to drink, know your limits and refrain from driving afterwards or during. Assign a designated driver just in case. If you are drinking while at a party, make sure you make wise decisions when it comes to sexual activity and watch out for one another. Don't let a friend do something she is going to regret in the morning.

Be wary of your surroundings at all times. If someone looks suspicious, make eye contact with them and calmly steer clear of them. Criminals are less likely to harass someone who has taken a good look at them, because they know that you will be able to provide a more accurate description if questioned

by the police. If you are travelling in groups you will decrease your chances of being approached by someone with ill intentions. While at the beach or pool, make sure you stay in an area here you feel comfortable. If you cannot swim, be sure to stay in the shallow end. If you run out of cash and need to head to the ATM, make sure to take someone with you and go to one that has adequate lighting, preferably indoors. Always check the peephole before opening the hotel door and put all the locks on the door while you're sleeping at night.

Many of us don't like to include parents in our spring break plans, for fear that they may worry or ask too many questions. However it is important to check in with them periodically so that they know you are safe and have some idea of where you are. You and your parents may also want to establish a code word that indicates that you are in danger. Even if they are hundreds of miles away, they will be able to contact someone who can help you.

The goal of spring break is to have a fun, relaxing, and exciting trip that you and your friends will laugh about for years to come.

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# THE SPELMAN SPOTLIGHT



## The Spelman Spotlight Promotes Cervical Cancer Awareness

### MYTHS ABOUT CERVICAL CANCER

**Myth:** Virgins should not get Pap Smears.

**Truth:** It is safer for clinicians to recommend the pap smear by age 21 because HPV is transmitted through skin to skin contact. Though a patient may have never involved in sexual intercourse, the virus still may have been transmitted.

**Myth:** Women who have taken the HPV vaccine should stop Cervical cancer screenings.

**Truth:** Screenings are still necessary in order to check for the many other strains of HPV that the two vaccines do not protect against.

**Myth:** Only Promiscuous women contract Cervical Cancer.

**Truth:** Women who have had only one partner can develop cervical cancer because there are many factors involved in the development of cervical cancer.

**Myth:** Condoms alone can protect against HPV.

**Truth:** Condoms provide minimal protection against HPV. Since the virus is transmitted through sexual, skin-to-skin contact, there is no penetration needed to contract HPV.

**Myth:** Pap Smears are always extremely painful.

**Truth:** Doctors and specially trained health professionals perform Pap tests. These individuals are trained to provide the least discomfort to patients as possible.

*"The Spelman Spotlight promotes Cervical Cancer Awareness by dedicating the health column to promote cervical cancer awareness through prevention tips and student expression."*



COURTESY OF ZAZZLE

Deaweh Benson  
Executive Editor

We are all guilty of judging a book by its cover. Unfortunately, each year approximately 12,000 women do not realize how judging by appearances alone can result in the contraction of cervical cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cancer is a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control. Cancer that starts in the cervix, the narrow

end of the uterus, is called cervical cancer.

The Human PapillomaVirus is one of the leading causes of cervical cancer and is generally transmitted during intercourse. There are over 40 strands of HPV, and most people who are infected with one of the various types do not know that they have contracted the virus. Sadly, many young adults hold the misconception that unprotected sex is safe if his or her sexual

partner lacks any skin irritations surrounding the genital area.

The current statistics on HPV suggest that there can be no such thing as safe unprotected sex. There are about 20 million Americans who are currently infected with HPV. In fact, the virus is so common that at 50% of sexually active people contract it.

As the HPV virus progresses, it can cause normal infected skin cells to turn abnormal. If the human body is unable to fight off the virus, then HPV can cause genital warts or cervical cancer.

### Prevent Cervical Cancer

Cervical Cancer can be easily prevented due to HPV Vaccines and screening tests.

There are two types of HPV vaccines: Cervarix and Gardasil. The vaccines protect women against certain strands of HPV that cause most cases of cervical cancers, and Gardasil prevents most genital warts.

There are also two types of cervical cancer screening tests: The Pap smear or the HPV test. The Pap Smear only screens for cervical cancer by finding precancers and cell changes on the cervix. The HPV test checks for the virus that can cause cell changes on the cervix. It is often used for women ages 30 and over and when the Pap Smear reports unclear results.

Regulations from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommend that women begin Pap test screening at age 21, be screened every 2 years through the age of 30, and then be screened every 3 years as long as their last three tests have been deemed normal.

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## Apparently Black History Month Is Not Important Anymore at HBCU's

Seana' Dark  
Staff Writer

It is very unfortunate that the accomplishments of African Americans are only recognized across the United States during one month out of the entire year. The month that is allotted to African Americans is commonly referred to as "Black History" month. The question that arises here at Spelman College is, "At a Historically Black College is this month really still important?" obviously not.

I have seen a few papers throughout LLC2 posted that have facts about famous and notable African Americans on them; while this is one step towards showing our appreciation to those who paved the way for us it is not enough. As the #1 HBCU one would expect that Spelman would have several events, programs, festivities, and special tributes throughout the month or even daily to reflect the hard work and achievements of African Americans throughout history, but this is not the case.

Just because the majority of our institution is African American, that does not mean that emphasis should not be placed on being enthusiastic about celebrating our History during the month of February. Yes, many of the students here at Spelman learn about Black History everyday in class, but that should not take away this from this month.

Some may attest to this argument and say that they do not need a month to celebrate Black History because they live it every day, but is this really true? In my opinion I think that Black History month is special because it is a time that is specifically set aside to teach others about Black History and how people within this race and culture have overcome

so many obstacles and have paved the way for African Americans today. While a "month" in particular is not needed to celebrate and show our appreciation for those who came before us and made great accomplishments, I often wonder if there was no Black History Month would individuals really gather together and make a difference in society?

Some complain that African Americans are only celebrated one month, and the shortest one at that, but this is just one way that people have lost sight. Many people fought and even died to get African Americans any recognition at all, but having an entire month is a lot in a world that seems to always bring African Americans down.

The history of our wonderful institution and many other Historically Black Colleges and Universities across the United States is so special, and we must make sure that we do not overlook, forget, or take for granted all that it took to get African Americans equal educational opportunities. With all the students, visitors, and faculty that walk around on this campus every day I am sure that everyone is not aware of a lot of the history of African Americans, and there is much more that can be done. While Spelman places a big emphasis on Spel-bound, NSO week, and Founders day, I think that we can focus on Black History Month a lot more. Overall I think that there really should not be a lot of fuss over the month, but I do believe a lot more needs to be done at HBCU's in order to celebrate our history.

HBCU's are more than schools that are largely populated with African Americans and more than what many stereotype as party schools, but instead these institutions show the progress and success of African American people over many generations. So my question



## PEPers: Finding the Creative Balance Between Entertainment and Education

Deaweh Benson  
Executive Editor

The goal of the Spelman Office of Student Activities is to address the growth of the whole student through creative and enriching activities. PEPers, one of our budding registered student organizations, does just that. PEPers is a peer education program that promotes the emotional and mental health of students. The organization is a part of the certified BACCHUS and GAMMA network which educates college students on comprehensive health and safety initiatives. The Spelman members of PEPers are a part of more than 32,000 student leaders and advisors on more than 1,000 college campus throughout the world.

This academic year, PEPers has placed a major emphasis on depression and self-esteem. Thus far, the club has hosted a panel discussion on domestic violence and healthy relationships entitled Fall For Your Type, a yoga night, and a wealth of community service activities.

President, S. Jalysa Boose-Sheppard notes that her most enjoyable experience with PEPers was the Fall For Your Type event.

"With the promise of Chick-Fil-A as well as the presence of the special guest panel, we had an amazing turn out for the event," Boose-Sheppard said.

With over 80 registered student organizations, it is easy to be unaware of the various opportunities that PEPers has to offer to the student body.

The PEPers House of Representatives member, Brittney Gooden comments that "if

you are sociable, have a bubbly personality, possess the qualities of a leader, and most importantly a passion for educating your Spelman sisters on mental health issues, then this is the organization for you."

Although the Fall 2010 semester was successful, PEPers has even more great events and initiatives for Spring 2011. For instance, the club plans conduct a Spring Break Challenge Campaign in partnership with the Wellness Center.

Additionally, the organization plans to host regular dorm chats with first year students to discuss topics such as sex and self-esteem. The purpose for such chats are to promote open dialogues about issues that are often ignored by the larger African-American community. The dorm chats are scheduled to take place from February through April. Residents will be notified about the scheduled dates and times in advance.

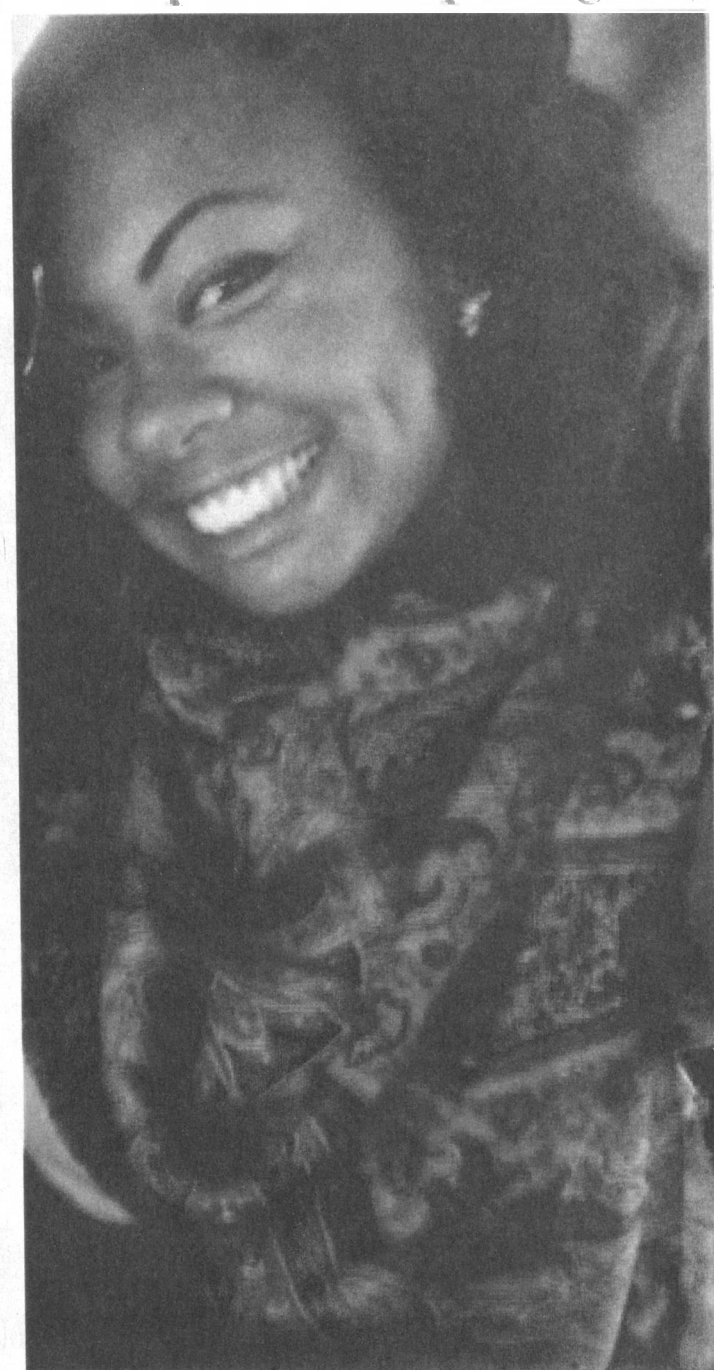
"I want the average Spelman student to know that PEPers is here to serve you. No matter how odd or crazy you may think your questions are, we can help you. If you do not feel comfortable talking to us, we can [also] direct you to another source," says Boose-Sheppard.

Boose-Sheppard knows that it is hard to find a balance between education and entertainment. However, by establishing creative events and captivating initiatives, PEPers will soon grow to become one of the more recognized registered student organizations.

If you have questions or are interested in learning more about PEPers, contact S. Jalysa Boose-Sheppard at sboosesh@scmail.spelman.edu.

## SPOTLIGHT ON Mea Boykin

Briana Haymon  
Forum Editor



Paying for a collegiate education can get incredibly rough at times. Loans, scholarships, and grants can only cover so much. And for many students striving towards a degree, that dream is deferred when finances that they so heavily depended on falls through. This is a lot to think about when you are studying for finals and trying to pay for books. One Spelman student has seen these dreams at risk due to finances time and time again, and has actually created a means to stop the trend.

With the assistance of her father and many other contributors, Mea Boykin, a senior Psychology major with a minor in French at Spelman, has founded the Spelman Emergency Assistance Scholarship Fund to help students who are experiencing the kind of financial burdens that threatens the progression of their education.

"It is so unfortunate when people can't continue their education because of money," Boykin said. "I think that education is important. It is a necessity to life." With this scholarship she has found a means to make sure that people are still able to do so. Already S.E.A. has assisted in the continued education of two students, and the funds awarded to this scholarship continue to grow.

Although this is a scholarship for Spelman students, it is still a very competitive one.

Boykin explained adamantly that this scholarship would be awarded to students who are active on campus and who are in very strong academic standing. The acceptor must be someone with strong moral character and extensive community service work. "We are looking for someone who is bigger than themselves," said Boykin.

Boykin is the first student to create a scholarship fund while still enrolled at Spelman. She has worked with many organizations including the Institutional Advancements Department to raise funds for her scholarship, and her strives have not gone unnoticed. In March Boykin and many others will be attending a scholarship banquet that honors those who have helped others continue their education. She will probably be the youngest one in attendance.

"I love service, and I just feel like with all the negativity that the world offers, when people are fed negativity they should give the world something positive" said Boykin. "Through this scholarship I feel as though I have done my part; to be able to give back to the Spelman community."

Following her education, the New Orleans native has plans to pursue a Doctorates degree in Chicago, Illinois.

## To Commute or Not to Commute

Stevi Darden  
Forum Editor

In the morning, I stare at the alarm on my phone with disdain and confusion. Every morning implodes the same frustrating thought into my mind, "Why am I waking up at 7 o'clock for a 10 o'clock class?" Well, it has something to do with my commute to the Spelman College Campus. From my house, I commute to school every Monday and Wednesday in a sleepy daze. In case you haven't noticed, the I-85 North traffic could easily be equated to the fun of sliding down a giant cheese grater. Driving inch by inch on the freeway towards the destination of Spelman could drive any young woman insane. The main reason for this mind-blowing commute is the lack of accessibility to Spelman housing.

Every year, Spelman's tuition raises and teeters along the borderline of outrageous. Numerous students cringe annually at the thought that they may possibly be paying more for a place to lay their heads at night. It is evident that students are paying for the name of their institution instead of the cramped rooms and questionable, communal showers in resident housing.

Even more unfortunate is the school's shameless preying on the naïve freshmen who are required to live in the dormitories. Sweaty, humid summers with no air conditioning and ancient style rooms may be seen as a "newbie" tradition- paying her dues as a first year college student. Nevertheless, paying about thirty-five thousand dollars to appease the freshmen ritual of Spelman is extremely unacceptable. Quite frankly, our money is nothing to be played with; So, what are your options?

There are numerous options and circumstances to consider when thinking about commuting. Of course the most apparent issue is cost. How much will it cost to live on campus as opposed to off campus?

Will I need a car? Am I willing to use public transportation? How will my commute affect my classes and campus activities? These are all essential questions, but let's review the facts. Some people shy away from off campus living because they do not want to pay the monthly rent.

Yet, when calculated by semester, housing and board costs about \$5,030 at Spelman. Essentially, students pay about a thousand dollars a month. After the second year at Spelman, a lot of students feel the need to spread their wings and live off campus in search of independence. Others, like me, commute to avoid the harsh financial rip-offs of the resident housing. Down in the depths of upperclassmen are a select few who enjoy on-campus housing with no intention of leaving. Everyone takes a different stance on the idea of commuting, but what's most important is that you decide what fits best for you.

Consider what is desired most out of your college experience. Do you feel like an on-campus residency gives you a false perspective on what Atlanta has to offer? Perhaps you have so many activities that you cannot afford to live away from the pearly gates of Spelman. Every year, it becomes a more strenuous process for our parent's pocket books as well. Although it would be ideal to believe that increased fees will not affect students, it is truly disheartening to see students leave Spelman because of financial pressures.

Ultimately, the best thing to do is weigh your options and consider all of the positives and negatives of the commuter lifestyle. Yes, I experience occasional blushing when I'm caught dancing in my car during a traffic jam. Yes, I am excessively jittery after my double shot of espresso in the morning to sustain energy. All the same, I smile wide when I hear that saved change jiggling in the depths of my bank account.



## Has Rihanna gone too far with S & M?



COURTESY OF ISLAND/DEF JAM, UNIVERSAL RECORDS

Lakin I. Starling  
Staff Writer

As soon as Rihanna's music video for her hit single "S&M" hit the internet and television stations, the controversy sparked like a broken fuse. The pop singer has a new album "Loud" that has a few songs similar in content to her new album that are comprised of risque lyrics.

The term "S&M" abbreviate the word "somasochism" which alludes to the idea of one finding pleasure and causing and receiving physical pain. The lyrics to the song are racy, "Sex in the air I don't care I like the smell of it/sticks and stones may break my bones but whips and chains excite me", however the content of the video is even more extreme.

Plenty of a songs get played on the radio that have highly suggestive lyrics about sexuality and sexual behavior, but when it is transferred into a creative idea to portray those messages visually, that is when the artists usually have problems. In the "S&M" video, Rihanna uses a ball gag, and elements of dominatrix and pretends as if she is tied up while making very sexual movements and gestures. The video is already banned from being played in 11 countries, and on Youtube.com the viewer must be over the age of 18. The reaction of the

public seems to go further than the concern for a half-naked woman walking around in a video because unfortunately, that is what most of today's video's entail.

Earlier in the week she tweeted "They watched Umbrella ... I was full nude", but in the Umbrella video there was something left to the imagination. The larger concern seems to be about what exactly the song means and how Rihanna has not stayed within any boundaries while portraying those ideas.

Most argue that "S&M" should be banned because there is no discretion when it comes to what type of viewer could potentially see the video. Anyone has access to the internet, and regardless of how old a person truly is, with the smarts of most tech-savvy youth, there are ways to get around weak restrictions. MTV is one of the major stations that still insist on playing the video, which is a major way for the video to get into the hands of teenagers all across the country. It is proven that they are the largest group of people who watch music videos.

It seems to be a reoccurring issue about if the artist should create their art with discretion and their audience in mind, or whether they should be able to express themselves freely through their crafts. It is a very sticky issue, since over time, artist will grow out of the

image that they once upheld in the beginnings of the their careers. Yet and still, as a public icon, it is still important to be realistic in who is consuming most of the product.

Although "S&M" has shocking lyrics, it can still be played on the radio, maybe even in an edited version, it may not be the best idea to play the video on all mainstream channels. In doing so, it is sure to conflict with Rihanna's profit and marketing tactics, however there is a group of viewers who could potentially not have enough intellect to decipher the fact that the video is for pure entertainment. Rihanna has grown into a woman and it is her right to be able to express her sentiments about sex and her sexuality freely. There was no sugarcoating the meaning in the song nor the lyrics, but in creating the video it may have been a clever idea to make an edited version as well.

Sometimes it seems as if the artist want to have that wow factor, and when they cause controversy it solidifies their career. The idea is somewhat factual however the issue still remains, should Rihanna's video be played or banned from television. With such immediate restrictions on the video, perhaps "S&M" should be shown in an edited version on everyday television because it cannot always be assumed that viewers will watch with discretion.

## A Constant Triumph

Jordan Harris  
Executive Editor

With arms stretched wide and a solemn face, the young woman on the screen serves as a canvas as the words monogamy and polygamy are being carved in her arms. This provocative image pushes the boundaries of contemporary art and is now available to the Spelman College community.

The Spelman College Museum of Fine Art will feature the Constant Triumph exhibition by artist IngridMwangiRobertHutter Feb. 4 through May 14. The exhibition is the first in the United States to feature an extensive collection of the artist's work.

IngridMwangiRobertHutter's work has been featured in solo exhibitions in Belgium, Egypt, Italy, Germany, Japan, Kenya and Tanzania. The exhibition features 13 works of photography, video and performance.

This season, the Museum of Fine Arts presents artistic exhibitions that explore the theme of artistic partnerships.

In the fall 2010 exhibition Evenly Yoked: Bradley McCallum & Jacqueline Tarry, the artists McCallum and Tarry examined race relations and the issue of interracial affairs in the United States.

IngridMwangiRobertHutter expands this conversation to cover socially relevant topics that affect the human experience in all communities across the globe. The works featured in the exhibition explore private journeys of the artists and the challenges of race, gender and cultural heritage.

The theme of Constant Triumph was inspired by Mwangi's sister's battle with breast cancer.

In an interview with News Blaze, Andrea Barnwell Brownlee, Ph.D, director of the Museum of Fine Art said the exhibit is both "pertinent" and "timely" as the Museum of Fine Art presents contemporary exhibitions that provoke thought and expose injustice. Mwangi is of Kenyan and German heritage. Hutter is a German native. The two merged their names and biographies to work as one identity and formed IngridMwangiRobertHutter in 2005.

According to News Blaze, the artists declared that their work would be dedicated to them as a collective and cohesive unit. The exhibition includes a series of events that will touch basis on the interpretation of the artists and their works.

Through poetry readings, gallery walks and discussions, the museum staff will facilitate conversations with the Spelman community and outside communities on the ideas behind race, skin politics, appropriation and cultural identity.

Major support for IngridMwangiRobertHutter:Constant Triumph was provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners under the Arts Council.

members are aware of what the Project Impact is designed to do.

Spelman's service reach will only be strengthened by the creation and implementation of Project Impact, and students or community members who are interested in working with Project Impact should contact LEADS at leads@spelman.edu.

## Project Impact Arrives at Spelman College

Kelly N. Harper  
Managing Editor

While Spelman College is often seen as an oasis amidst an urban jungle, it is virtually impossible to ignore the needs of the community that surrounds Spelman. The community that surrounds Spelman is comprised of real people with real needs that cannot be ignored. Recently, Spelman launched a new service initiative to strengthen community ties, entitled "Project Impact" on Sat, Feb. 5, 2011 in the Cosby Academic Center.

Dr. Jane E. Smith, executive director of the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement at Spelman, has been an integral part of the development and execution of Project Impact. Dr. Smith worked with President Dr. Beverly Tatum along with community leaders from The Center for Working Families, Greening Youth Foundation, Hands on Network/Points of Light Institute, United Way of Metro Atlanta, and Emerging Leaders Institute.

LEADS intern Alexis Crews says that the launch of Project Impact was well received,

and it generated a great amount of publicity and attention.

"I was excited to see so many students come out to support this new initiative—the number of attendees surpassed the amount that we had hoped would come!" says Crews.

Project Impact is aligned with the purpose of the Johnnetta B. Cole Institute for its community outreach foundation. The Institute is designed to support LEADS' endeavors to create forums for experienced leaders to assist with enhancing the respective communities that surround Spelman. Project Impact was launched during this Institute, which had surpassed its goal for attendees.

One of the strengths of Project Impact is that it utilizes the College's longstanding community partnerships. The College works with and supports organizations such as KIPP Strive Academy, The Center for Working Families, Neighborhood Planning Unit T, the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, and the Center for Black Women's Wellness. Moreover, through the use of the partnerships of the College and Project Impact, Spelman students will be have the unique opportunity

to complete ongoing, meaningful service in the area surrounding the campus.

Many of the initiatives of Project Impact focus on community issues such as education, health, environmental sustainability, and economic development. LEADS created Project Impact to also align with the College's Strategic Plan for 2015, and each of the four aforementioned areas will be a substantial part of the Project's Initiatives.

After the information session and the Johnnetta B. Cole Institute, which was held from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., there was a community outreach walk that was designed to dispense the Project Impact information into the community. The walk lasted from 4:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m., and it was a crucial aspect to ensure that a varied amount of community

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