

Spelman College
A Choice to Change the World

THE BLUEPRINT:

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CELEBRATING
BLACK HISTORY

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THE BLUEPRINT: Mission Statment

It is the mission of The Blueprint to serve as a profound forum that fortifies understanding, unity, and advocacy throughout the Spelman and greater AUC community. The Blueprint strives to produce innovative, fair, and creative journalism that helps its readers understand the nation and world through the lens of African-American and Black Women.

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CAMPUS LIFE & Events

Beyond the Gowns:

A Look into Black Collegiate Pageantry

By: **Alaja Phillips** C'2015

Behind the glamour and spotlights, there is much more to pageants than most of us know. With some pageants finished, and the even bigger ones quickly approaching, we thought it might be useful to give some insight as to what being a part of a pageant entails by allowing the participants of recent pageants to share their experiences.

All Historically Black Colleges and Universities have many events in common but perhaps the most socially exciting are pageants. Collegiate pageants are a chance for students to break out of their shell and showcase their talents in front of peers. The types of pageants range from Greek, scholarship, university, and class pageants--all serving different purposes.



Here at Spelman College, a registered student organization can choose to host a pageant in which both male and female students may attempt to represent and carry out the initiatives of that organization. The biggest pageants in the AUC are The Mr. and Miss AUC Pageant, Miss Spelman, and Miss Maroon and White. To be a contestant in these pageants, or to even win, is a great opportunity that comes with a long process.

Pageants are filled with defining moments that can build relationships and open doors for many students. With a range of pageants to choose from, it is important to understand the different goals of each pageant. Each pageant inadvertently attracts a particular audience and says something unique about its contestants. The first semester of every year is filled with

RSO and class pageants.

The most recent was the 2014 scholarship Miss Omega Psi Phi pageant, in which Zhané Dadson C'2015 took first place. Dadson entered the competition because she loves the fraternity and was in need of a scholarship. Her exquisite performance was rewarded with a book scholarship and endless love from the fraternity. She now works closely with the men of the Psi chapter to host community events.

"This competition has brought me closer to the rest of the contestants," Dadson said. "Everyone was really supportive of the outcome and I am so appreciative of the relationships that I have fostered because of the pageant. This really allowed me to see who my true friends and supporters are."

It is important to correctly choose





a pageant that is best for you. Samia Billups, a junior, was another contestant in the Miss Omega Psi Phi pageant.

"I chose to do a Greek pageant because I know they are the most controversial and criticized," Billups said. "I perceived it as a challenge to use my gracefulness to change that perception."

Many enter pageants for personal aspirations but others have goals to connect with people they admire. Whatever your goal may be, make sure that you find the perfect one for you. The pageant process and outcome are both worth a close look into when considering entering a pageant. Some pageants occur within a month of contestant selection, while others may occur three months later. Most RSO and class pageants are held in the same month of contestant selection.

Other pageants like Miss Spelman

and Miss AUC are held the semester following selection. This is important because you may apply and be selected in October with the mindset that it will be over soon. The time leading up to the pageant is full of chaos. A storyline must be made, a photo-shoot must be carried out, a dress must be bought, questions must be practiced, a platform must be established, and above all a talent must be solidified!

The process of a pageant can sometimes be so worrisome, that some contestants quit after realizing it's not for them. This is why it is crucial to make sure your pageant of interest is dear to your heart.

"Seeing the contestants work hard under so much pressure was motivation for me to stick to the project," said Morehouse senior and pageant director Logan Battle. "After so many financial and social obstacles, we were still able to put on a good show. Though I learned a lot and made great friends, I would not do it again. I feel as though it was a once in a lifetime experience for a reason.

Rachel Delsarte, a senior biology major, was a recent winner in the Kappa Alpha Psi pageant.

"My involvement in the pageant

was enjoyable and I learned a lot about myself," Delsarte said. "I made good connections with important people, but I probably won't do another pageant in my college career."

Some pageants reveal to contestants that the spotlight is for them, while others learned that they were born to perform. Though it may be stressful and require hard-work, pageants are worth it in the end as you receive a great number of rewards in all forms. Fallon Clark, junior computer science major, is now serving as Miss Junior.

"I feel honored to represent the class of 2015," said Clark. It's wonderful to know that the students trust me to represent them with poise, grace, and class. It is difficult to collaborate with class council, but I know that it will help me grow as a student and a professional. It was a very rewarding experience."

If you see a pageant contestant out and about, take the chance to congratulate and complement them as they have worked very hard. We encourage you to go for it and be determined if you are considering taking part in a pageant!



What is The Spelman Glee Club?

*Karrah Red C'2016 Speaks on
the Glee Club Experience*

By: **Analisa Wade C'2016**
Arts and Entertainment Section Editor

Second Soprano Karrah Red, has been a member of the Spelman Glee Club for two years. The bonds she has created with her Glee sisters are irreplaceable and have truly impacted the way she views music.

"Being a member has changed my Spelman experience," Karrah said. "At first I wanted to quit. The transition was difficult being the freshman all over again."

She quickly overcame the uneasy feelings and fell in love with who the Spelman music community was helping her become.

Red refers to the director of the Glee Club, Dr. Kevin Johnson as a "musical genius".

"If it wasn't for him, I'm not sure where the club would be," she said.

The Glee Club performs shows all around the country, so it gives the students a chance to travel and truly represent Spelman women, "Everyone doesn't have the chance to visit Spelman College, so we give them the best depiction of what a Spelman woman looks like."

The members perform in black dresses, pearls, and red lipstick. "The three of them combined is to show what it is to be a woman of Spelman College as well as a woman of music." To Red, being a woman of music is to like it, be serious about it, and to love it, "my life is devoted to music; music is not devoted to me."

The Glee Club continues to help her evolve and develop herself as an artist. Walking into it, she didn't know what to expect, but now she understands it's a major part of her matriculation as an artist.

Interracial Dating in the AUC

By: **Karys Belger C'2016** and **Veronica Fulton C'2016**

Interracial has long been a topic of great controversy. Though in our generation, the mixing of black, white, and other colors has become more common. However, despite growing tolerance, meshing between the races can still ignite passions.

Actress Tamera Mowry grew up "not seeing color". A product of a biracial background, she never saw anything wrong with interracial dating. When she announced her engagement to FOX News correspondent Adam Housley, she was bombarded with criticism from the African- American community for choosing to marry outside of her race. In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, Mowry said:

"It's hurtful, because my husband and I are so openly fine with showing love, but people choose to look past love and spew hate."

Here in the AUC the opinions of the student body are a bit more varied. Spelman senior Faith Porter expressed that while she would never consider interracial dating, she doesn't see a problem for others who choose to do it themselves. Traveling abroad, she was exposed to cultures where black women were hyper sexualized.

"My main concern is if you like me for myself or to fulfill a fantasy," Porter said.

With regard to black men, opinions are much more critical. The general consensus is that if a black man dates a white woman then he is a sellout. Spelman sophomore Madison Pulliam agrees.

"The only reason a black man will date a white woman is because he is too weak to handle a strong black woman," Pulliam said. "There are too many fine

black women out here."

But what about Spelman women dating outside the color lines? Considering that there are more Spelmanites than there are men of Morehouse, one would think that it would be more acceptable for a woman in the AUC to explore other options. Yet there are still mixed feelings about the subject.

"I like the idea of interracial dating, but not the practice," said Morehouse sophomore Takelion Thompson. He believes that people tend to date outside of their race because of bad experiences while dating within their own. Like many of his fellow men of Morehouse, Thompson is unsettled with the idea of a black woman in the AUC dating a white male.

"I feel like if black woman comes to the AUC and dates a white guy, then she really had to try," Thompson said.

The white students at Morehouse seem a lot less bothered.

"I don't really see anything wrong with it," said Ian Niemeyer. "It seems like a really close minded viewpoint to say that people should only date people within their race."

Junior Stephen O'Reilly-Pol agrees. "I think it can be done with the right people involved," he said.

It seems as if the opinions on interracial dating are as varied as the people in the AUC themselves. While we can argue the fine points of interracial dating endlessly, we can agree that love is something that is bigger than us all. According to sophomore Theo Curuthers, "If God is love, and God created all of these different races, then interracial dating shouldn't be a problem".



Lorie Has No Boundaries

By: Courtney D. King C'2015

Despite popular belief, lower classmen aren't the only ones caught up in the "cupcake" stage of a relationship this time of the year. As a junior in my own "Spelhouse" relationship, I should know! With so many students in the Atlanta University Center that embrace Valentine's Day with their significant others, I had to rise to the occasion and find out how other successful, long-term relationships in the AUC have been able to prevail through the good and bad times. And what better way to reveal the truth and beauty of a relationship than to ask actual couples who have conquered many obstacles, respectively: racial differences, physical separation, and the transition into marriage. For students who are searching for Mr./Mrs. Right, get your pens and paper ready!

Paris Clark and Matthew Reed

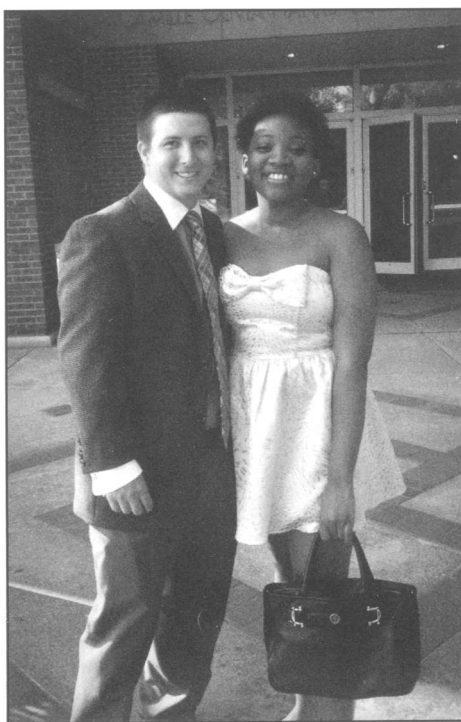
Anniversary: April 22, 2012

Paris's classification/major:

Junior, Psychology Major with a Writing minor at Spelman College, Atlanta, GA

Matthew's classification/major: Junior, Political Science at Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA
1) How have you both been able to maintain a long-term relationship in the AUC?

- a. **Paris:** "I think respect, trust, and communication are important. Respecting one another's personal space is also crucial in regards to boundaries. Also, anytime we have a problem we give each other some space to cool off before we talk



about the issue."

- 2) As an interracial couple, have you received any negative criticism towards your relationship? If so, what reactions have you encountered?**

- a. **Matthew:** "For the most part,

we aren't confronted with any backlash. However, there have been times when we're out in public and get certain looks from strangers. We're able to notice when people are looking at us because of our relationship, but we just brush it off."

- 3) In what ways do you overcome racial stereotypes against interracial couples (i.e. jungle fever)?**

- a. **Matthew:** "I don't pay attention to any of it. You have to be confident because people are going to think and say whatever they want. It's all about having thick skin."
b. **Paris:** "Yea, I agree. When my friends ask me about how the relationship started, I just tell them that it simply 'just happened'". It's one of those things that are hard to explain to others since the connection was just present.

- 4) What general advice do you have for Spelman and Morehouse students who seek the infamous Spelhouse relationship?**

- a. **Paris:** "People should just be patient and try not to search for a relationship. Matt literally walked through the door and things began to fall into place."
b. **Matthew:** "At the time, I wasn't looking for a relationship. I was



actually meeting up with my Spelman sister."

Allyson Brown and Chris Melvin

Anniversary: January 2, 2010

Allyson's classification/major:

Junior, Drama/Theatre Arts at Spelman College, Atlanta, GA

Chris's major: Pre-Physical Therapy at Delgado Community College, New Orleans, LA

1) As a Spelman student in a long-distance relationship with your high school sweetheart, what challenges do you face due to the separation from your significant other?

- a. **Allyson:** "There are times when I get lonely. I feel like the separation is difficult to bear because I want to have him physically around me, especially when I'm going through things that my closest friends can't always help me through in the same manner that he can."

2) What factors do you believe contribute to the success of your relationship?

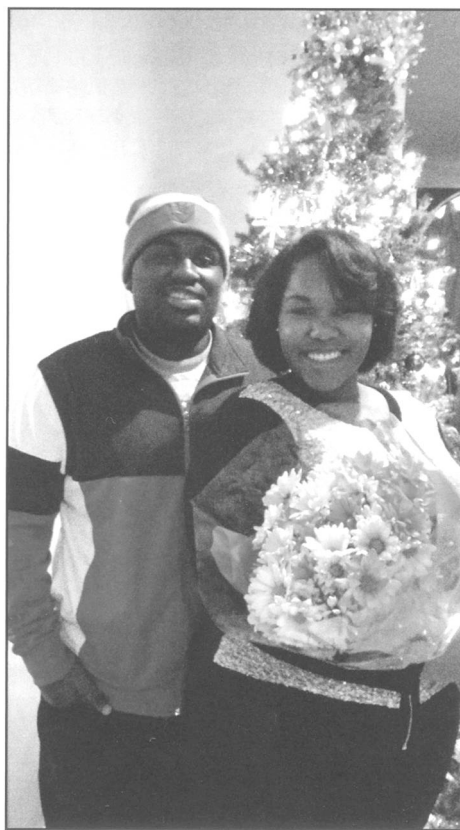
- a. **Chris:** "Communication is really important in my opinion, especially since we attend schools in different states. We've adopted great ways to take each other's feelings into consideration whenever we talk."
- b. **Allyson:** "In addition to what he said, I think our years of building a friendship prior to the start of the relationship strengthened the love that we share for one another. Another big factor for me is trust. I'm able to know that he's remaining faithful while I'm in Atlanta because we spent so many years trusting each other as friends first."

3) Since the AUC consists of attractive men from both Morehouse College and Clark Atlanta University, in what ways do you find yourself fighting off temptation in order to remain faithful?

- a. **Allyson:** "I avoid putting myself in

conflicting situations. Whenever I interact with a guy in the AUC, he's able to show me why Chris is such a great person and boyfriend. When I see other couples out here and hear why things didn't work out, it reinforces the importance of building a friendship with someone before you begin the relationship aspect. Relationships go beyond physical appearances; there are also the mental and spiritual aspects to take into consideration. Guys know how to play with girls' emotions."

- b. **Chris:** "Even though this question is directed towards Ally, I believe that if I take care of my responsibilities as her man, then there won't be any temptation on her part to be unfaithful. I'm



completely confident in her, myself, and the relationship."

4) What advice do you have for college women, especially those here at Spelman, who might be in a similar situation as yourself?

- a. **Allyson:** "I would encourage women to take things within their long-distance relationship one step at a time. It's so easy to give up on a relationship when the two individuals are separated for long periods of time. You have to believe in the relationship and remain faithful because word can travel easily back to the person."

Paige Smith and Curtis Smith II

Wedding anniversary: January 1, 2014

Paige's classification/major:

Junior, English major with a Professional Writing minor at Spelman College, Atlanta, GA

Curtis's classification/major:

Junior, English major at Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA

1) What factors keep your love and bond for one another so strong?

- a. **Paige:** "That's a great question! There are two things: Our faith and simply the decision to keep the relationship strong. Divorce isn't an option for us and neither is a loveless, passionless marriage. We stay in love on purpose, we don't want to fall in or out of love, but grow in it day by day. And I can honestly say I love Curtis better than I did when we got married January 1st. He's not just my fiancé now, he's my best friend. Most importantly, our personal relationships with Jesus definitely bond us."
- b. **Curtis:** "Our relationship and faith in Jesus Christ has kept our love and bond so strong because as we understand the depths of Christ's love for us, it motivates and pushes us to love each other with this same love and compassion towards each other. Also our previous family experiences with divorce, unhappy marriages, and broken households give us a



blueprint on what to do and what not to do. This draws our hearts together as we are achieving our goal of a happy, successful, and passionate family. Also, I'm deeply in love with Paige. She is more



than I could ever dream for as a wife to be and as a wife."

2) Upon getting engaged, how did you know you were ready (i.e. emotionally, mentally, financially, etc.) to actually get married while still pursuing an undergraduate education?

a. **Paige:** "Honestly, we took it by faith. Now I'm not advocating for people to rush into marriage by ANY MEANS; all I can tell is my own story. We believed God wanted us to get married on January 1st as crazy as it may sound, so against all logic and even our own fears, we did it and it's been one of the best decisions I've ever made. Once we decided we were going to pursue with the wedding, we prepared as much as possible for our marriage: We went through a vigorous pre-marital counseling course, got

advice from experienced married couples and our pastors, solidified housing arrangements, made sure our finances were in order, and went through the paperwork and red tape that marriage preparation requires. And we prayed!"

b. **Curtis:** "Honestly, I knew I wasn't completely ready to get married. The reason Paige and I got married was because we both felt like Jesus wanted us to get married at a particular time and a particular date. But though I felt that I wasn't ready, I was willing to do whatever, go through whatever, or face whatever comes my way because I deeply love both Jesus and Paige."

3) Have you each obtained new responsibilities post-wedding day? If so, what are they and how have you grown individually, as well as a married couple?

a. **Paige:** "We definitely have taken on new responsibilities, he's now a husband and I'm now a wife. Our greatest responsibility to one another is simple and evolving: loving each other. My main responsibility is loving Curtis and submitting to him, as well as figuring out what each of those things really consist of. Submitting to him without pride or fear that he'll take advantage of me and for him to love me completely unconditionally. It's hard, but the beautiful thing is that marriage completely stretches you and grows you in every area, especially if you're open to growth and change like we are. I'm learning every day just like Curtis is learning himself. We don't have rigid expectations for one another which makes it easier."

b. **Curtis:** "Yes, I have attained new responsibilities. As the husband, my responsibilities are leading a household, ensuring my family is financially stable,

loving my wife with everything that is in me, nurturing my wife's relationship with Jesus Christ, keeping the romance of our relationship aflame, and attending to all of my wife's needs.

Personally, I have grown more as a man in regards to my mannerisms, speech, and demeanor. I have grown spiritually with my relationship with God. As a married couple, we have gotten even more intimate as we are discovering more things about each other."

4) As women, we're generally raised to aspire to become someone's wife. With that being said, a lot of women get caught up on acquiring the ring instead of the marriage. Are there any comments that you have for Spelman women who are trying to rush the process for the wrong reasons?

a. **Paige:** "Yes! I can't emphasize it enough: marriage is nothing to rush into! No matter if you have a cynical view of marriage and don't believe in its authenticity, or have romanticized it beyond reality, you cannot rush into it. Marriage is serious and it takes work. It takes patience, selflessness, maturity, humility, and the ability to forgive--all of which aren't manifested in us overnight. God had to do a serious work in me to prepare me for marriage, and now that I'm married I'm still learning and growing all the time. I can't encourage my Spelman sisters enough: find yourself—who you really are—and not who the world tells you to be. I hope my story encourages each others, but if a woman feels that nasty, creeping feeling of inadequacy or comparison lurking over her, she MUST remember that we all have our own unique journeys to walk that God paved out for us. Don't seek validation in anything or anyone besides God. He's the only constant in life."





Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum

Expanding the Doors of Educational Opportunity

By: Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, Spelman College President

When the President of the United States wants to bring attention to an important issue, there are two important tools he can use. To quote President Obama, "I have a pen and a phone – I can sign executive orders and I can call people together." It was the President's convening power that was in evidence on January 16, 2014 when a select group of college and university presidents, foundation heads, elected officials, and higher education policy experts were invited to attend the White House Summit on College Affordability, a gathering focused on how to increase the pipeline of academically prepared, low-income students to college, and how to ensure their success once they are admitted. The need for the Summit is clear when we understand that educational opportunity is the primary route to economic advancement in our society, and yet only 9% of low-income students will get a college degree as compared to 54% of students from the top

25% income quartile. President and Mrs. Obama both want to change that statistic, and they called upon college and university presidents to take action to expand the doors of opportunity to these underserved students.

In fact, prior to participating in the Summit, everyone in attendance was asked to make a public commitment to doing at least one new thing that would make a difference for low-income students. For many schools, that commitment begins with admitting more of them. According to an article in the New York Times (July 31, 2013), among the top 50 most competitive (and well-resourced) colleges, on average, only 15% of their students had family incomes low enough to be eligible for a Pell grant. By comparison, most HBCUs have a much higher percentage of Pell-eligible students. At Spelman, approximately 50% of our students are Pell-eligible. Consequently, our commitment to action was focused on retention and graduation rather than admission. Our goal is to help as many of our students make it all the way from matriculation to graduation as possible. Right now our

graduation rate, which averages 77% over the last six years, is the best in the nation among HBCUs, but we want it to be better.

So what was our commitment to action? We know that low-income students are more likely than affluent students to be derailed by an unexpected family hardship such as unemployment or family illness. They often need additional financial assistance in the latter years of their academic program as family resources have run out. One solution – and our commitment – is to ensure a permanent, reliable source of funding to meet these emergency needs by securing funds to endow the President's Safety Net initiative. That effort was given a jump start by the prize money I received as part of the Carnegie Academic Leadership Award in December. Other donors, inspired by the Award, have joined in this effort, now with \$300,000 already pledged toward our \$1,000,000 goal. This commitment, combined with those of other colleges and universities across the country, will open the doors of opportunity at least a little wider for economically disadvantaged students, an outcome that will benefit all of us.



The Silent Generation and the Death of African-American Protests

By: **Chelsey Washington** *Clark Atlanta University C'2015*

With so many detrimental issues afflicting the African-American community, it appears as if this generation is either disinterested in making their voices heard or too comfortable to advocate for change.

We may be informed about the injustices that occur everyday within the African-American community, even those that do not make it to national news, and yet we do nothing.

Instead of flooding the streets in solidarity against issues such as police brutality, the Stand Your Ground law, black-on-black crime, poverty, and the Stop-and-Frisk program, this generation takes to Twitter or Instagram to voice their opinions. These social media outlets have not enacted any legislation to change any of the mistreatment of African-Americans on a national scale.

It seems as if this generation has an issue with curing ills in the African-American community as a priority. This generation has gotten so comfortable living with the rights that generations before them fought for through protests and sit-ins. Those before us endured powerful blast from water hoses, survived being attacked by police dogs, and have even died for us; yet there are many that feel as if there is no more to accomplish in America.

For example, thousands of people flocked the streets nationwide to march in the name of justice for the slain, unarmed Florida teenager Trayvon Martin, whose only crime was being black. Yet, three years after the incident and a year after his killer, George Zimmerman, was found not guilty, the hype has fizzled in obtaining justice for Martin.



Courtesy of Fox News

Since the Trayvon Martin incident, numerous young African-Americans have been innocently murdered and have received no justice, yet no one has rallied in the streets, held candlelight vigils, made t-shirts, or flooded the internet with petitions to seek justice for these victims.

"We get so mad when someone outside of our race kills a member of our community", said Clark Atlanta University senior, Shanice Washington. "But we don't get upset at the fact that we kill each other on a daily basis."

With detrimental issues such as gang violence, colorism, the "N-word", the incarceration of African-American males, the increase of unemployment and mandates such as Stand Your Ground and Stop-and-Frisk, this generation seems to be more interested in the latest Jordan releases and have a strange fascination with reality television stars.

Is this generation so stuck in the "This isn't going to happen to me" or "This doesn't directly affect me" syndromes that they have become so passive and out of tune with issues that could possibly cause their demise? Will we wait around to see more Jordan Davises fall without justice?

It is time for this generation to become active in causes that empower the African-American community and not contribute to its collapse. There are so many improvements that African-Americans must seek; and it is our responsibility for our generation to implement these changes.

If we can voice our opinions about irrelevant matters and be seen and heard, imagine the possibilities of coming together for matters that could potentially aid in the restoration of the African-American community.

My Princess Night

By: LaDarrien Gillette C'2016

A simple rose. A touch of compassion. A few words of prayer.

These are three things that flood my memory of a Friday night a couple of months ago.

Along the streets of Fulton Industrial Blvd in Atlanta I accompanied a group of young women and men on a "Princess Night". Rushing from a late night at work I felt my nerves getting to me as I pulled up to the Atlanta Dream Center for the Princess Night

debrief. It was here that I was told what I would be facing that night--women who lived a life of selling their bodies in exchange for money on the streets of Atlanta.

After the meeting we hopped into the van and headed to Fulton Industrial Blvd to hand out roses and speak words of prayer to women in need. Before this night I had never once thought that I would be able to handle this type of interaction, but I was so very wrong. Instead I was eager to get out and see and touch the women

and just let them know that they were loved. I spoke with every woman that night, even if it was a silent, loving communication through the meeting of our eyes. I said my own silent prayers for them that they would find peace.

I spoke with many women that night and their stories moved me. From stories of their children to ones of sick family members my heart could only feel for them. One woman in particular caught my attention, her name was Rita

and her spirit reminded me so much of a close family member of mine, that I lagged behind my group to continue speaking with her. I let her know that she was a beautiful African-American woman, capable of doing amazing things. I reminded her of all that she could do should she just love herself and realize her potential. Before I knew it tears were running down my face and, by the end of our time together I almost felt like she was consoling me. I gave Rita a hug and walked off to

the van. I'm not sure if she knew it but meeting her I believe sealed my destiny. From that Princess Night I knew that my calling lies in teaching young women to love themselves and to be aware of the dangers of our world.

Women, of all different hues, backgrounds and from different families walk the streets each and every night. Women, who are being sexually exploited. Women, who have children at home and sick mothers in the hospital. Two simple words can explain this crime--sex trafficking. When people in the United



LaDarrien Gillette C'2016



Gillette's Prayer List from Princess Night



States hear those two words they automatically think that the heinous crime is happening in some developing country far, far away. However, this is a very popular and troubling misconception.

Victims of sex trafficking reside right here in our own country of the free; slavery lives on even in modernity.

Not only are these women victims of physical violence but also of a psychological one. I could no longer stand clueless to this, so I decided to join the fight against modern day sex trafficking.

Everyday women become



A Rose from Princess Night

victims in this country of sex trafficking because their low self-esteem makes them "easy" targets. As women we have to stand up for ourselves and learn

to love and be loved the right way, not by a man who says that four-letter word in exchange for sexual favors. That isn't love and the fight must continue on to keep every woman safe.

I love myself and I will not be sexually exploited! Can you say the same thing? Will your daughters and their daughters be able to say the same thing? Join the movement against sex trafficking, every voice counts.

To find out more about Gillette's on campus organization WOWPriceless, which strives to create awareness about sex trafficking:

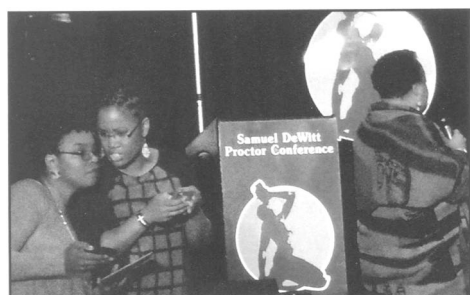
Directors: LaDarrien Gillette and Camille Henderson

Email us: wowpriceless@gmail.com

It's Time to Break the Silence

By: **Rev. Dr. Lisa D. Rhodes**

Power in Our Testimony was the theme of the 11th Annual Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, a gathering of religious scholars, lay leaders, pastors, and seminary and college students, who are committed to the work of faith



and justice. Of major significance this year was the Sisters of the Rock panel designed to break the silence and encourage women to share their testimony about issues of sexism in the Black Church. Sexism is defined as an

attitude, action, institutional structure, power, or policy that oppresses women and violates her personhood.

The Sisters of the Rock platform provided a safe space where women and men were encouraged to break the silence and give voice to a number of troublesome issues—masculine language and images of God, cultural narratives of gender, and church politics. Black Church leaders, community activists, and religious faculty raised questions that Black women scholars, clergy and female college, seminary, and graduate students confront every day, particularly the following:

- Why is it easier to tell the truth about racial oppression than to deal with and address issues of sexism?
- Why do women tend to choose

race over gender which means being black over and against being woman?

- How is the Christian Bible used to support misogyny, gender oppression, and violence against women?

These questions and others must become an integral part of both our collegiate and church conversations.

Thoughts for Reflection:

- Tell the truth about gender oppression.
- Silence is betrayal.
- Sexism is Sin.
- Women oppress women and protect men over against their sisters.
- When you see something, say something; call men and women out, hold them and all pastoral leaders and church officials accountable.



Beyoncé: Feminist or Hypocrite?

By: Imani Love C'2016

Bow down and all hail the queen. She's known as being Ms. Independent, a fashion icon, actress, recording artist, mother, sister, daughter, supportive wife to the hip-hop mogul Jay-Z, and a breadwinner totalling net worth of 350 million dollars. In the eyes of the public, Mrs. Carter can do no wrong. Her lyrics seem to entice women (and even some men) by giving them a sense of empowerment and self-worth. Starting from her days with Destiny's Child up until now, Beyoncé has always had a way with her words, engraving themselves in the minds and hearts of her fans.

Up until her recent, strongly sexual, self-titled album, Beyoncé, Mrs. Carter, has taken on an independent feminist stance, lyrically. With songs such as "Run the World (Girls)" and "Me, Myself, and I" her verses put her female fans into a zone that gets them thinking that they are the controllers of their own destiny and that they can get by all on their own.

In an interview with Vogue in April of 2013, Beyoncé declared that she was a "modern day feminist" and that she believed in equality. This all looks good and well on paper, but then when songs and music videos like from her latest album,

Beyoncé, are played, it makes you think twice.

Within the number one hit, "Drunk in Love" Jay-Z refers to Beyoncé as being "the baddest b**** thus far" as well as reference to known abusive relationship between Ike and Tina (Anna Mae) Turner. It just brings up the question of whether Beyoncé is truly a feminist or if she just takes the idea of what a feminist is lightly. Either way, if Beyoncé plans on referring to herself as a feminist, she should consider

making some adjustments.

Don't get me wrong, I do enjoy listening to Beyoncé and there are some songs on her new album that I like, but the bold statement of being an advocate for women's rights, especially after this album does not seem to fit the image that she is portraying right now. Beyoncé

has recorded songs in the past delegating an empowering message, but her newly recorded album makes the statement of being an advocate for women's rights controversial. She talks about women

equality, but she portrays a backwards image with her music and portrays an element of submissiveness. It raises the debate of whether Beyoncé is genuinely an activist for female equality or if she pretends to be for record sales.



Courtesy of
www.thelineofbestfit.com



Courtesy of Kevork Djansezian / Getty Images

Book Recommendations

By: Sarah Brokenborough C'2016

NW

By Zadie Smith
(2012)

Americanah

By Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
(2013)

Where'd You Go Bernadette

By Maria Semple
(2012)

Sula

By Toni Morrison
(1973)

32 Candles

By Ernessa T. Carter
(2011)

Colorblind: A Memoir

By Precious Williams
(2010)

We Need New Names

By NoViolet Bulawayo
(2013)

On Black Sister's Street

By Chika Unigwe
(2012)

Nowhere is A Place

By Bernice L. McFadden
(2006)

Some Sing, Some Cry

By Ntozake Shange
(2010)



COUNTERPOINT FESTIVAL & The Return of Outkast

By: Kyra Carlisle C'2014

This year's CounterPoint festival has already generated plenty of buzz because of its line-up.

Atlanta's very own Outkast is the confirmed headline for the three-day music festival in Rome, Georgia. This is the first hometown performance on their 40-date festival tour. During the tour Outkast will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of their debut album *Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik*.

There are plenty of people excited for this reunion and the festival. Atlanta native and Outkast fan Alysse McCruter said, "I love that Outkast is bringing back that 'ATLien sound' everybody misses. I'm happy to pay the \$180 for the CounterPoint festival since it's three days."

Clark Atlanta University Junior Ebonie Harris said, "\$180 is a little pricey, but I think it's cool what Outkast is doing...its long overdue."

According to counterpointfestival.com the confirmed line-up includes: Outkast; Pretty Lights; Foster the People; STS9; J. Cole; Major Lazer; Krewella; Big Gigantic; Flux Pavilion; Above & Beyond; Matt & Kim; Thievery Corporation; A-Trak; Janelle Monae; Wolfgang Gartner; Sleigh Bells; Boys Noize; Flosstradamus; Chance the Rapper; Griz; Shpongle; Phantogram; Moon Taxi; Run the Jewels (El-P & Killer Mike); Schoolboy Q; Papadosio; Rich Homie Quan; GTA; Tycho; St. Lucia; The Revivalists; YACHT; Minnesota; Ott; The Polish

Ambassador; Thundercat; Poolside; Wild Cub; Rubblebucket; Kill Paris; Congorock; Rustie; Hucci; Cashmere Cat; Nosaj Thing; Dan Croll; XXYYXX; Mayhem; Green Lantern; Butch Clancy; Lance Herbstrong; Tourist; Ratking; Jonas Rathsman; Watch the Duck; Kap Slap; Basic Vacation; JMSN; Pegboard Nerds; The Floozies; Thriftworks; Deep Cotton; Five Knives; Infinity Shred; Real Magic; Roman GianArthur; Bagheera; Skrause; Shreddie Mercury; Martina McFly; Chris Bushnell; BLKKMorris; Panther God; Ployd; The Difference Machine.

The festival takes place April 25th- 27th. Kingston Downs is the site for the festival and is about an hour outside of Atlanta. The site includes four performance spaces, a food court, bars, carnival rides and a game center.

"I'm very excited for this festival, it's like a mini Coachella, but not as expensive," Clark Atlanta University Senior Kearra Carlisle said. "I'm from the southside of Atlanta so I can't wait to see Outkast; they are like hometown heroes."

"I'm also looking forward to Chance the Rapper, Rich Homie Quan, and Schoolboy Q."

Tickets, including three-day passes, VIP packages and camping package deals are available at www.counterpointfestival.com. This seems like an experience one wouldn't want to miss, especially with the variety of acts and entertainment.

Is It Love?

By: Analisa Wade C'2016

you hold me.
and the feeling of your touch never goes away
you've shown me.
that you're the only one,
that can make me feel this way.

I want you.
and you put my mind at ease
I can feel you through the breeze
how you make my heart freeze
I stop and just cheese...
I feel like I've been diagnosed with a brain disease
'cause all I can think of is you
it's the simple things you do

I wonder if you think about me too
...and why is it that I can't get enough of you
Is it love?
that you've got me going through.
You're the only thing in life that I'm dying to pursue.
The only thing my mind seems to be into
...but it could be as possible
as it could be untrue
that *it's love*.

but it's really hard to see
to believe
to receive
that you're really feeling me
that you need me
to see me
to love
to hold
to breathe me
it's not easy to agree,
even though you guarantee
that *it's love*.

and you put no one above...
above me
above we,
that's how you want it to be
...but
I'm still stuck in this moment of intimacy.
I'm feeling you.
like how you're feeling me.
if this is how love is supposed to be
then I *love it*
'cause I'm *loving*
this feeling
you're giving
me.



Jezebel: Stereotypes of African-American Women on Scripted Television

By: **Jasmine M. Ellis** C'2015, Associate Editor

If you're black, and on television you're probably a Jezebel--an impudent, shameless, or morally unrestrained woman. It is just one word among several that has been considered synonymous with African-American women for decades; a word that haunts women of color in every avenue including movies, music, and television.

Television shows such as *Being Mary Jane* and *Scandal* show strong black women upholding successful roles with main characters. Mary Jane Paul and Olivia Pope serve in significant positions as a journalist and a crisis manager respectfully. These two women seem to have it all from the expensive clothing to the immaculate car. However, both Paul and Pope are wrestling with a serious character flaw, adultery.

Michelle Burris C'2014 is one of several African-American women who believe that *Scandal* and *Being Mary Jane* have no problem promoting adultery.

"Scandal condones it [adultery] more than *Being Mary Jane*," Burris said. On *Scandal*, rarely to never is Olivia Pope criticized for having sexual relations with a married man.

"They make wrong seem right and acceptable. On *Being Mary Jane* her family does look down upon adultery. However, both shows make it seem normal and acceptable."

While *Being Mary Jane* and *Scandal* have grasped the attention of millions of viewers specifically from the African-American community, not everyone is pleased with how these two fictional characters are

carrying themselves on television. Leaving many viewers contemplating the possibility of there ever being a representation of a wholesome African-American female character on television in the 21st century.

Whitney McCollum C'2014 sheds light on her thoughts surrounding the notion on the existence of a wholesome African-American female character thriving within scripted television.



Courtesy of Kelsey McNeal/ABC

"I think that wholesome is a relative term," McCollum said. "Who gets to decide what's wholesome and what's not wholesome? In my opinion [being] wholesome is being morally excellent."

"I don't think that there are many African-American women characters on television who meet this standard, but I don't think it is necessary for them to."

Sadly, in 2014, African-American women still have to deal with the stereotype of being labeled as a jezebel even though African-American women such as First Lady Michelle Obama and nationally syndicated talk-show host, Oprah, are quite the opposite of this stereotype. Burris touches on how African-American women are being depicted negatively on television.

"African-American women are depicted as jezebels," Burris said. "They usually have great careers, but socially and intimately they do not have a balance."

"On *Being Mary Jane*, she is depicted, as a black woman who is desperate to the point where she cannot restrain herself from having intimate relations with a man who is married."

"Similarly on *Scandal*, Olivia Pope is depicted as a woman who has a great career; however she is still having relations with a married man. There is a loss of values and self-worth."

The question of how detrimental the effects characters like Paul and Pope will have on the depiction of real black women is to be determined. According to McCollum, by more African-American writers being given additional opportunities to diversify television networks, negative portrayals of African-American women can be combated positively.

"Olivia and Mary Jane do not represent all black women anymore than Fitz or Cyrus can represent all white men," McCollum said. "The interesting part is that they are not expected to represent their whole race."

"In order to make sure that negative generalizations are not made about all black women, I think it's important to have more and more black women telling our stories on television."

"In this way, there will be an increase in the types of black women portrayed. And hopefully one day people will recognize that we are not all the same, there is more than one way to be a black woman and that's okay."



A Different Kind of Scandal

By: Karimah Noble C'2015

Imagine I am to produce a prime-time television show on a major network. The show centers on a young, rich, successful white businesswoman. Let's just call her Susie, shall we? Susie is quick-witted, well spoken, possesses the uncanny ability to manipulate anyone, and can talk her way out of every conceivable situation. She owns a consulting firm and has a handful of employees whose unquestioned allegiance to her borders on God-like reverence. Yale-educated and drop-dead gorgeous, Susie is politically connected, fiercely independent, single, no children, dresses in the finest tailor-made clothing, is completely self-made, and earns a substantial living as a professional liar.

Intrigued?

Suppose I spiced things up more and told you that Susie's love interest is a married man? A little more enticed? I thought that might do the trick. But wait! Before you rush to tune in, there is a caveat: Susie's adulterous affair is with...a **black** man.

Did I lose you? Stay with me; I beg you.

Let's call said lover Tyrone (because quite frankly, I cannot think of a name more unmistakably "black"). So...Tyrone is Harvard educated, handsome, rich, and

powerful. He has a beautiful, black, pregnant wife named Tammy (I considered Taneequa, but the name just seemed a bit over the top). At any rate, I digress. Tammy holds a degree from the same ivy-league institution as Tyrone, is cunning, ruthless, and will stop at nothing to ensure that her husband maintains his power and status- even if it means "sharing" him



Courtesy of ABC

with another woman. They have two children in boarding school, live in a sprawling white mansion, and have every imaginable luxury.

In spite of this, Tyrone hates Tammy. Not just your everyday, run-in-the-mill hate, but a deep-seated genuine distain. He **loathes** his wife. And he makes no secret about it. Nor does he make any secret about his affair. Tammy is fully aware of his habitual indiscretions and his desire to divorce her (pregnant or not). As if that were not enough, the caveat of *all* caveats: Tyrone is president of the United States.

Suddenly feeling "some kind of way" about the premise of my show?

I would venture to say you probably are. I would also venture to say this storyline would never see the light of day. However, if by some miracle, a major network were brave enough to air such a show- one depicting a black president having an extramarital affair with a white woman- chances are Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, the NAACP...shucks,

everyone from the Black Panther Party to Martin Luther King Jr.'s second cousin's nephew's brother would stand in protest.

I challenge anyone to disagree.

But is this not the storyline of the hit show *Scandal*? Yet no one stands in protest. No angry uproars. No outcries.

Is this simply because Olivia Pope is black and Fitzgerald Grant is white? Quite possibly. Nonetheless, the question remains: Same storyline, same script, slight "tweak" in casting...

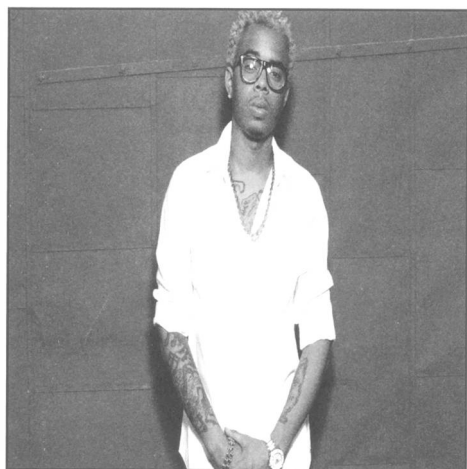
If "Livy" were white and President "Fitz" black, would you even watch the show?



It's Not Just Rap, It's a Business

A Look-Inside the Life of Rapper J-Real

By: **Analisa Wade** C'2016, Arts & Entertainment Section Editor



When you want something you have to grind for it, you have to fight for it like you're starving. You have to hustle and go get it. Twenty-four-year-old Atlanta artist, Deshon "J-REAL" Jordan (aka Real), knows what it means to hustle and it's helped him advance in his career.

You don't have to go to college to be successful in 2014; you just have to be innovative. Since Real was 14, he's been grinding his way up to the top. He's done it all. From selling mixed CDs in high school to selling "grillz" in Las Vegas, Real is now selling himself and his music as a brand. He's always considered himself to be an artist, but quickly delved into other ventures, that slowed down his progression in the music business.

It didn't take him long to learn the ups and downs of the music industry or how people judge you off your appearance instead of your music. Real never fed into many trends associated with rapping though.

"It's not about what sneakers I

wear or how many chains I have on, it's about the music," he says. "I like the home feeling and hospitality in the suburban areas. They're not so quick to judge you; they just want to hear your music."

He appreciates his wide range of fans. They help him work harder because he must appeal to a diverse crowd.

He says, *"You have to be able to try new things, the world is constantly changing. I thank God that I'm able to reinvent myself. If I was still trying to sell grillz in 2014, I would have been dead."*

He's succeeded as an independent artist so far, refusing to fall for the gimmicks that come along with labels. Currently, he's

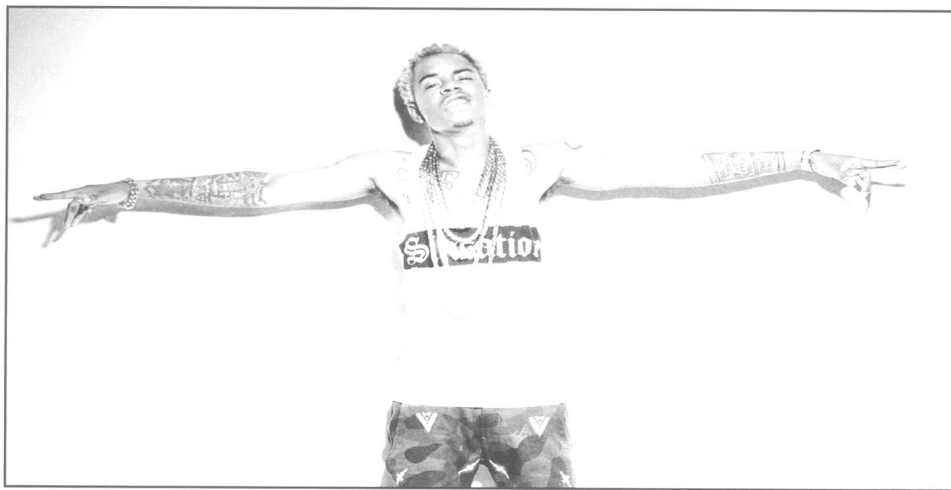
from his real family, he has a strong support system from his team.

"I believe you can choose your own family," Real said. "The people you are born with... your blood, doesn't necessarily have to be your family."

Real did just that with DJ Paperboy and his assistant Jasmine, "they've been more loyal to me than my real brothers and sisters, so that's family to me."

Real's music is inspired by his fans and his experiences. He treats the music game as a business and is always looking for a way to elevate to the next level. As a measure for success, Real says he won't be satisfied until he is touring in Europe.

If he can establish himself with



preparing himself for the release of his first official album, *Real's World*. He's solely campaigning for his single "Buck Wild" right now, which has been averaging about 150 spins a week in the Southeast.

Despite the lack of support

an international legacy, then he will feel like he has succeeded. Be on the lookout for what's in store for this young, ambitious machine. He says *"Money don't come in your dreams, only sleep,"* so he's always in grind mode. He can't stop. He won't stop.



SNL's Diversity Issue "Solved" With Single Hire?

By: Sarah Brokenborough C'2016

NBC's Saturday Night Live (SNL) has been on-air for almost 40 years. However, up until the recent hire of Sasheer Zamata, there have only been 15 cast members of African descent. Of those 15 only four have been black women: Yvonne Hudson (1980-81), Danitra Vance (1985-86), Ellen Cleghorne (1991-95), and Maya Rudolph (2000-2007).

Even though Kenan Thompson, the longest black show member to date, stated that he will no longer dress as women on the show in protest of the show's lack of black female cast members, he blamed SNL's lack of diversity on the lack

of quality black female comedians.

Since 2007 when the show lost Maya Rudolph, whose versatility, talent, and melanin were used to portray her as white, Asian, Latina, and Black all with a change of a wig, SNL has gone seven years without a single black female comedienne on the show.

SNL relies on what they believe to be is a tried and true method of finding new black cast members. They find a reliable, relatively young, and unknown actor or actress in the New York Area whose credentials can be backed up by some member of the already established cast. Then they make

sure he or she can do a myriad of impersonations, an essential skill because he or she will be relied on to impersonate any and all types of black people, without objection.

Zamata is a veteran of The Upright Citizen's Brigade in New York City, which has long been recognized as a feeder of sorts for the show. Instead of looking elsewhere for black actors and actresses, possibly Atlanta, the mecca of black entertainment, or Hollywood, they have chosen to stay in their comfort zone and hope for talent women of color to come to them.

"I think it's great that there's a new black actress on SNL," said Karys Belger, Sophomore English major at Spelman College. "But I think it's sad that discrimination is so prevalent that we feel the need to celebrate these small victories."

Zamata debuted on January 18th of this year with Drake as the host and musical guest. Although her first skit had her act as Drake's auntie she seemed to be treated more as a prop than a character. However, to be fair it is common for new cast members to have non-speaking parts and little airtime.

Besides Zamata's role as Rihanna, all her characters were race neutral during her debut show. Hopefully she will continue to play memorable characters besides the expected black celebrity impersonations.

Zamata's hire is an important step towards the visible representation of people of color in the media. We all want her range to shine through instead of being typecast and performing as the token minority.

I Listen

By: Paris Clark C'2015

His melody

It excites me...

I can't wait to listen

It lulls me into a calm trance

That hypnotizes me into a world wind of peace

That sound is the background to my dream.

I dance to the up beat

I sway to the low beat

And I walk towards you when I hear...

A slight pause...

In my ear...

And then I wake up!

You're still sleeping

I love to listen to your heart



Sista Spelman Talk To Me

Dear Sista Spelman,

I am struggling to stay emotionally faithful in my relationship with the man of my dreams. For some reason I continue to go back to a man I have once loved, even though he has hurt me so bad. I can't deny that I still see him as the one, although the boyfriend I have now treats me like the Queen I am. I just don't know what to do. I love one guy, and really like/care for the other.

Sincerely,
Confused

Dear Confused,

First and foremost you cannot move forward with this new guy! In order to truly be committed and faithful, both physically and emotionally, you have to have your entire attention dedicated to the new guy. It seems as though you have lingering feelings for this old guy, and you will not be able to have a prosperous relationship with the new guy until you let go of your feelings for the old guy.

How do you get rid of the feelings for the old guy, you may ask? That is simple, just write a list of pros and cons for both guys, read them over, throw them away and follow your heart. Sometimes the heart overrules the logical aspect of situations, even if it may hurt someone else or yourself sometimes you have to follow your heart. If you do decide to go back to the old guy, just remember how he made you feel during the bad times and be prepared for the same thing and maybe even something worse. People do not change; they just evolve to another level in life and until this old guy is done hurting your feelings please prepare to go through the same BS with him.

When you realize where you want to be, you must cut one of the guys off, cold turkey, no turning back. One of them may be hurt and may attempt to move himself back into your life in the future. Maybe one day you can be friends with whomever you do not choose, but just remember that you should never intentionally burn bridges, but you cannot always extinguish the ones others choose to set afire. Be patient, honest with yourself, and honest with the men in your life.

Respectfully,
Sista Spelman

The Lows of Fashion: Playful Racist Misogyny on MLK's Day

By: Nyla Nation C'2017

It is easy for progress to be overshadowed by shortcomings. With Erykah Badu as the new face of Givenchy for its Spring-Summer 2014 line and Rihanna the face of Balmain Spring 2014 this industry has taken huge steps to change this inescapable issue.

However, also this year it is safe to say racism is still alive, even as the fashion industry attempts to diversify.

Just on the heels of the weekend that the nation stopped to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s mantras of equality and civil rights, a Russian fashion blog, Buro 24/7, released an article that did a good job of negating and voiding all that Dr. King fought for.

A picture of calm Russian socialite Dasha Zhukova seated atop a black woman accompanied the article about Zhukova. The picture gained more controversy than the article as it sent

out a racist and misogynistic message of white supremacy.

Zhukova, Editor-in-Chief of Garage magazine, sat on a black "dummy doll" that is suggestively naked with exception of panties, knee-high boots, elbow length gloves, and a garter belt. The black woman is on the floor, the garter belt bonding her thighs to her chest, putting her into compromising slave-like position.

The image of this hyper-sexualized black woman is nothing new. This image of black people seen as less than human is not new either. Due to the article's immediate feedback from fervently disgusted readers, the editor quickly issued an apology and deleted

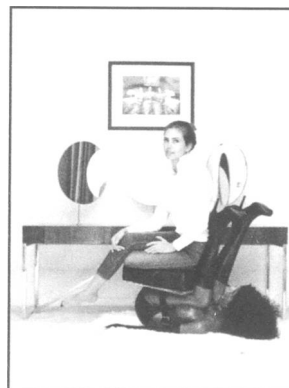
the picture from her Instagram.

On January 15, just five days before Zhukova's article went viral, Belgian Designer Walter Van Beirendonck had his models wear Native American headdresses that had

"Stop Racism", in Russian and English, painted on them during his Fall 2014 show. It is startling how another person in the same industry, from the same place, could be so racially insensitive.

African-American models Naomi Campbell, Joan Smalls, and Jourdan Dunn have each made several pleas over the

past six months to end this silent but crippling stigma put on blacks in the industry. But when will it end?



Style Profiles: A Rise in Black Fashion Bloggers

By: **Andreella Muffy Gaynor**, *Clark Atlanta University C'2015*



Tamu McPherson, creator of all-theprettybirds.com, is a brilliant fashion photographer, writer, and blogger. The concentration of her work is street style. She has also been a contributor to many

reputable fashion publications such as *Glamour U.S.*, *Haper's Bazaar U.S.*, and *Vogue Pelle* to name a few. McPherson actually got her start with *Glamour* where she photographed street styles in Milan.

McPherson was born on the island of Jamaica. She lived there for about six years until she moved with her family to New York City. McPherson currently resides in Milan, Italy where she lives with her husband and son.

An educated woman, McPherson initially studied Literature and Rhetoric, at Binghamton University soon after she received a JD/MBA from Fordham Law and Business School. Shortly after her educational achievements, McPherson found herself wanting to dabble in the world of fashion, realizing that this is where her passion had always been.

McPherson's inspiration spawns from her mother and aunt dressing her in various styles and dresses as a young girl. McPherson recalls this experience in an interview with *Vogue* magazine in 2010.

McPherson's personality is that of a woman who knows what she wants not only in fashion, but also in life. She shares on her blog that she is a "simplistically idealistic, champion for the underdog, too sensitive at times and just plain human." Her heart and ear are one with the street. This is evident in her success as a street style photographer, which can be attributed to her humble nature.

Joshua Kissi and Travis Grumbs are known for launching the style blog *StreetEtiquette.com*. The popular denim

company, G-Star had Kissi and Grumbs style their men's lookbook for Spring/Summer 2013.



Kissi and Crumbs spoke with the website *Hypebeast.com* and said their

blog was started out of "pure" boredom. Created right after the duo finished high school, the blog has been recognized by the *London Times* to be among the "40 Bloggers Who Really Count". It has also been featured in many publications such as *GQ* and *Essence*.

The Bronx natives connected themselves to the heart of their urban metropolis and decided to define the life styles that come with fashion for men. They are known for documenting fashions in New York but are not limited to just one city. Kissi and Crumbs have received accolades from all over the world and they continue to increase.

The fashion style is a mix of cool and class. The duo's curiosity of the world and where it's going ignited the title "Street Etiquette". In *Nordstrom's Men Styles Profile*, the two speak about the title saying it tells their story.

"Something that can be usually classified as bad, Street Etiquette is something that's classified as good" said the duo. "It's a representation of us and it is a positive representation."



The Glamazons blog focuses on black women's fashion, their lifestyles

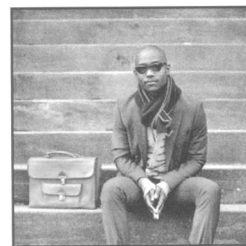
and a bit of celebrity dash. Two young, fashionably hungry women trying to make it in the fast streets of New York City created the blog. They refer to themselves

as *Glamazon Jessica* and *Glamazon Andrea*.

Jessica, a suburban girl from New Jersey, realized that internships were not beneficial. She decided to take action and follow her dreams in fashion and journalism.

Andrea, a Texas native, has a similar passion as Jessica. Graduating with a degree in Journalism, Andrea jumped right into the publishing realm after undergrad.

The two collaborated their passions and started a blog that is progressively moving up in the fashion and lifestyle world.



Brooklyn native, **Louge' Delcy** started his career off in the competitive world of fashion by styling. He then moved to concentrating on

blogging and photography. He did this to make sure he would always be employed. He also saw a gap online when it came to men's wear.

Louge's blog is entitled *Dapper Lou*. It is a progressive menswear website that focuses on quality and style. He is a street style photographer that captures the essence of men from their perspective.

Louge's is also a writer for *Essence* and a notable stylist for *Vogue.it* and *GQ*. *Barney's New York* and *The Window Blog* interviewed him and he gave a few tips for men's fashion. One that stood out was "color is your friend not your enemy" which epitomizes his ideals in *Fashion and Style*. *Barney's* gave a visual of his trade work by saying "he knows how to take the chaos of the city and scope out only the best in street style."

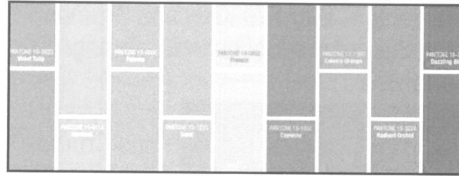
Spelman's Sassy Spring Trends in 2014!

By: Tytianna Kaniese Johnson C'2017

Fashion news reporters have spoken and the next color report for this month of February 2014 has been determined. Reports from fashion analysts show that pink is the new black, yes PINK! However, not just any shade of pink will be flaunted amongst trendsetters this month, according to Trend Council Magazine. Exhibited throughout today's most popular clothing, including off-the-shoulder sweaters, high-waisted bottoms, crop tops, and thick heel pumps, will contain the finest shades of pink. These precious tones of pink will be made up of Gerber daisy, melon, French rose, coral, fuchsia, and magenta.

As we dive into the color trend of February, it is also almost time to acknowledge the upcoming arrivals of what the fashion trends of spring 2014 holds. Spring week fashion shows have shown that the transition from the trends established in the year 2013 to that in 2014 will be an interesting one. Metro fashion news provide that given the intermixing colors of pink, white and black along with hints of pastel

colors, this season's colors and styles will result in happy trendsetters all with heterogeneous modes and styles of representation.



A few decided 2014 spring trends will include an invasion of crop tops of various and more unique styles versus what has already been revealed to the public eye. Thus, exposing the midriff area will become even popular. Aside from such, short and medium length pleated skirts will be in high demand, more specifically with deep knife pleated designs. Bermuda shorts will also make its way back into the public, however worn with a few of today's most recently adopted trends. Bermudas can be worn with a bandeau top underneath of a jean button-up style shirt or either with the shirt wrapped around the waist area.

Creatively designed sandals or

wedges can be worn with the outfit to give off an at ease yet cutesy fashionable look. Sheer brilliance fabricated bottoms, whether it be pants, shorts or skirts, can be worn with a light sweater on cool days, or a box crop top on hotter days. Fashionable yet comfortable pool slider sandals can also set off the completion of one's look in a creative manner. A bucket luck sack purse will be more suitable for holding all of your paraphernalia while adding glamour to your outfit. Calf-length shirt dresses are also a perfect look, whether it's for a nice day out of enjoyment or a day on the job. Also, expected to be seen amongst these fashionable trends will include pastel colors of placid blue, violet tulip, Paloma, ad hemlock.

As we begin to encounter the transition of these fashion trends one thing is clear. Fashion trends will differ greatly either with additions of creative jewelry, stylish hairstyles or other accessories which all adds flavor and spice to one's outfit of choice. That is where the true beauty of fashion lies!

Kanye West Embraces the Confederate Flag in New Clothing Line

By: Lauren Coggins C'2014

As a controversial celebrity figure who can't seem to stay out of news headlines, Kanye West has positioned himself once again for criticism in the public eye. However, this time his antics don't involve any run-ins with the paparazzi.

African-American leaders such as Rev. Al Sharpton are blasting the rapper for using the U.S Confederate flag in the promotion of his new album. As a design on merchandise for his Yeezus tour, the flag is accompanied by a skull on concert t-shirts and bags, along with a clothing line that is being designed by West.

Dating back to the days of slavery, the confederate flag was adopted as a symbol that represented slave owning

states during the time of the U.S. Civil War. White supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan have also adopted the flag as their emblem. Due to such a racially charged history behind the icon's usage, many have been left to wonder why West would place the flag on his clothing. Is it simply a design used to make a fashion statement, or does it have an underlying message that the artist wants to portray?

In a radio interview with Los Angeles 97.1 AMP, West addressed the issue without sympathy for critics as he stood behind his creative standpoint. With the recent unveiling of his sixth album, the *Yeezus* paraphernalia may be support for racially charged songs including *Black*

Skinhead and *New Slaves*.

"Any energy you got is good energy. I represented slavery, my abstract take on what I know about it, I wrote *New Slaves*, said West. "So I took the Confederate flag and made it my flag. What are you going to do?"

Despite what some many perceive to be as insensitivity to slavery, the fact remains that the rapper is still entitled to freedom of expression. However, according to the opinions of influential civil rights leaders, the clothing line should be boycotted along with any stores that sell it. Whatever West's intentions may be, he has managed to ruffle everyone's feathers again as being the topic of discussion.



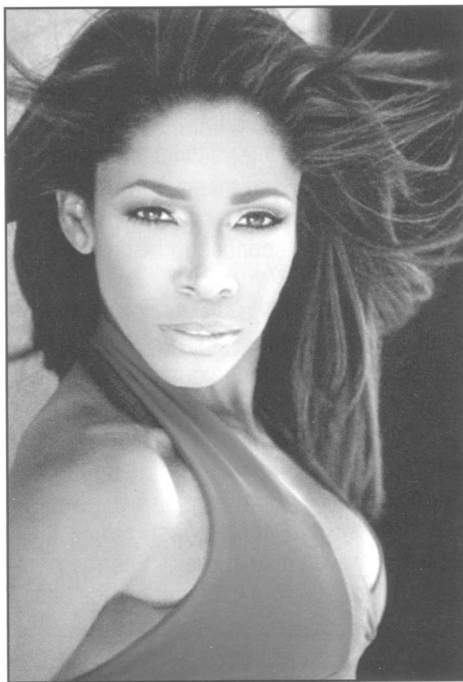
How Black Women Continue to Challenge Statistics...

By: Nyla Whalum C'2016

Isn't it interesting how black women continue to challenge statistics? Throughout the past year, black women have made many contributions to the forever important topic of health and fitness. The increase of African-American women in this segment of our wellness is necessary when looking at the statistics of our health history.

In Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum's article "Why Wellness," she states that according a National Institute of Health study, by the age of seventeen more than half of black girls were reporting that they do little to no physical activity. With a combination of poor diet and lack of exercise, black women have been cutting their chances of living a long and fruitful life. But rather than letting this epidemic continue, black women have decided that it is time to make a change for the best by becoming more involved with their overall wellness.

A great contributor to this "wellness revolution" is actress, lifestyle coach and fellow Spelman alumna AJ Johnson. Guided by wise words from her father, Johnson set out to impact the world by dedicating herself to wellness education, training and philanthropy thus creating "The AJ Zone". She states that "The AJ Zone" is not only limited to physical fitness but incorporates



AJ Johnson

emotional, mental and spiritual wellness. Johnson pushes herself to impact and educate others about the importance of health, fitness and overall wellness.

Another great contributor to health and fitness, and also one of the country's leading healthy



Jeanette Jenkins

lifestyle coaches is Jeanette Jenkins. For years Jenkins has shared her knowledge of health and wellness to millions of men and women throughout the country.

Recently Jenkins has partnered up with Kelly Rowland and created the "6 Week Bootcamp Challenge", targeting men and women to push themselves for six weeks to obtain amazing results. Jeanette's mission is to use her education and experience to get men and women to live the best life they can.

Along with these women, our very own Chavonne Shorter impacts the lives of Spelman students regarding health and fitness. Along with overseeing the Spelman Wellness program, she provides consultations on fitness and nutrition to Spelman students; Shorter enjoys assisting Spelman women reach their health and fitness goals. These women are taking steps to make an impact and inspire many to live a healthier lifestyle. Whether it is taking a Zumba class or drinking more water, strive for a healthier lifestyle and keeping *working on your fitness!*



Chavonne Shorter



Richard Sherman: Thug the New “N-Word”?

By: **Jordan Watters** C'2015

Picture this: A Black male from Compton, CA; scholar-athlete; graduates high school as salutatorian; accepted into Stanford University; achieves a 3.9 GPA in college; graduates with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communications; drafted into the NFL; but is now labelled a “thug.”

Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman has been the headliner of many reports since his passionate post-game interview after winning the NFC Championship on Jan. 19. After a gruesome fight on the gridiron, Sherman and his teammates were victorious against the San Francisco 49ers, 23-17.

During this game, the No. 1-ranked Seahawks defense made clutch plays in the fourth quarter.

With 0:22 left in the game, 49ers' quarterback Colin Kaepernick's intended touchdown pass to wide receiver Michael Crabtree was tipped by Sherman into the arms of linebacker Malcolm Smith. Thus sealing the deal for a Seahawks win.

But instead of Sherman receiving credit for his performance, he was more

condemned for his comments in an interview with Fox's Erin Andrews.

“I'm the best corner in the game,” Sherman said. “When you try me with a sorry receiver like Crabtree, that's the results you're going to get. Don't you ever talk about me [Crabtree.] Don't you open your mouth about the best, or I will shut it for you real quick.”

These words have resonated all around the world and resulted in Sherman being labelled derogatory terms including: thug, villain, classless, and many more.

In a Seahawks press conference days later, Sherman responded to being called a “thug.”

“The only reason [being called a thug] bothers me is because it seems like it's the accepted way of calling somebody the 'n word' nowadays,” Sherman said.

Sherman also referenced the NHL and how hockey players literally fight on the ice during games.

“There was a hockey game where they didn't even play hockey,” Sherman said. “They just threw the puck aside and

started fighting. I saw that and I'm like ‘Wait, I'm the thug? What's going on here?’”

According to the Webster's dictionary, a thug is defined as: a violent criminal; a brutal ruffian or assassin. In Sherman's defense, he has a clear criminal record and is far from a “thug.” It is unfortunate that he was stereotyped and that his character was judged from a 20-second interview.

Therefore, it is important to highlight Sherman's accomplishments off the field and how he gives back to the community.

Sherman is the founder of “Blanket Coverage: The Richard Sherman Family Foundation,” where the goal is to provide as many children with proper school supplies and adequate clothing. Additionally, he often volunteers with the “Students with a Goal (SWAG)” organization.

Though Sherman's short post-game interview was blown out of proportion, it teaches the world another lesson about why you should not judge a book by its cover. After all, this “thug” is now a Super Bowl Champion. Looks like Sherman gets the last laugh.

Deserted and Hungry: The Realities of Living in a Food Desert

By: **Kevona Belcher** C'2015

Can you imagine yourself in the middle of a desert, a food desert that is? A desert left desolate and barren not because of minimal precipitation, but due to the fact that it has been stripped and deprived of nutritious food. A land flooded with KFCs and multiple McDonald's chains, with not a single vegetable in sight. Does this sound familiar?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines a food desert as a “low-income census tract where a substantial number of residents have low access to a grocery store.” According to the Huffington Post, food deserts specifically refer to urban or rural areas where access to quality fresh produce and poultry are limited, and finding these products are difficult and time consuming. Unfortunately, our community of the West End fits this definition perfectly.

Yes, the West End Wal-Mart provides minimal quality produce and poultry.

However, it is our only source. And before 2013, there were no grocery stores within walking distance of the AUC. We live off of cafeteria food and fast food, stuck in the middle of our desert. But we aren't the only ones deserted.

According to the USDA, there are as many as 23.5 million Americans living more than a mile from a supermarket. These same Americans are also in socio-economically disadvantaged communities and have limited access to vehicles and public transit. This should ring a bell; our community fits perfectly into that statistic.

Food deserts can have grave impact on health and have a concrete connection to America's obesity epidemic. According to the Huffington Post, a greater number of convenience stores in an area (common within food deserts) are linked to an increased risk for obesity. Obesity is

prevalent in low-income communities--communities where it is more likely to see a pig flying in the air than a Whole Foods on the corner.

Where we live is a risk factor to our health. Our limited options have major impact on our lives, and the community around us. So how can we combat this problem? The answer isn't easy.

Socio-economically disadvantaged communities have been mistreated and misrepresented since the Industrial Revolution. Environmental injustice is prevalent and thriving.

Community programs such as the Atlanta Local Food Initiative want to transform this corrupt system, and provide affordable nutritious food to every Atlantan. But it is ultimately our responsibility to take intuitive in our communities. With new student initiatives such as the SSGA Fruit Market to be held on Fridays in Lower Manley, we are one step closer to surviving life in the food desert.

For more information on the ALFI visit <http://www.atlantlocalfood.org/>



“The [Mental] Struggle is Real”: A Reflection on School Shootings and their Connection to Mental Health

By: Jamyla Blackmon C'2015

Everyday, somebody in America is losing their mind. Mention the words Aurora, Columbine, or Sandy Hook, and everyone thinks of the mass murders that transpired in those places. But how many of us turn a blind eye towards our fellow Spelmanite or Atlanta University Center neighbors when they say, “I can’t take this anymore”, only to look on in shock when they hear about another school shooting or act of senseless gun violence? When was the last time you really listened to your friends when they were stressed out? No, not everyone is at risk for being the next mass murderer, but it shouldn’t take an act of violence to take notice.

Mental illness is running rampant in our country, and many people are not seeing the signs such as depression and suicidal notions. According to Curiosity.com, a website sponsored by Discovery Communications, depression of some form affects an estimated “**121 million** people worldwide, but less than **25 percent** have access to effective treatment.” Women also have a **higher likelihood** of depression than men.

World of Psychology also reports that “**one out of every five young people and one out of every four college students or adults** [suffer] from some form of diagnosable mental illness”.

If someone were to only follow the televised coverage of the recent years’ shootings, they would guess that the most dangerous or deadliest perpetrators are young, Caucasian

males seeking revenge, releasing terror and anger, and/or expecting infamy. While CNN, FOX, and CBS cover acts of senseless violence, they only seem to capture certain types of killers, leaving America to feed upon the stereotype of the white male with mental issues. No one would think about a black female doing anything like that. This is wrong: it could be anyone.

Men *and* women, black, Latino, Asian, commit these crimes, but when it comes to national news, death toll and the damage done weigh in more, and those that have lost one compared to the 20 first graders that died at Sandy Hook can only get so much coverage.

In a Psychology Today article, Dr. Peter Langman, author of *Why Kids Kill: Inside the Minds of School Shooters* recounts female perpetrators like Brenda Spencer, age 16, who committed a sniper attack at Cleveland Elementary School in San Diego, as well as 23-year-old Latina Williams, an African-American woman who killed two female students in their college classroom in Louisiana before she committed suicide.

The victims of these crimes did not get national coverage for long. Perhaps because according to the FBI, their shock value is to low. According to the FBI, these aforementioned shootings are not mass murder--they’re two people short. Four or more people, not including the shooter, must die in a single incident for it to be classified

as a mass murder. There is currently no active FBI definition for a mass shooting.

With the many mass shootings that appear (or not) on the radar, regardless of race or gender, the definite question on everyone’s mind is, “why?” As of right now, no one knows for sure. Research has focused on the neuroscience behind it, while society continues to blindside what’s really happening to our country, particularly our youth. Neil S. Kaye, an assistant professor of psychiatry and human behavior at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, says “mass killers do this for multiple reasons, and even when you develop a profile of people at risk, 99 percent of them never go out and do anything bad.”

Blame chemical imbalances in the brain, bullying, and bad break-ups for the mass shootings, but there has to be more to it all. It could be as simple as lack of someone to talk to, or the inability for someone to handle his or her emotions. More than ever, love, compassion, and respect for other people matters in the world. So the next time you see on the television screen yet another coverage on school shootings, don’t jump to conclusions. Don’t believe the stereotype of mass murderers always being young white men. When you hear something in you and your friend’s conversation, don’t ignore them: truly listen to them. As we all say, “The struggle is real.”

Let’s not let it evolve into the loss of life.





A Choice to Change Spelman: The Student Trustee Overview

By: **Raquel Rainey** C'2014, Chief Copy Editor

Every three years, Spelman College chooses its next Student Trustee. With a school full of passionate advocates, dedicated volunteers, and motivating leaders, the process in choosing a qualifying candidate is relatively easy, but does everyone have what it takes to be on the Board of Trustees at Spelman College?

The role of Student Trustee is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to shape the future of Spelman College while working closely with some of its leaders. Many would be intimidated

by the responsibilities with being in this position, but the current student trustee, Kemi Oyewole C'2014, saw the role as an opportunity to grow.

"I felt it would offer me a chance to give back and contribute to the college," said Oyewole. "I also felt it would be an excellent opportunity for me to build my leadership skills and learn more about Spelman College."

During her time as Student Trustee, Oyewole has made strides to connect board members with students. With creating Board newsletters and organizing lunches between trustees and students, Oyewole has provided a platform for students to be aware with the decisions made with the College.

With no room for error, the Student Trustee must always uphold the highest standards of conduct and scholarship. The student must attend quarterly meetings, contribute financially, and stay in touch with significant College initiatives.

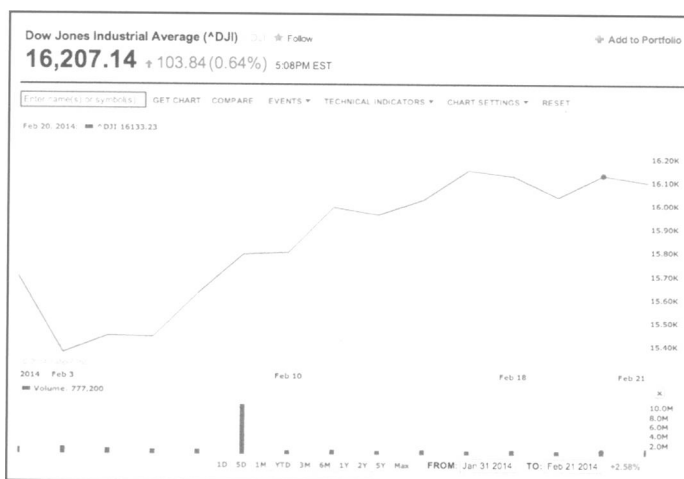
As Oyewole's term comes to an end in May, she hopes her successor will continue her work in assisting to create relationships between students and trustees.

"I also encourage her to take advantage of any opportunities to help promote Spelman while trusting her voice and believing in the validity of her experiences and opinions," she said.

Stocks Rise as Love Fills the Air

By: **Tyler Alexandra Lee** C'2015

Are you feeling the love? Wall Street sure is! During the month of February the Dow Jones went up +2.58% and is still rising. Coincidentally, Valentines Day was the highest peak for the Dow this month.. So what is cupid trying to tell you... to invest as much money as you can before the love runs out. If you could not afford to buy your significant other something special this valentines



day, perhaps if you invest your refund check into one of the companies listed below (instead of into a frivolous

spring break), you can make up for it by the summer.

Stock prices as of February 24, 2013:

BAC	Bank of America	16.53
GS	The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.	66.54
PG	The Procter & Gamble Company	77.86
JPM	JP Morgan Chase & Co	58.03
DAL	Delta Air Lines, Inc.	32.45
STI	SunTrust Banks, Inc.	37.59
MS	Morgan Stanley	30.31
GOOG	Google	212.51
SPG	Simon Property Group	159.91

Although the stock market is volatile remember in the world of Wall Street, no risk yields no reward! Your refund check could turn into a very profitable investment!

For last minute stock price checks there is a “Stocks” application that automatically downloads to the iphone, or visit finance.yahoo.com.



Love Does Cost a Thing

By: Gia Savage C'2016

The nationally recognized day of love is quickly approaching. Valentine's Day is a yearly event that many may acknowledge with extreme anticipation. One may either look forward to an amazing day of love and chocolates in heart-shaped boxes, or just spend the day as they would any other. However, people in relationships tend to prepare for this holiday with their wallets. It has become a trend to express love with gifts. However, the big question isn't what the gift is, it's, "How much are you spending on the gift?" The gift is a symbol of one's love, but exactly how much does love cost?

According to certain news reports, Americans spend a hefty amount of money every year to express their love. Gifts range from candy, flowers, cards, to fancy dinners. How much does all of this cost? Here's a breakdown of the numbers from Valentine's Day 2013 (CNN):

- \$130.97- The average amount that people (per person) will spend on Valentine's Day
- \$18.6 billion- The total spending that will be reached by Valentine's Day
- \$1.6 billion- The amount that

people will spend on candy

- \$1.9 billion- The amount people will spend on flowers
- \$4.4 billion- The amount people will spend on diamonds, gold, and silver

Since these large figures are being spent on a national level, how much money is being spent within the AUC? What are the opinions on Valentine's Day? Let's ask a few students...

How much do you plan to spend on Valentine's Day?

This year, I expect to spend close to \$50.

What do you plan to do for Valentine's Day?

I plan to take my date out to dinner and a movie with flowers.

-Aaron Jones, *Sophomore English major at Morehouse College*

What do Valentine's Day gifts mean to you?

I see the gifts as a representation of how much someone appreciates me. Whether it's expensive or not, it shows that they notice me and that they care.

What do you plan to do to celebrate Valentine's Day?

Sarah Nicole Hasley, my roommate, and I have made plans to spend the day getting massages and pedicures. We're

just going to pamper ourselves.

-Justice Echols, *Sophomore Biology/Pre-Med major at Spelman College*

How much do you plan to spend on Valentine's Day?

I believe in the quality of the present, not the price. As long as she knows my effort, everything turns out fine.

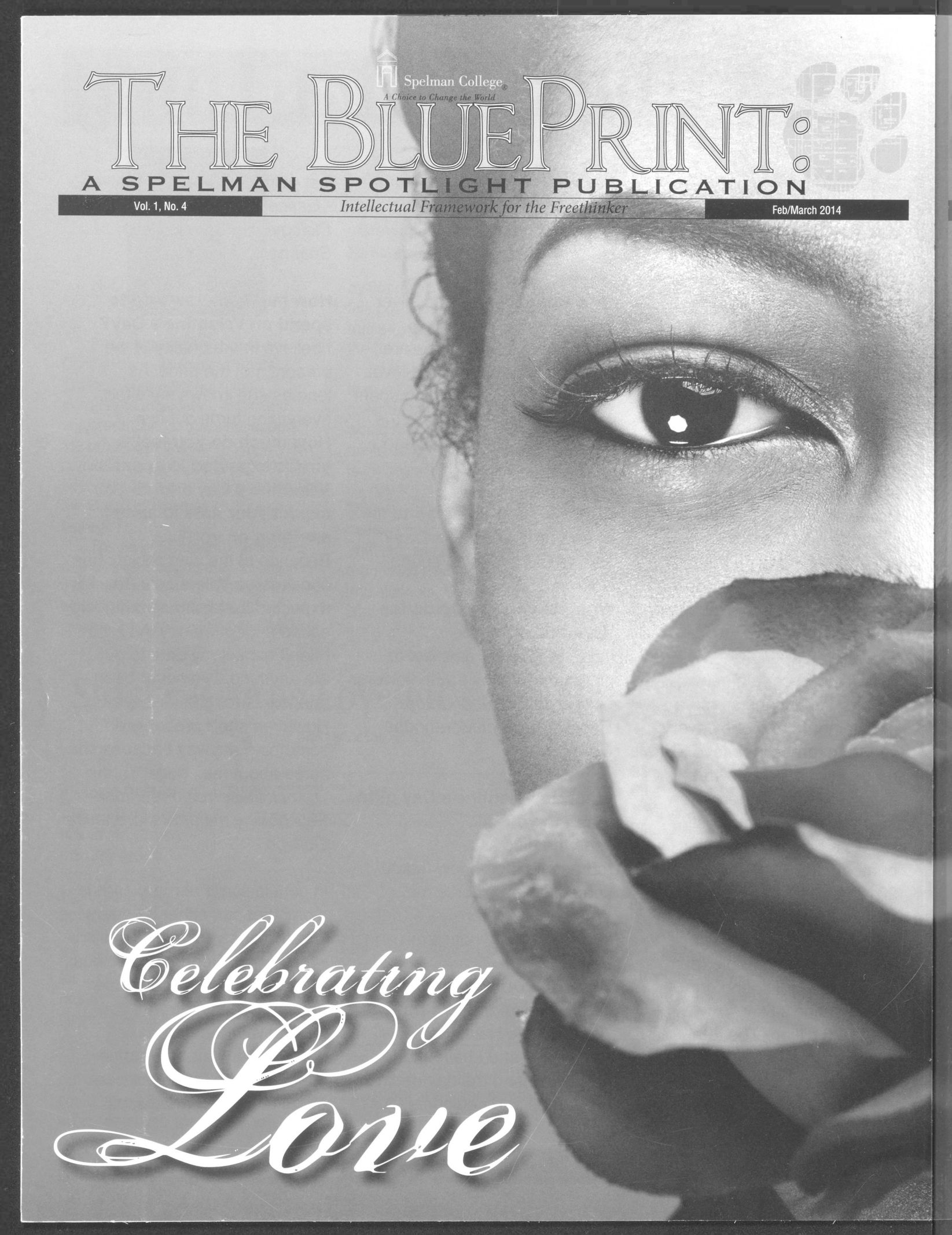
How much do you feel you're expected to spend on Valentine's Day and do you expect your date to spend anything on you?

Because of the way society has constructed Valentine's Day, it's expected that I should definitely spend a lot of money. And, no I don't expect my date to get me anything. I've never been one to ask for gifts or anything. However, she'll probably do something anyway because she cares about me.

-Terrick Gutierrez, *Freshman Psychology major at Morehouse College*

In conclusion, February 14th is a day that can either be spent with the one you love or even with friends. Regardless of what any price tag says, celebrate Valentine's Day the way you want to with the people or person you want to. Sharing your time with those you care about is actually priceless.



A black and white close-up photograph of a woman's face, focusing on her eyes and a rose she is holding near her mouth. The rose is in the lower right foreground, partially obscuring her mouth. The woman's eyes are looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

THE BLUEPRINT:

Spelman College
A Choice to Change the World

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Intellectual Framework for the Freethinker

Feb/March 2014

*Celebrating
Love*