

The Student Magazine of Virginia Commonwealth University
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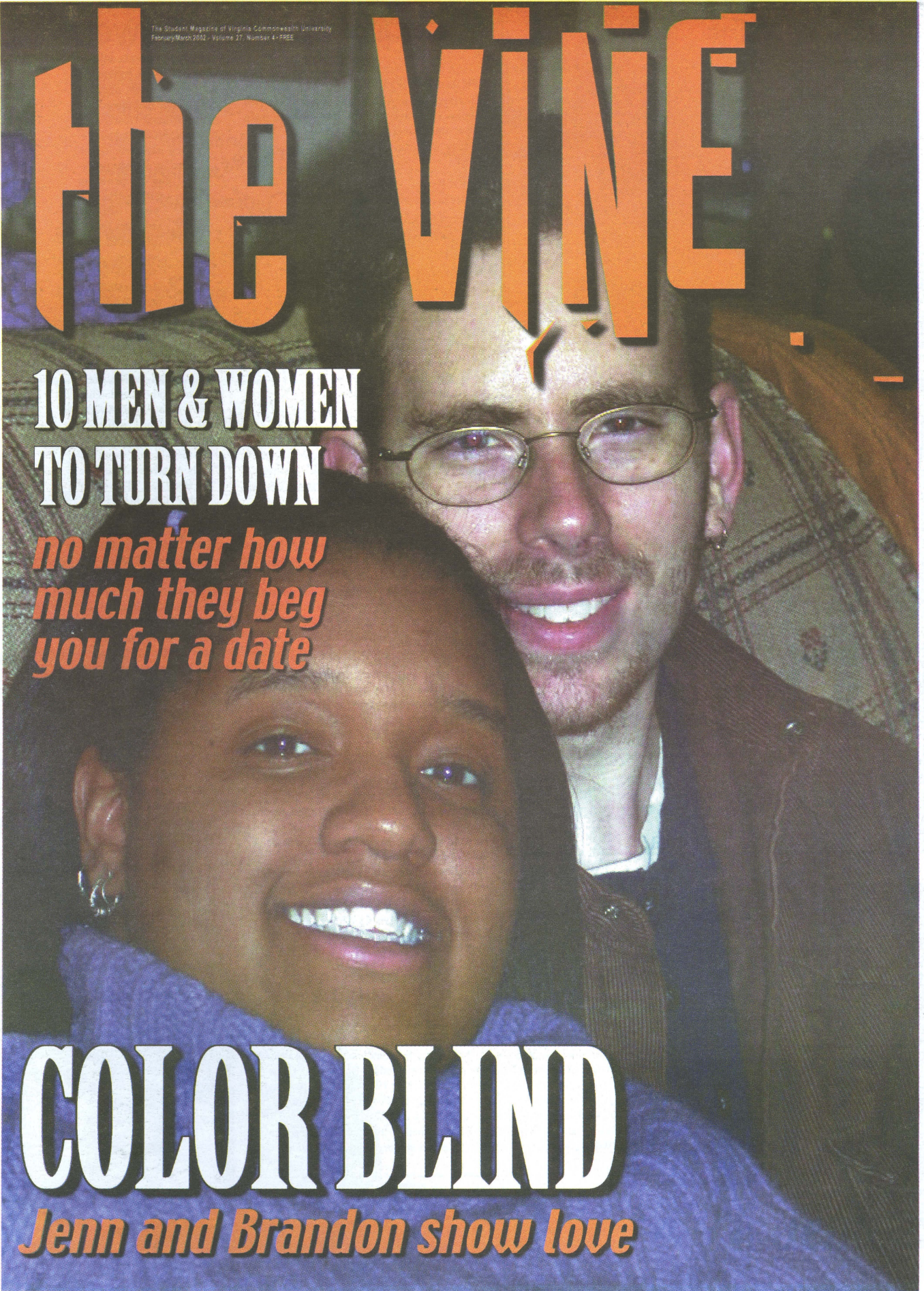
the vine

**10 MEN & WOMEN
TO TURN DOWN**

*no matter how
much they beg
you for a date*

COLOR BLIND

Jenn and Brandon show love



hiphop//URBAN

- 1 Ludacris
Saturday
- 2 De La Soul
Baby Phat
- 3 Lil Jon & The Eastside Boys
Put You Hood Up (Remix)
- 4 Nas
One Mic
- 5 Ja Rule
Always On Time
- 6 Beanie Sigel & Freeway
Roc The Mic
- 7 Ghostface Killah
Ghost Showers
- 8 The Clipse
Grinding
- 9 Nas
Got Yourself A Gun
- 10 Lil Bow Wow
Thank You
- 11 Wu-Tang Clan
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- 12 Ruff Ryders
They Ain't Ready
- 13 Methodman & Redman
Part II
- 14 Jay-Z
Jigga
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Break Ya Neck
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Hey Luv
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Roll Out
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Rock City
- 19 Ghostface Killah
The Hilton
- 20 Fubu Presents
Fatty Girl (Remix)
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- 23 Naughty By Nature
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Your Favorite Joints
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Not Ready
- 30 Baby S
So S

the Streets

...brought to you by



It's like Richmond Radio...Only Good.

Compiled by Swirv Deniro, Urban Music Director
at WVCW campus radio.

body awareness week

4th Annual Body Fair

Tuesday, February 26: 10 p.m.-1 p.m. Get a free 5 minute massage, make a stress balloon, learn about the numerous nutrition resources on campus.

Brown Bag Lunch Discussion: Body Image and Cultural Identity

Tuesday, February 26: 1-2 p.m. Share your thoughts and experiences about how your cultural identity has influenced your perception of beauty and body image. Center for Multicultural Student Affairs.

Survival Foods

Wednesday, February 27: Noon-1 p.m. If you were stranded on a desert island, which 10 foods should you have with you? Find out from a Ukrop's nutritionist. Commons. Room TBA (ask information desk.)

Slim Hopes

Wednesday, February 27: 2-3 p.m. Learn about the media and its obsession with "thinness". Watch the 30 minute Slim Hopes video and participate in the discussion to follow. Business Building Auditorium.

Mindful Eating

Thursday, February 28: Noon-1 p.m. When you eat with full consciousness, you can appreciate the true meaning of hunger and satiation. You can also feel more nourished and be satisfied with less, which can help you manage your weight. Learn what mindful Eating really feels like. Capital Ballroom B.

Other Events in the Planning Stages:

A performance by Laurie Daily-a gifted performer who sings and shares her experience and recovery from bulimia and anorexia.

Intro to Yoga session-watch and learn about the power of yoga.

"Movie and Popcorn" Night-in the residence halls (movies and discussion).

Weight and Body Image- Not Just for Women Anymore-geared towards guys!

Linda Hancock's "Sex, Booze..."-presentation
Vegetarian Food Tasting Night-Hibbs Dining Hall

College students are particularly prone to suffer from poor eating habits, negative body image and disordered eating patterns. Nearly 10% of female VCU students reported experiencing an eating disorder or eating problem within the last year. This is why the Office of Health Promotion and several other departments have designed a week of educational programs that address the issue of eating disorders as well as healthy eating, exercise and body image. This week is called "Body Awareness Week" and will take place February 25-March 6.

The main kickoff event for "Body Awareness Week" is "The Body Fair." This event is highly visible in the Commons lobby and thoroughly interactive. It is a fun atmosphere that allows students to make stress balloons, get a free 5 minute chair massage and also learn about the spectrum of campus resources for nutrition, exercise and eating disorders.

Other events for the week include a program on men's issues with body image and food, the "Slim Hopes" video and discussion, a Mindful Eating workshop and a nutrition seminar titled "Eat Like a Survivor-Without the Worms!" The departments collaborating in this effort include the Office of Health Promotion, First Year Student Services, Counseling Services, Recreation Sports and Aramak Dining Services. The sorority groups and athletic departments have been involved as well. -Sandy McGinnis.



vintage & modern

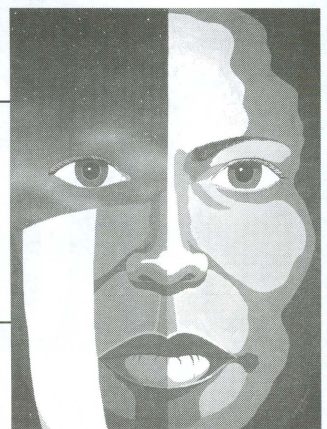
local art & fashion * jewelry * housewares * furniture * rock t-shirts * clothing & accessories

belts & buckles

Cool Gear For City Living

3003 West Cary Street
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Virginia Commonwealth University's 2002 Black History Month poster "Destined to Be Free" was done by Robyn Phillips, Illustrator and Assistant Professor of Art at the University of Delaware. Phillips received her Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Communications Arts and Design from VCU in 1989. She then received her Master's in Fine Art from Syracuse University in 1995. Phillips' work has been included in Society of Illustrators' Annual 41 and American Illustration 18, as well as other editorial venues. Phillips, originally from Hampton, Virginia, currently lives in Delaware. Phillips did a poster signing in the VCU Student Commons February 13.



beneath the pages

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- p. 7 dating no-no's
- p. 8 interracial dating
- p. 10 relationships
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- p. 16 jay-z vs. nas
- p. 17 home coming



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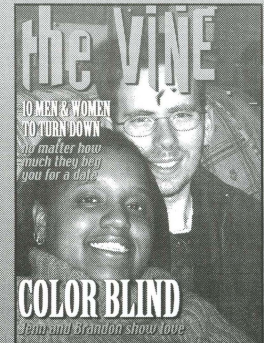


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the VINE

About the Cover

"Jenn and Brandon"
by Kevin and Randy.
After over a week of confusion, we finally got the photo shoot done with this couple, who are featured in "Crossing The Line" by Kevin Clay. The staff decided this would be the perfect cover, after all, the issue is about relationships. In our opinion, the photo does its job. It's subtle, yet powerful.



rebekah rambles

by REBEKAH FRIMPONG

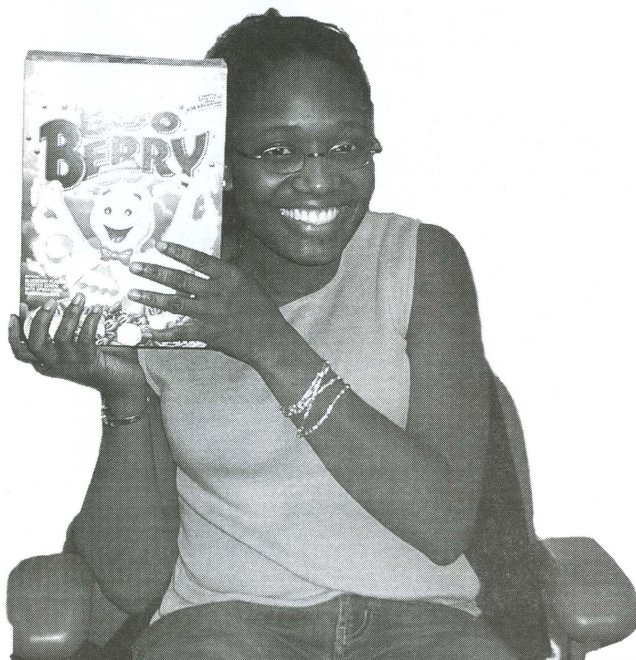
(change is good)

Dear Readers,

Often times, people feel that change means that things will never be the same. In actuality, this just may be true, but change can be good. Recently, I have gone through changes in my life that have helped me realize the importance of friends. When I first started as Editor-in-Chief of *The Vine*, I thought I knew who my friends were. In time, I learned that friends can be the people you never expected to be. In the beginning of my term as editor, I needed to search for a new staff because most of the staff from years before had graduated. The staff I ended up with, in fact, became my dear friends. There was Kevin, who taught me to dream; Charissa, who ensured my ability to care; and Antione, who gave me confidence. Then there were other staff members that even through brief conversations gave me hope that *The Vine* would be more than a magazine but a place to find friends. Now, I have to face yet another change in my life. I am no longer Editor-in-Chief of *The Vine*. The memories though, will always be there no matter what changes I endure. You, the readers, understand that change can be good.

Sincerely,

Former Editor-in-Chief
Rebekah Frimpong



staff

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shout outs

Thanks to all of the staff and supporters of The Vine. We've gone through a tough transitional time the past few weeks. Ultimately, we'll succeed. Thanks goes to Lisa Brownlee for the positive reinforcement and concern. Thanks to WVCW and The Commonwealth Times; remember, unity is the key! Thanks to Sarah for all the support. Thanks to Wilma Wirt for always being that guiding hand. Edom, you came through! Thank you buddy. Thanks to all the dedicated readers who cared enough to consistently ask when the next issue was coming out, here it is! Thanks Kevin for all your hard work in spite of your ailing back, get better Kev! Thanks to our advertisers: Mr. Owens over at the Lost Sock, who has been with us since the beginning; Scott Dickens and everyone at Glass and Powder Boardshop; and Merideth and Didi at Urban Artifacts (thanks for letting us distribute The Vine at your store). Your kindness and patience with us as we continue to build our business program is greatly appreciated. Last, but absolutely not least, a very special thanks goes out to Rebekah Frimpong. Rebekah, your dedication and presence at The Vine didn't go unnoticed. Keep it real Rebekah. Keep it real. Everyone we forgot, ooopps! Peace.

Virginia Commonwealth University

The Vine is a free publication written and produced by the students of Virginia Commonwealth University. Published monthly, the magazine is a forum of expression through art work, poetry, articles, short stories, and essays. Views expressed in columns and opinion pages are those of the author and should not be interpreted as views of the administration, faculty, student body or the Vine. Please mail letters, complaints, submissions or suggestions to Virginia Commonwealth University, Student Activities Center, The Vine, 907 Floyd Avenue, P.O. Box 842035, Richmond, VA 23284-2035 or phone us at (804) 827-0646 or e-mail us at vcvine@hotmail.com. Input is always appreciated.

A Story^{With} No Words

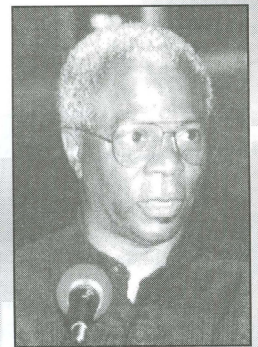
by EDOM SAHLE

One of the most agonizing times in history which is inexplicable to many, has been illustrated and portrayed

for people to view in the book "The Middle Passage" by Tom Feelings. Feelings is a well known artist who has illustrated many children books and other books in his days.

He has traveled extensively, from Ghana, to the West Indies and South America. "The Middle Passage: White Ships/Black Cargo, is a story illustrated with haunting pictures which tell the story from the beginning of the journey of the Africans from their homeland, to the arrival of the various ships in America.

Without fear or letting the viewer distances himself or herself from the reality, Feelings captures the terrible journey known as the middle passage. Feelings was the keynote speaker at VCU for Black History Month.



The Vine: *I just wanted to first ask you how you came about becoming a keynote speaker for black history month at VCU?*

Tom Feelings: How did it come about...hm...I think I met Alex the illustrator. I met him at the society of illustrators and we talked about maybe me coming down and talking about my book "The Middle Passage."

V: *Let me get some background information on you. You attended the school of visual arts, but where and how were you inspired to draw before then?*

Feelings: I've been drawing ever since I was young. I remember a teacher taking me by the hand; I must have been five, showing the drawing I did to the other teachers. So I have been drawing since I can remember.

V: *You have won the Caldecott Honor for your illustrations for "Moja Means One" and "Jambo Means Hello." What were the motivations behind these books? (Feelings collaborated with Muriel Feelings on these children books by submitting the drawings for the books)*

Feelings: I've gone to Africa to find out some about you know my background, but mainly to find out where the joy came from. When I left and went to Africa, it was in 1964, and there was a lot of painful things happening to Black people here in the states. So I knew where the pain came from. I wanted to find out where the joy in our lives came from because our lives are not made up of just pain. And so I went to Africa and I did find out where it came from, the whole sense of celebration. Africa is a culture where everything is celebrated, even death, as a new beginning. So the whole sense of rhythm and movement, the sounds of the drum all those things were accents for me, of the joy. And when I came back from Africa, I stayed there two years, realizing that children, both Black and White, were bombarded with negative images of Africa. I wanted to share my experience, a positive experience of living in Africa, so that they might want to go and see for themselves. So I illustrated, I concentrated on books that dealt with the African experience

V: *"Now Sheba Sings the Song," featured your drawings by Black women celebrated by Maya Angelou. How did you end up collaborating with Angelou and what besides the poetry inspired you to illustrate these images?*

Feelings: Ok, again in this case I did not illustrate. What happened was, while I was in the states before I went to Africa, I did a lot of drawings from life, right in my own community. I did drawings of men and women and children mostly children and when I got to Africa I got a job as an illustrator for the African Review Magazine. Then, on my own time, I went out and did exactly what I did in Brooklyn, I started drawing from life. So I ended up with a lot of drawings of Black men, women and children that I did anywhere that I visited or lived. So I had all these drawings of Black women from Africa, of course from the United States, from South America, where I lived for three years and when I visited the West Indies. So I had all these drawings of African women on the continent and in the Diaspora, and I knew there was a story in these drawings but I felt the woman should write the story. So I asked Maya Angelou, who I met in Ghana, when I got to Ghana in 64 she was already living there. We both moved back to the states at different times. I thought she knew their story so what I did was to leave maybe 30 drawings with her. Again, these are drawings from the vast Diaspora, in Africa and outside of Africa and she wrote a poem and then I designed a book and took it into the publisher.

V: *Ok, I see. So you moved to West Africa in 1964, and did the Ghanaian community there accept you?*

Feelings: Until I opened my mouth, that was the case. They didn't know I was from someplace else.

V: *They didn't?*

Feelings: No, because we look exactly the same.

Let me tell you a little short story. I was there for about a month, first of all there were already African-Americans already there working and living including Maya Angelou. And one day I went into a bank and a woman behind me, Ghanaian woman, started speaking to me in Ga, which is one of the tongues they have, they have different tongues. I tried to explain to her that I didn't speak Ga and she kept talking to me in Ga. Finally, saying that I was trying to act as if I didn't speak the language. And then someone from the bank who knew me came over to her and spoke in Ga and told her that I was not from there, that I was from America. And she said, but you resemble Ga too much. So one of the first experiences I had when I got there was seeing people that looked exactly like the people in my Black neighborhood in Brooklyn.

V: *Do you feel that Black Americans would have a better understanding of who they are if they did travel back to Africa, in a sense?*

Feelings: Well, you have to know who you are in order to know where you are going. So I consider myself an African who was born in America. When I talk to people trying to explain this I use a quotation from Malcolm X who said "Just because a cat gives birth to kittens in an oven don't mean the kittens are biscuits." You are African no matter what part of the world you were born in. You can see that in terms of our culture moving all around the world and influencing the world. Africans in America, you know created jazz, but jazz, the base of jazz, comes from Africa so therefore Africans created it.

V: *You speak about being inspired in the 1960's to depict images of your own people, was that one incident to inspire you, or was it everything that was going on at that time?*

Feelings: In the early 60's and late 50's there were no images in magazines and books, there was no children books with Black images in them. I was in art school in 1959, 58, when I came out of the services, I went back to art school. And I realized in an illustration class when we were given stories to illustrate, none of the stories had anything to do with Black people. So what I started doing was making up my own assignments and I would go out into my own neighborhoods, you know I grew up in a Black neighborhood, but I realized at that point I haven't done many drawings in that neighborhood of Black people. So I started drawing the people that I had seen all my life and lived around me, you know ordinary people. And in the drawing process I began to see the extraordinary in the ordinary.

V: *Let's go back to Africa. You speak of a Ghanaian friend who led you into the journey to examine the images that you did in "The Middle Passage." Was this book something you always wanted to do or felt that people should hear about this story in some way and you just didn't know it until you went to Africa?*

Feelings: I went to Africa to find out where the joy came from but I didn't just feel pain in America. I felt the pain of racism and it's limitations, but in my own community, of course we had music and dancing and jokes. I wanted to find out where that original joy came from and going to Africa that is where I saw it and felt it. Within Africa, this Ghanaian friend asked me, "What happened to y'all, when you were taken away from here?" And it made me examine and look at that moment, how do you tell a story of a painful thing that happened to us? But I wasn't ready to do that at that point. So it wasn't until ten years later, something like that, let me see I came back in 66. In 1968, I illustrated a book by Julius Lester, called "To Be A Slave," which was a story of slavery in the south, right from the words of the people, the black people, who were enslaved. And that made me look at the painful things again. I remembered them before I went to Africa; it influenced my artwork, my artwork before I went to Africa. The colors were somber and it reflected the pain that I was feeling and I wondered if I could combine the two things together like the music does, like the blues. The book combines both pain and joy. But in Africa, I saw where pain and joy just

don't sit side by side, they interact and they build on each other and that's where this strength of African culture is, in looking at and balancing the two things.

V: *Research and reading personal accounts of the slave trade is one of the ways you say you started this journey. How else did you capture the details of the ship and exactly where these people were and the faces that you drew? How did you transfer those images into your artwork?*

Feelings: Well let me give you another short story. While I was working on these drawings, and it was difficult because you see there were no photographs at that time. So I didn't have any photographs to look at. So what I was trying to do was imagine all this. And by reading these accounts I used my imagination. But no matter how debasing the situations were, I always tried to feel a sense of dignity about the people who were going through it. But sometimes this would be reflective on their bodies or in a sense of movement and rhythm that I learned how to do in the images I did of Jambo and Mojo of the African images.

V: *You moved to America to start this book, and you speak of how painful it is to see things in present America, the legacy of slavery that is still destructing lives today. Why do you believe that is still going on or affecting our society the way it is?*

Feelings: Because it still is! We haven't...I live in the south here, and one of the reasons I moved south was to finish the other half of "The Middle Passage," which is the arrival in America, and in the south and they are still fighting over... the people still defending the Confederate flag.

"The Confederate flag to black people is just like the Swastika is to the Jews."

Well the Confederate flag to Black people is just like the Swastika is to the Jews. It's a symbol of racism. It's a symbol of death to Black people. So the struggle still goes on but it's because, I've realized how important it is for

people to look at what happened in the past, face it, look at it directly and face it. That you can't solve the problems of the present unless you deal with what happened in the past. And its too much denial in this country in terms of what happened to black people.

V: *You asked Black people to look at your work before you finished "The Middle Passage," Why do you think you needed that feedback?*

Feelings: Well, I'll tell you what happened. I let people come into the loft and look at pieces. And what they would do is start telling me their own lives, or their grandparents lives or people that they know. And I would just listen and I realized what I was doing. I was taking all this information in and then using it in the work. It was far more information, far more experiences than my own limited lifetime. There are a lot of people in that book, "The Middle Passage," because I used a lot of peoples feelings and emotions and the stories they told me and I think I put it in that work. It's not a story about one slave ship or even

100 Black people came over on the slave ship; it's a story of thousands of slave ships and hundred of thousands of people. I was trying to reflect what happened to the group, not trying to tell a story through one person.

V: *Let's talk about some of the images in the book. There is a drawing of what appears to be a ruler of a certain tribe watching his people being taken away and he is sitting expressionless on the throne as fellow Africans are bound and taken away beneath his feet. What does that image mean?*

Feelings: It means exactly again what happened, is Africans whether they knew or understood what was going to happen to other Africans when they were sold and taken away on those ships, some Africans participated in it. Some African chiefs participated in it. But you can't have sellers

without buyers and in many cases the same people who participated in the selling of other Africans they were sold themselves.

V: *There is also another image I want to talk about, it's a drawing of a Black man being held up by white arms and chains are holding him down.*

Feelings: No, they are pushing him up into the ship.

V: *So they are pushing him up into the ship?*

Feelings: Yes, to tell the story I needed all kinds of elements. I needed the abstractions so that you will get a certain kind of energy and dynamism when you use abstractions. That scene is an abstraction. It's a symbolic, showing this figure being pushed up into the mask of the ship and if you look in the background on the sides, you can see inside the ship there are figures in there already. And of course I use realism, realistic figures so that you won't be able to distance yourself from this experience. So I have tried to use both abstraction and realism the same way I've tried to use pain and the reflection of joy even if it's not really joy but a reflection of the energy, the positive energy, that comes out of Africa, which helped us to survive the trip.

V: *As the story progresses in the book there seems to be almost a revolt on the ship, I don't know if I am perceiving that right?*

Feelings: Yes, you're perceiving it right.

V: *Ok, so the battle is going on with the blacks being the ones physically beaten. Can you explain some of those images?*

Feelings: You see cruelty going on up on the ship. In order to keep people enslaved you've got to exert negative energy, you've got to try and hold them down. Because nobody wants to be enslaved. There were always revolts on the slave ships. In many cases because the sailors had more guns or more ammunition, they won. And what they would do was hang the ringleader because they did not want to kill everybody because they were seeing human beings as cargo. As matter of fact, they didn't see us as human beings.

V: *There's one more image I want to speak about. There is a haunting drawing of a woman being held by an almost demonic, ghostlike person. What is that portraying, is that drawing of a person, the man holding her?*

Feelings: What I tried to do is when I read all these accounts of the middle passage they were all by Europeans. What I tried to do is tell the story from the Africans viewpoint. So when they come on this slave ship for the first time, what they see is people who look exactly the

opposite of them. They're dark, these people are White, and they are doing these horrible things to them, so they are more demonic images. If I had never seen White people before and they are doing these things to me, this is how I would see them. So this is right from the cover of the book, how the Africans saw this experience. I took myself in their place because I am an African.

V: *What specific knowledge or emotions do you want people to eventually come out with after finishing the book?*

Feelings: First I would want these young Black people... In the beginning of the book the first image in the book is life affirming, that's Africa before the slave trade. The last image in the book, the arrival at a port and land, is somewhat life affirming, because these are the people who survived. That's why Africans are here in this country because so many people did survive. But in order to get you from that first picture to the last picture I had to go through all that pain in the middle, the middle passage. And once people have gone through all of that pain and come to the last picture then they would begin to understand how pow-

erful our ancestors were to have survived that horrible trip. And then they would feel the responsibility to see them not as victims but as powerful people who survived. Also I want the adults, the Black adults to realize only by telling the children the painful things you've gone through in your life will you prepare them to move on to live into the future

V: *This is obviously a very moving book for Blacks to look at African or American. Do you feel that White America can begin to understand the total evil of the slave trade by looking at this book?*

Feelings: Yes, that's exactly what I want to see. There is denial in this country about what happened in the past, because people don't want to...they're ashamed of it. Black people shouldn't be ashamed because we were the victims not the oppressors. I did this book in a children's book form because I felt that it should go to children who should see it now,

while they are young and it should go to adults who should have seen it when they were young. Because if you know the truth you can understand more what is happening now and the effects from the past and then you move to change things right now in the present.

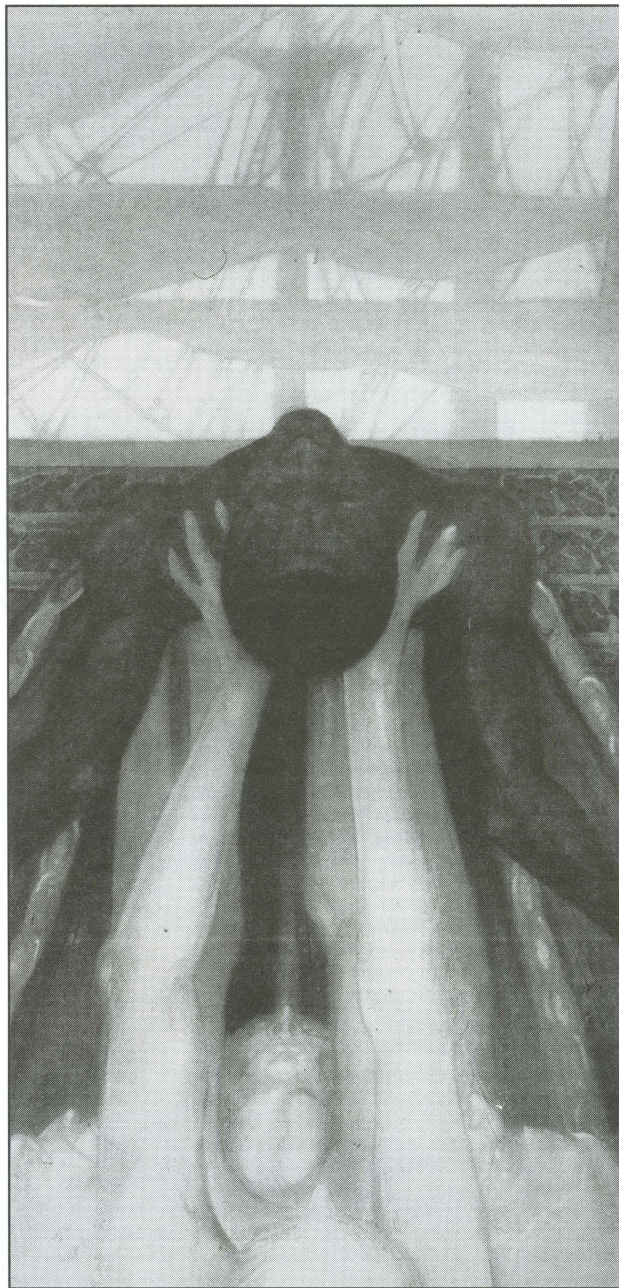
V: *I don't know if it's possible for you to pick one but is there one piece in this book that is the most compelling to you, it means a lot to you personally.*

Feelings: All the pictures mean something to me personally, but the one that is on the title page of the screaming faces and the ship moving ahead that basically says, is a statement about the middle passage. What happened to human beings that were taken away from their homes and realize in the

middle of the ocean that they may never see their home

again. And then the story that follows, which is what I am working on now is what happened to the people when they got to these countries. As painful as the middle passage was, it was a straight story but once Africans got to South America, Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Peru. All these places that we are now, things got more complex and convoluted and remain. So I want all of us, wherever we are now, on the continent, outside the continent, to realize that we are linked together even though it's through a painful experience. And hoping that those bonds that we now will share willingly and understand that it's a bond that connects us all together. And out of this bond, as a matter of fact, wonderful music, to the sciences connection, with the world of athletes wherever black people are now they are still created. And whatever form they have gone into, whether it's music, the sciences, or athletic world we have improvised, like we did on the slave ships, improvised, innovated and then transcended the pain releasing the level of excellence.

V: *The different and best part of this book to me is that in the end I am left with a sense of hope, not just of sadness*



and pain.

Feelings: No, we are still here. That's why the last picture in the book shows the people who survived and so we are still here. There's people in this world, there's whole groups of people that have been wiped out completely. But we're still here, on the continent and we're still here on all these places now in the world, like South America, Cuba, Dominican

Republic, all these places we are still here creating music and living life and I think that's a tribute to our ancestors

V: *There is so many different emotions that I went through when looking at this book. I think it is an amazing book and you are an amazing artist.*

Feelings: Thank you. I did the book because of emotions. I wanted people to be emotionally involved. I really believe that Africans, wherever they are, demand of their artists, no matter whether they are musicians or painters or whatever. They demand because we have been lied to and lied about so much in this world, they demand our best work, they demand to be moved emotionally even if it is a painful story. They want to believe that the person who is telling this story is telling it for a good reason and that the person who is telling this story loves them. ☺

10 men and women to turn down (no matter how hard they beg for a date)

the men

the women

1. The Mama's Boy

Characteristics: Sweet, but soft: he may have a bit of a belly from mom's home-cooked meals, and/or he may actually live at home.

Why You'll Be Tempted: He'll watch chick flicks with you.

Why You Should Run: He's actually already seen them all.

Danger Signs: He tells you you're the woman his mom's always dreamed of, and brings her along on your first date.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "I tend to prefer guys who pick out their clothes themselves."

2. The Teacher's Assistant

Characteristics: Charismatic, but conceited: the breadth of his knowledge about thousands of fascinating topics pales in comparison to his interest in himself.

Why You'll Be Tempted: Brilliant pillow talk, better grades.

Why You Should Run: He'll tell the teacher how you are in bed.

Danger Signs: He grades your papers in bed, and you still don't pass.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "By the way my dad said that he wanted to discuss your position as his assistant at dinner tonight."

3. The Jock

Characteristics: Hunky, tough, always up for a spontaneous game of football, and able to carry off a backwards baseball cap -- sort of.

Why You'll Be Tempted: Those muscles.

Why You Should Run: All the hours he spends at the gym bulking up those muscles, not to mention the hours spent gazing at his reflection in the mirror, in store windows, on the back of his spoon...

Danger Signs: He watches sports on TV constantly, even during dates.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "The [his favorite sports team here] stink."

4. The Trendoid

Characteristics: Well-dressed and confident, he knows the latest fashion trends -- even better than you do!

Why You'll Be Tempted: Flat-front chinos, slick turtle-necks, fashionable belts, cool shoes...what more could you ask for in a man?

Why You Should Run: His wardrobe will make you look pathetic by comparison.

Danger Sign: He'd rather shop at Banana Republic than have sex.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "Dolce who?"

5. The Womanizer

Characteristics: Whether he's traditionally handsome or a diamond in the rough, there's just something about this guy that makes you swoon. And he treats women like gold because he loves them -- all of them -- so much.

Why You'll Be Tempted: He knows how to compliment, woo, and touch to thrill -- especially thrill.

Why You Should Run: He uses the same routine on every woman he meets.

Danger Sign: He blanks on your name while you're both naked (it's tough to keep all those women straight).

What to Say to Scare Him Away: Two words: "Monica Lewinsky"

6. Mr. Not-So-Straight

Characteristics: Stunning good looks, dashing dresser, hip on the pop culture front, and refreshingly keen on shopping with you.

Why You'll Be Tempted: He really "gets" you.

Why You Should Run: You deserve more than a partner to watch "Will and Grace" with.

Danger Sign: When you both catch yourselves watching Ricky Martin with equal, um, enthusiasm.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "My dad would love to take you hunting."

7. The Artsy Wannabe

Characteristics: He wears sexy glasses and scruffy vintage clothing -- and he ventures nowhere without a journal in hand.

Why You'll Be Tempted: His way with words will win you over.

Why You Should Run: Do you really want to be attached to a struggling artist? No dinners out, no gifts, no movies, no video rentals even...

Danger Signs: He stages real fights and breakup scenes to inspire the plot of his novel.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "I actually thought that 'Clueless' was a great adaptation of Emma."

8. The Pre-Med Student

Characteristics: Motivated and studious, this guy can tell you the ins and outs of DNA replication.

Why You'll Be Tempted: He's smart, charming, and goal oriented. Gotta love a man with a plan.

Why You Should Run: The kind of chemistry he's looking to study does not involve you.

Danger Sign: He prefers a night at the library until 2 a.m. instead of a romantic night with you.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "Contrary to eulthanasia, I'm quite for that practice!"

9. The Lonely Guy

Characteristics: Sweet, romantic (though typically not great in the dancing department), loves planning outings, and thinks that the sun rises and sets right on you.

Why You'll Be Tempted: He's the sensitive guy who everyone says just needs a chance, plus he'll do anything for you.

Why You Should Run: He really will do anything for you, which can be very, very scary.

Danger Sign: He not-so-casually remarks: "Since my other friends have girlfriends now, I'm really looking for someone to fill my evenings with." (Translation: "Please, please save me from my horrible crushing solitude.")

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "I love spending time alone."

10. The Frat Boy

Characteristics: He may have a bit of a belly due to alcoholic consumption, but his charisma and confidence will compensate plenty.

Why You'll Be Tempted: He seems interested in everything you say and will charm the pants right off of you.

Why You Should Run: He'll charm the pants right off of you!

Danger Sign: He leaves you for a minute to get you a drink and when he doesn't return, you find him out on the dance floor grinding with some chick.

What to Say to Scare Him Away: "I think you're the ONE."

1. The Needy Freshman

Characteristics: Naive, anxious, and ready to embrace the freedom of college.

Why You'll Be Tempted: They're always dressed to impress, haven't hit the freshman 15, and their "I need a big strong guy to show me around" act has got you lined up to help out.

Why You Should Run: They're still in their high school mode.

Danger Sign: She's filled your voice mail box up with "I miss you" and "Just in case you lost my number" messages. And you just met the girl this weekend at a party while in a drunken stupor.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "Wow, you're friend is hot! Can you hook me up?"

2. The Party Girl

Characteristics: Energetic, sociable and is the reigning champion of beer bong; without fail, no matter how lame the party, she is sure to be there.

Why You'll Be Tempted: Her sexy grinding dance technique has got you all hot and bothered!

Why You Should Run: You'll never see daylight again.

Danger Sign: The only quality time you get to have with her is on the dance floor...between four other guys!

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "How about we stay in tonight and read a book."

3. The Temptress

Characteristics: Her sexy attitude and drop dead gorgeous looks...what more is there to know?

Why You'll Be Tempted: Her flirtatious demeanor and suggestive glances lure you in.

Why You Should Run: This desirable woman is wanted by everyone and can't be expected to settle down with just one guy.

Danger Sign: While you're telling her your life story, she's already spotted her next victim.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "Oh I don't think that dress makes you look fat. You were already big to begin with."

4. The Ditz

Characteristics: Bubbly personality and a love for cute, fluffy animals. This girl is always looking to bring a little sunshine to your gray days.

Why You'll Be Tempted: She'll laugh at all your jokes...no matter how corny they may be.

Why You Should Run: The extent of her conversation topics is limited.

Danger Signs: Your friends openly joke her and she laughs along with them...not knowing.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "Who's political view points do you agree with, Aristotle or Plato's?"

5. The Feminist

Characteristics: Independent, animal loving, bra burning

Why You'll Be Tempted: Her independent life-style will allow you use your money for your own benefit.

Why You Should Run: Every remark you make is countered with a slap.

Danger Sign: She decides to stop shaving as an act of protest.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "Woman, get in the kitchen and make me dinner!"

6. The Goody Goody

Characteristics: Incredibly sweet and down to

earth.

Why You'll Be Tempted: Her innocence and "Little House on the Prairie" values are a refreshing change to your wild life-style.

Why You Should Run: When you take her home to meet the family, all you hear all night is, "Why can't you be more like [your significant other]?"

Danger Signs: You have become the Hallmark poster boy.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: Start taking her parent's side in arguments, after all, she only went out with you to piss them off anyway.

7. The Tomboy

Characteristics: Athletic build and carefree behavior...no need for makeup on this natural beauty.

Why You'll Be Tempted: She gets along great with your friends and is always willing to watch Sports Center with you.

Why You Should Run: She really is "One of The Guys".

Danger Signs: She's always the first one picked for teams and you're always last.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "I signed us up for ballroom dance class."

8. The Drama Queen

Characteristics: Always has something to talk about.

Why You'll Be Tempted: She does the cutest impersonation of Marilyn Monroe's "Happy Birthday".

Why You Should Run: She loves the limelight, so don't be surprised if she pushes you out of the way to get there.

Danger Signs: If you're ever caught hogging the spotlight, you can be sure she'll cause an Oscar worthy scene.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "Since women live longer than men, it just kills me to think how devastated you'll be all alone after I'm gone."

9. The Bookworm

Characteristics: Cute, incredibly smart, quiet and shy on the outside, but just waiting for someone to break her out of her cubicle.

Why You'll Be Tempted: She helps you with your homework...and will even do it for you every now and then.

Why You Should Run: Your new theme song will become "If I Only Had a Brain!"

Danger Signs: She starts dragging you to her Oprah book club meetings.

What to Say to Scare Her Away: "I thought that maybe you could watch the movie rather than read the book."

10. The Prima Donna

Characteristics: Her trendy styles and flawless looks are just a bonus to her confident attitude...this chick is ready to take the world by storm.

Why You'll Be Tempted: She knows you want her and will openly give you an invitation...why wait around for you to make your move.

Why You Should Run: It's her way or the highway!

Danger Signs: Make sure you allow her ample time before dates...you didn't think that flawless look came naturally did you?

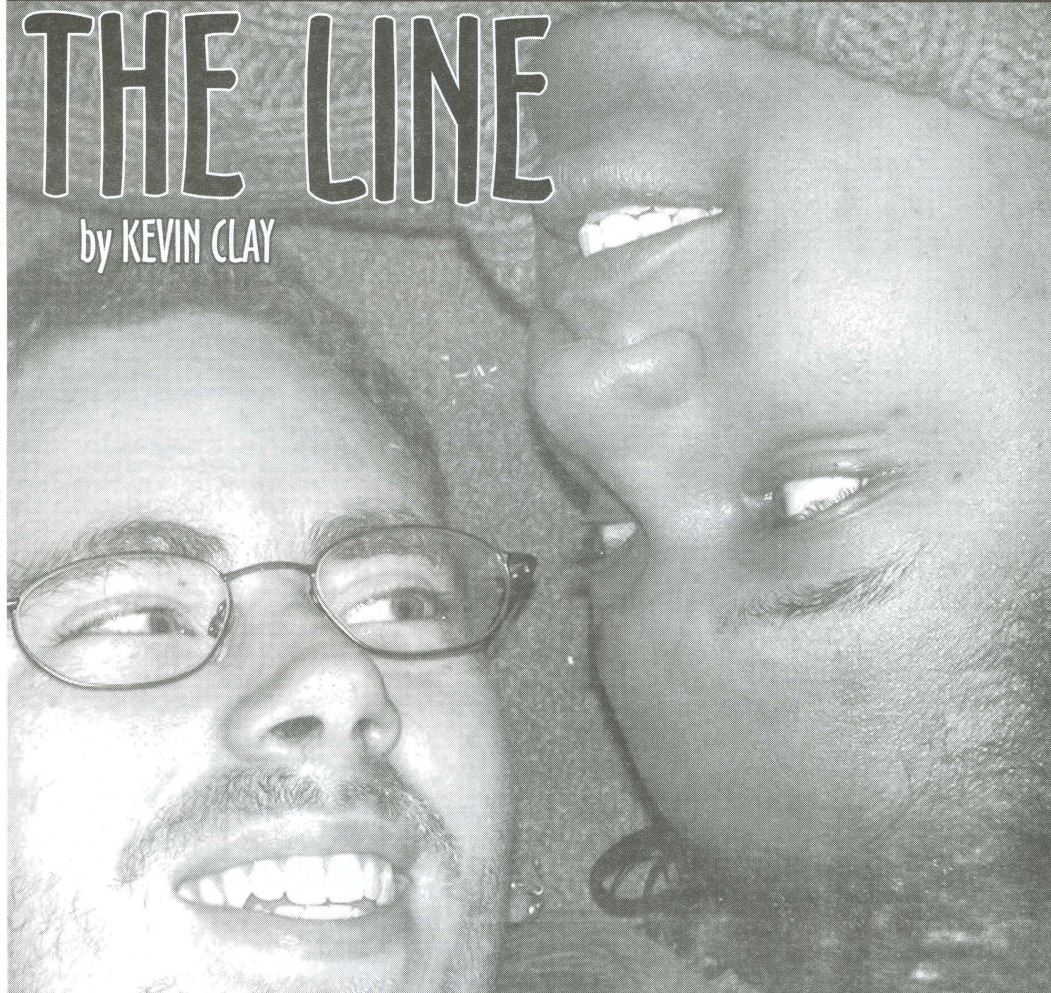
What to Say to Scare Her Away: "Wow! I had no idea how dumb you were!"

CROSSING

how one couple's
love for each
other transcends
racial boundaries

THE LINE

by KEVIN CLAY



IT'S JUST ANOTHER TUESDAY AFTERNOON IN THE WVCW STUDIO. JENNIFER OAKRUM IS currently losing a game of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 to friend and co-worker Jon Carpenter because she wasn't paying attention. Jon then rubs in his victory. "Ha, ha. You lost. I won!" The gang's trying to pass some time between classes playing video games when music director Elbe d'Oliveira asks "Is he hung like a black man?"

The question didn't come out of nowhere. It arose during a discussion with Jennifer about her relationship with her boyfriend Brandon Thomasson. Although everyone in the studio knew Elbe was clearly joking, interracial couples often times face such stereotypical comments, and they aren't a joke. No one took offense to his comment, and Jennifer responded to the question.

"White guys can have big *explicative* too," she answers.

Jennifer and Brandon have known each other since freshman year, two and a half years ago. They've been dating for over a year.

"We met through mutual friends at a party. We did stuff with our boyfriends and girlfriends together. We didn't even know we were going to go out," Jennifer said.

WVCW plays a big part in their relationship. Brandon goes to the

station to support Jennifer and what she loves to do.

"He knows how much it means to me," Jennifer said. "[The radio station] is probably where I see him the most because I work here so much."

Brandon was raised in a family that emphasized that race did not matter when it came to dating. Before Jennifer, Brandon had dated outside of his race before. Like Jennifer, Brandon does not have a preference.

"[Race] doesn't matter honestly because I was always brought up to just live my life happily. Physical appearance shouldn't even be an issue whatsoever. It's just what makes you happy in your heart. That's it. If they make you happy and they make you feel good, then that only should be what it's about. If people

can't look past that, then they are missing a big part of their lives. They are missing a lot more than just what they see. That is what I can speak from now."

Jennifer has similar feelings.

"His race didn't matter. The fact is, I don't say, 'this is a nice White boy I'm going out with.' I just looked at the fact that he was a nice guy and that he was cute.," Jennifer says.

Jennifer said that there are no differences between the races that she has dated.

"I don't think Brandon's family is any different from my family."

As far as her parents are concerned, their opinions vary on the subject of interracial dating.

"My mom is real supportive. She doesn't care. She's open to any kind of relationship. My dad on the other hand is real old school. He has a little problem with it, but he knows that I'm grown and that I can make my own choices. He likes Brandon a lot."

"[Race] shouldn't have any relevance to a relationship. If you chose that person to go out with, you shouldn't sit up there and think that it should always be a race issue. Right now I'm reading a book called 'Married Men' and in it, this Black guy is married to this White woman and he's just beginning to question dating White women. The point is, he dated her because of who she was, not because of her race, so I think it is the most ignorant thing for people to question [the relevance of] race in their relationship especially if they're in an interracial relationship."

Jennifer would want her children to date whomever they wanted to.

"There are some ignorant people out there. That's the problem. You're supposed to embrace the culture your children are with, but at the same time, you can't tell them to deny a culture they are part of too.

It's like what I saw on 'Jenny Jones.' This Black guy came up with a Confederate flag and announced that he hated Blacks. That's just so stupid."

Like any concerned parent, Brandon would be upset if he found out his child was being teased because of his or her racial background.

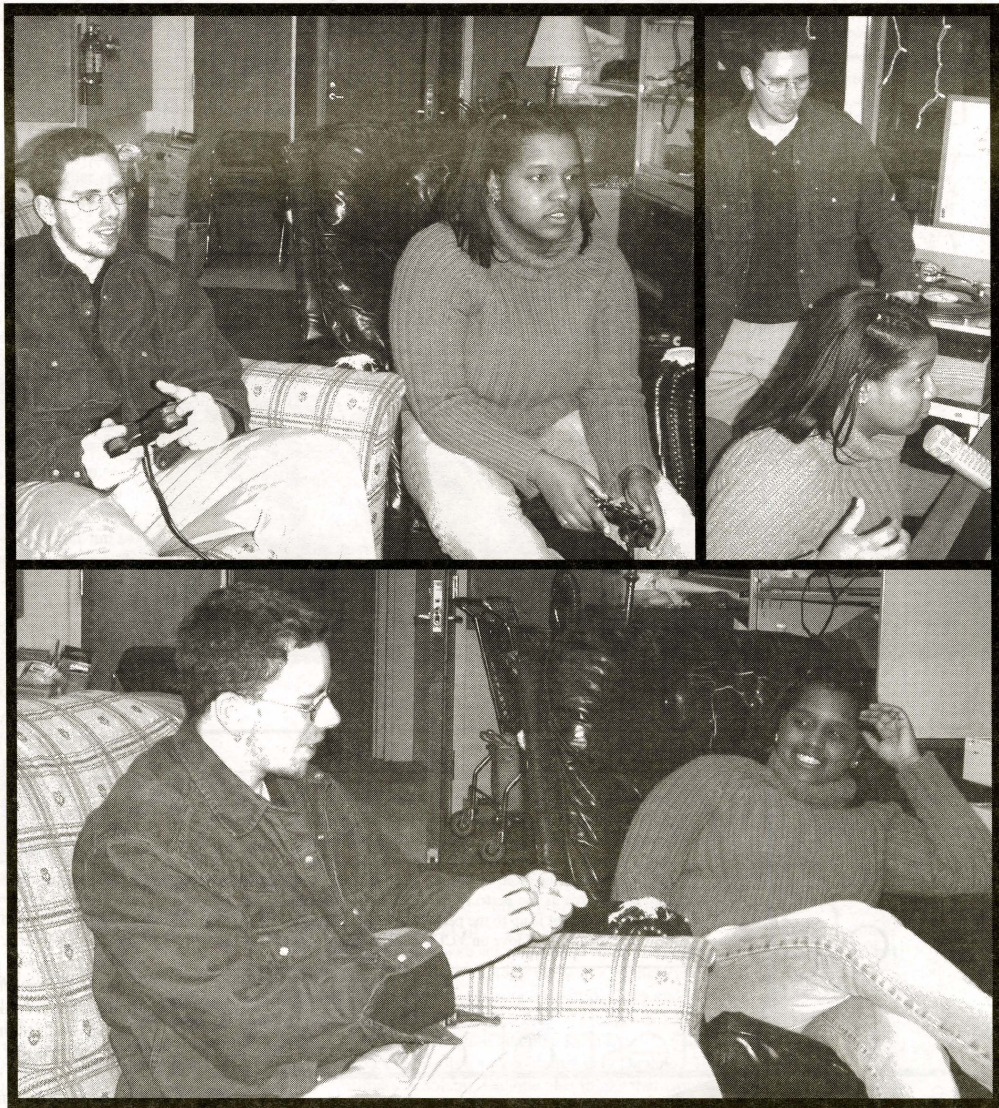
"I would always support my child. I would reinforce to my child that it doesn't matter what you look like, it's who you are inside. That's all that matters. The child would be beautiful to me anyway, so it wouldn't even matter. Growing up in life, people get picked and teased on.

It's just about supporting your child. You've got to be there for your child just as long as they know that they are somebody and that it depends on the inside and not on the outside."

Jon, still playing video games with Jennifer, butts in and says Brandon is speaking in Hallmarkese. "...because I care enough to send the very best." Jennifer agrees that her boyfriend is starting to sound like a Hallmark greeting card. "I'd like to see the children of the world..."

Jon has known Jennifer since she started working at the station and thinks of her as his little sister.

"[Because] I think of her as my little sister, I'm going to have a problem with anybody she's dating. But I like Brandon. He's a good influence," Jon said. "Brandon's a



"The fact is, I don't say, 'this is a nice white boy I'm going out with.' I just looked at the fact that he was a nice guy and that he was cute."

good guy. They're happy together, so I'm happy for them."

Interracial dating continues to be a taboo issue to many.

Both Brandon and Jennifer point out that it really depends on the person if they consider the issue to be taboo or not.

"For me and my family, it's never been a social taboo. I can't speak for anyone else in society, but I just can't see how it can be seen as taboo today," Brandon says. "I think it depends on the person and how they were raised. Some people don't have the best parents and aren't taught to look past certain physical appearances of people. That's what really destroys the community itself."

"Down in the deep South, I think it's less acceptable. I heard in Georgia, it's really

had feelings for each other, but it would have been hard."

Jennifer said that she is not dating Brandon for rebellious reasons, but in high school when she dated outside of her race, she got treated differently.

"I've dated everybody, it doesn't make any difference. In high school, people used to make fun of me and call me 'White girl' because I had a White boyfriend at one point. That fact is, now I'm grown and I don't give a damn about what people say. If you're still at that point and you're in college and you can't accept people having interracial dating, that's fine on your part. That doesn't mean you have to address it to everybody else, especially to the people that are in interracial relationships. That shows how ignorant you are if you're going to

constantly go up to people and say, 'I think this is wrong and you're going to go to hell,' and all this other [stuff]. I've had people tell me that stuff before and that was in high school. I've been called lots of names and [that just shows people's ignorance]."

She said the Black people who didn't accept her came from different schools and it depended on what middle school you came from. If you came from a predominantly White school, a lot of Black people accepted you. But, from a certain Black school in that area of the high school, they did not accept you.

"It's kind of ironic, because by the end of my senior year, one of those girls got pregnant by a White guy."

In Richmond, Jennifer and Brandon have only faced one remark, which came from a group of Black guys walking down the street one day.

"I have a smart mouth, I told them to go to hell. I don't deal with [that]," Jennifer said. "If you're going to be childish, you're going to be childish. At the same time, I uphold myself to the fullest."

Now, it's time for Jennifer's class. Brandon says good-bye and tells her he'll be at the station when she gets back.

"I can't even express how much I love her," he said. ☺



the brokenhearted

The saying goes, "It's better to have love and lost than to never have loved at all." In layman terms, is it better to stay up nights wondering, to stop eating, gain weight, be on the giving/receiving end of restraining orders, spending endless hours staring at the telephone and crying as the bonfire you set up outside burns the remaining proof of existence of your ex- is this all really worth the sake of the experience? Though exaggerated, almost everyone has gone through at least one somewhat similar experience to the ones I mentioned (if you haven't then you must be the cruel ex-in that case shame on you!)

Realistically, we all know what it is like to go through a relationship and have it fall apart. What if your ex was not only your ex but almost like your family? Lynita, a freshman here at VCU, described her relationship of four years to her boyfriend AJ not quite as tragically as mentioned above, but it still makes for an interesting breakup story.

"How did we meet? Through my cousin...I was a freshman in high school and he was a sophomore and he asked my cousin to ask me if he could talk to me...I thought it was funny at first...but we exchanged phone numbers through my cousin and we talked...at first my cousin would call him because I was to shy." Lynita says this is how the couple began. As in the beginning of most relationships, things went well. They started to get to know each other and later began to be officially known as a couple. Things were going smoothly for a while but then during Lynita's junior year, her mother decided to move from the area. Lynita, not receptive to the idea made other plans.

"I talked to AJ about it and he asked his mother could I stay with him". Lynita's mother had known AJ's parents prior to Lynita and AJ's relationship. Arrangements were made and Lynita ended up staying with AJ and his family. "We had separate rooms of course and I was seeing him more often cause we did almost everything together...went to school together, left school together (laughing...I think by me living with him kept me with him longer. I don't think if I stayed with my mother we would have been together that long"

AJ, a year older than Lynita, was the first to start college. At this time, he told his girlfriend of then three years that he did not want to have a girlfriend. "Well I was kind of hurt but you got to get over it. He went to Florida for one of his games, (baseball) and he changed his mind...this was a few weeks later...and he called me up at 2 or 3 a.m. saying he wanted the relationship back."

She took him back.

Eventually Lynita graduated herself and began attending VCU. Once again, things began to unravel.

"When I came to college, things were okay in the beginning, but then you have to understand that AJ is a very jealous person. He would call here and if I wasn't home he would leave a jealous message and that got on my nerves". Lynita realized her need not only for independence, but also for time to discover herself, something that her relationship with AJ didn't inhibit. "The conclusion was that I needed to be by myself and to find out what I wanted. AJ had in his mind that we were gonna be together forever and that's not the way I thought...I don't know who I'm gonna be with..."

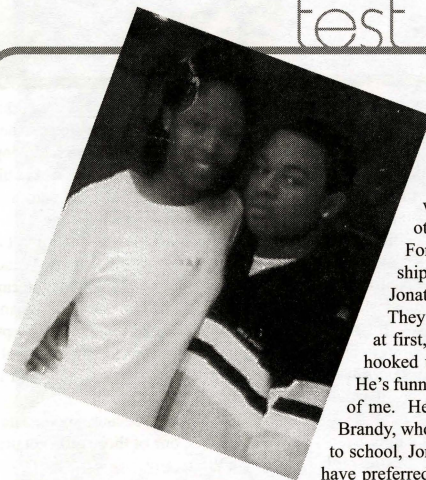
After a little over four years, Lynita is finally trying to reacquaint herself with the dating scene which she describes as having its "ups and downs." "I'm not looking for a boyfriend because I just broke with someone...mainly I want someone I can talk with, chill with, have fun, go out...do casual things. I mean it would be nice if he was cute (laugh) but that's not always the issue, looks aren't always the issue." She hasn't met anyone yet with the potential as of yet.

Despite all of the trials, her and AJ remain as close as ever. As friends. -sarah soroui

four Tales of love

Simultaneously managing romantic relationships and college careers can be tricky. Time management, priorities, exams and money, all of these components, among others; factor in the often-confrontational situation of catering these dual roles. Still, everyone falls in love at least once. With its budding adulthood stemming from newfound freedom, responsibility and exploration, college seems the perfect time for flowering relationships. Whether they pan out or not is up to the perseverance of the one's in love. Here are four different twists of love on VCU's campus.

test of distance



Long Distance relationships can be painful. It's can be hard not only because of the absence of the loved one but even more so when they come to visit only to turn around and leave again. Is it really worth the constant wondering and worrying about your significant other, or is your mutual love satisfaction enough?

For freshmen Brandy, her long distance relationship with her boyfriend of a year and three months, Jonathan, is worth every last cent on her phone bill.

They met at a party in high school, and though friends at first, they didn't consider anything more until they hooked up at a party one night. "He makes me laugh. He's funny, and really crazy (laughing). He's the opposite of me. He's really loud and stuff, and I'm not". When Brandy, who's a year older than Jonathan, decided to go off to school, Jonathan remained supportive although he would have preferred her to stay closer to home and closer to him.

Though Brandy moved away from her man in body, they have stayed very connected to each other in every other aspect of the relationship, and according to her they talk "all the time (laughing) everyday when he gets out of school from 2:30 until late at night".

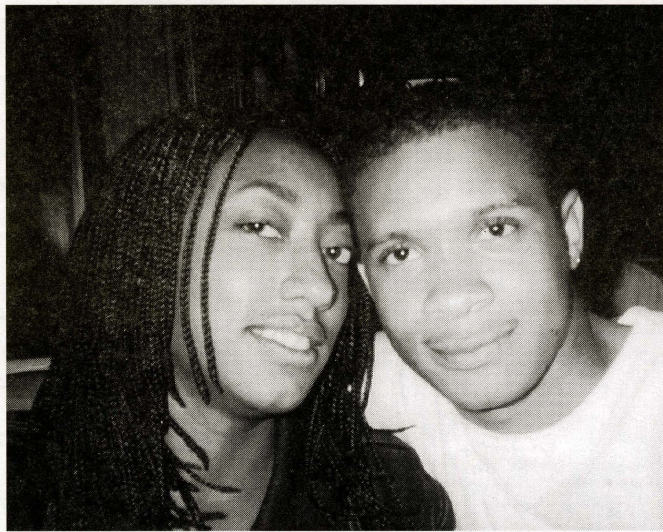
Brandy says her and Jonathan have remained very much in love. This year away from him has made Brandy consider perhaps moving closer to him next year by transferring to Old Dominion University. Like many couples in long distance relationships, there are issues with trust. Brandy says that "There's not really a trust issue. Just like in his high school, there is always a girl trying to mess with him, but I'm not worried about it. He thinks guys here are trying to talk to me but he's not worried about it."

Despite the pain and the heartache of having a loved one so far away, Brandy and Jonathan seem to be very sure that this is what they want. And that they will make it work. -sarah soroui

new found love

"I met her during Summer school. She was an incoming freshman. She was in the summer program [Academic Success Center Summer Transitional Program]. I gave her a tour of the campus, things just started from there," says Calvin. He's speaking of his now six month old relationship with Erica. "We saw each other off and on, it really wasn't serious. It was like cat and mouse," he says. "I really wasn't fond of relationships because of what I'd seen happen to other people, I didn't want to see it happen to me." Erica is Calvin's first serious girlfriend.

Erica says she didn't like him as more than a friend at first. She says she didn't gain interest in him until he came up to her room and left a note on her door. "He made the first



move," she says. Erica had just come out of a bad relationship in high school, so she wasn't trying to jump into anything. "But something about him was just different. I started to like him," she says.

Calvin, a sophomore, had never been involved with anyone seriously. Worried about taking chances, he felt insecure about hooking up with someone. "The more we talked, the more it was cool, she proved herself," he says. "She called at five in the morning, evidently that showed she liked me." Erica says she became sure of Calvin when she took him home to Norfolk at the end of the summer because his car broke down. He took her out to eat and they vibed. From there, one thing lead to another. "The next day I asked her out, we've been together since," says Calvin.

Both Calvin and Erica think they have a good relationship. "I love it, but sometimes we argue because we are so much alike, and I don't like for people to tell me what to do," says Erica. Both admit that arguing is a problem they both need to work on. "It's all good, we argue over the stupidest things. Never anything serious, we know our limits. We don't stay mad for long," says Calvin. They spend time together talking on the phone, at the gym, the mall and the movies, among other things. "We go out when we can," says Calvin. Calvin says he and Erica manage time between the relationship and school efficiently. "We tell each other when we have to study, we get our work done," he says. Calvin works an average 20 to 25 hours a week at his job. Both are full time students. "I still take time to see her," he says.

Erica says she likes the way he talks to her, his smile, and the way he makes her laugh. "He says what he means and shows it," she says. "Sometimes I don't trust him all the way just because of some of the things I've been through and I accuse him of things." Calvin says she's not like other girls. "She makes me laugh, I've haven't had anyone that makes me feel happy when I'm down. She's a good person to talk to. I find myself talking to her about things I usually won't tell people," says Calvin. Calvin says that their personalities and backgrounds vary, which causes adjusting. "She's from the country, I'm not used to that. I'm a city person." Calvin thinks the strengths outweigh the relationship's weaknesses. "She can be compassionate when she wants to be. She's my first girlfriend, I'm kind of glad that I waited until I got here." Erica says her having more relationship experience shows with her and Calvin. "Sometimes I have to explain to him how things are, I mean, I don't know everything, but I try to relate to him and break things down to him," she says. Sometimes I think that I can still do things that I did when I was single, but I don't take time to think about it," says Calvin. "Sometimes I don't look at the other view because I've never been in a relationship before."

Throughout their setbacks, both are hoping on a bright future. "I hope we'll still be together, hopefully, it'll be much better. We'll mature," says Erica. Calvin wants to argue less in the future. He says they should take their time and think about the future. "I still see us together for a minute," he says.

-randy gaskin

Doug and Daphne say they have a deeper connection that what appears on the surface. Once, they got into an argument that caused them not to speak for the rest of the day. Daphne, still not speaking to Doug, went to class the next morning. When she came out of class, Doug was sitting there with the same outfit on she was wearing: an orange shirt, light jeans and Timberland boots. "That made the situation better, I couldn't really be mad any more," Daphne says. "It could be just a coincidence, but those are the types of things that we do." "Sometimes we'll think the same exact thing," Daphne says. "And we'll take the words out of the other person's mouth," Doug finishes.

Doug, a sports management major, and Daphne, a criminal justice major, have been dating for about two years. They've been serious for a year and six months. They met freshman year and hit it off as friends immediately. Doug says that the relationship slowly but surely transformed into something else. "We were pretty much serious when we were talking."

Doug and Daphne say they have a healthy relationship that works. They share a mutual feeling of friendship. "Me and Doug are best friends," says Daphne. "It's different from having a female best friend because with Doug, I can tell him things that I sometimes feel awkward telling a female friend. I have really good female friends, but some things you just don't tell them because they run their mouths. If I tell Doug, I really don't have to worry about it going anywhere."

Daphne says Doug is a giving person. "It seems like he always tries to put me first in everything." "I think Daphne is the sweetest person on this planet," says Doug. "She's somebody that brings out the best in me and that's what I like."

She helps me realize things I didn't realize, makes me feel good, just always encouraging me. She's a confidence booster." Doug says before Daphne, he took school as a joke, but since they've been together, his grades have improved.

Doug works 20 to 25 hour a week job as well as attend school full time. Daphne, also a full time student and a resident assistant, also has a job, but doesn't work as many hours as Doug.

Daphne says she manages time for school and activities by doing things while Doug's either at work or in class. Doug spends all his free time with Daphne when she is available. "I only have two hour slots to myself, and that's not every day." Doug feels that the time in between his classes is enough.

They both say they make compromises and go out of their way to please each other. Doug feels although Daphne goes out of her way for him, he goes an even extra mile for her. "Daphne is spoiled and I spoil her. She spoils me, but I spoil her more. I let her have her way. That's my number one goal, to make sure Daphne is happy." Daphne, all smiles, says, "What else could a girl want but to have somebody to make them happy?"

Not unlike any other relationship, Doug and Daphne say they have problems, but work through them. "Doug is a 'lets talk it out' person, I'm like, 'let me think about it and then I'll talk to you about it.' So, whenever there's a disagreement, it's a problem," says Daphne. They both agree that's their primary problem. Daphne also thinks that Doug sometimes gets to far off focus. "I'm the person who pushes him, he thinks I'm nagging, I'm not, I'm just trying to keep him focused." Doug says Daphne is the type that could probably stay mad forever. "I'm the one who always has to make sure problems get solved when we have a disagreement."

Daphne says sometimes her and Doug may have an argument a week, but not all the time. "We disagree often, but we don't argue." They both believe that arguments are good for a relationship. "It shows that we can work through it and make thing better," says Doug.

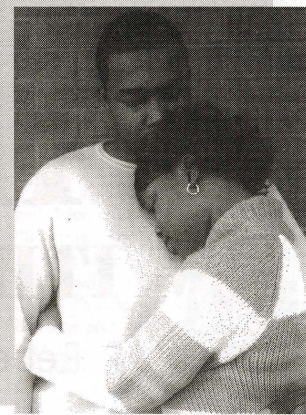
Their relationship will perhaps face another problem soon. Daphne will be graduating in May, Doug won't.

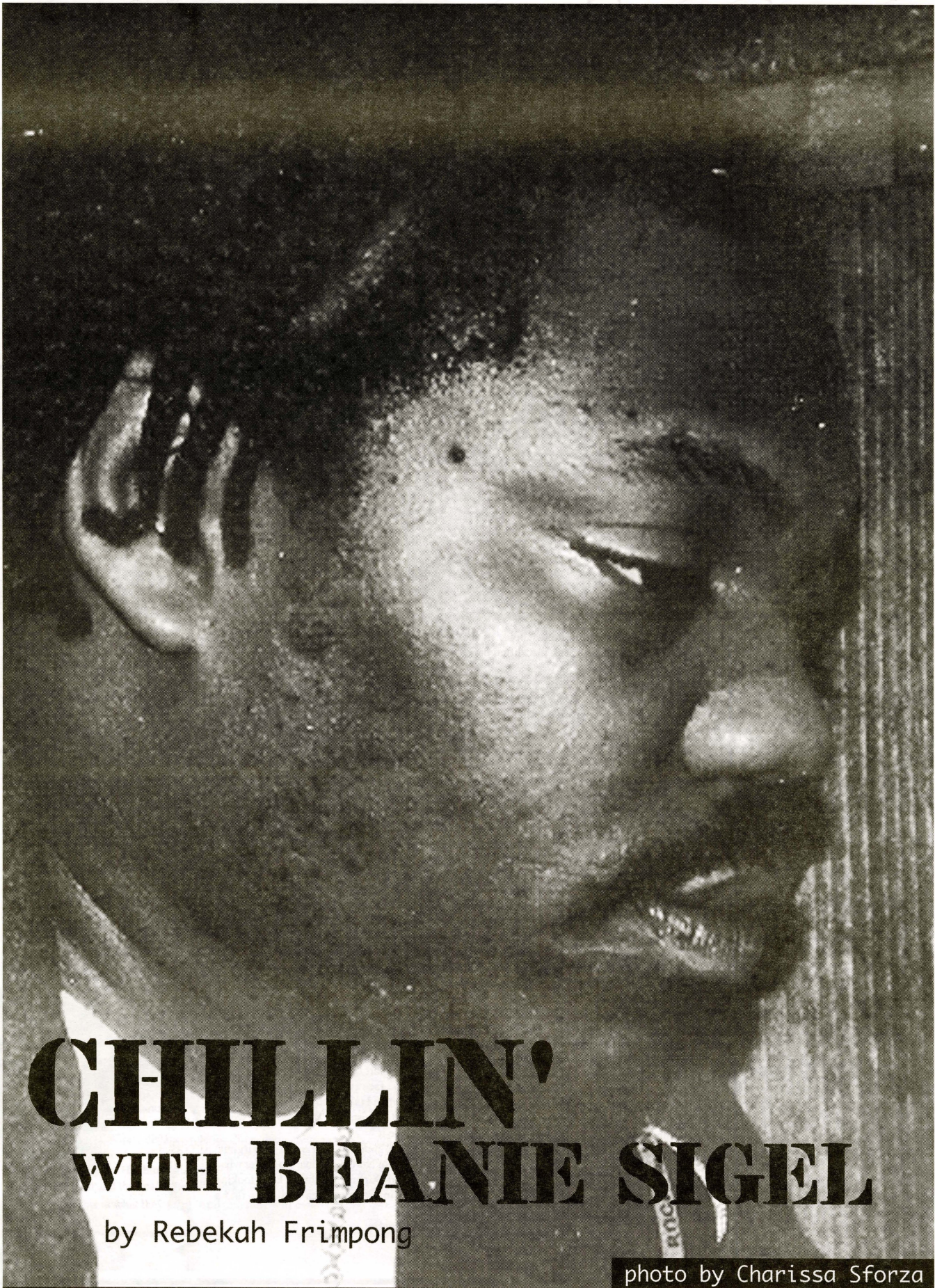
Doug says that he'll be finishing up his curriculum in December and then will seek an internship, then graduating the following May. In the meantime, Daphne will begin job hunting. Daphne wants to stay around Richmond, but thinks the relationship will work no matter where she goes. "I don't care where I go because I think even if I have to go far, it'll still work, that's how much I'm into this relationship." Doug expresses similar feelings, but doesn't look forward to having to be apart from Daphne. "I think about seeing her face everyday than talking on the phone, when I talk on the phone, sometimes I get kind of frustrated," he says. "We would still make it."

Daphne hopes to find a job in Virginia, Maryland or North Carolina. No matter what, Doug and Daphne say they'll keep looking for jobs in the same area until they find a match.

-randy gaskin

the transition





CHILLIN' WITH BEANIE SIGEL

by Rebekah Frimpong

photo by Charissa Sforza

the interview

movie stills

courtesy of Lions Gate Films

The highly anticipated Roc-A-Fella Records film "State Property" was released in theaters in late January in select cities along with a compilation CD of the same name. The movie received both praise for being a Black produced and directed film, and criticism for depicting negative images of the Black community. Some feel that the movie's success will measure the tolerance of the general public and whether or not movies like "State Property" will continue to be made. The basic plot involves drugs, violence, sex and materialism. Such themes have been the center point of several black films. Even though many see such movies as reality, others see such movies exploring these topics as graphically inappropriate. I had the fortunate experience to be able to talk to the stars of this breakthrough yet controversial film, "State Property." The movie's star, Beanie Sigel, was the main person I spoke to about the film, Jay-Z and the album. I met with Beanie over a late lunch at T.G.I. Friday's and proceeded to ask him questions about the new movie and album.

Q: How did you get your name?

A: "That's a long story, Beanie is the name my grandmother gave me when I was little. Sigel is the block where I'm from and I just put them together."

Q: What part of Philly are you from?

A: "South Philly."

Q: How was it working on a movie and making the transition from rapper to actor?

A: "Yeah well it was kinda fun, a lot of fun. I wouldn't say that it was easy, but I learned a lot on the movie set you know, watching everything as far as in front of the camera and behind the camera, different angle lens. I look forward to doing another film and writing my own films."

Q: What is the plot of the movie, can you explain it?

A: "The plot of the movie is the average everyday street hustler who tries to do his own thing, he wants to step up his game. So he puts together a squad and he tries to get it together the big house, the cars and he feels like he is on top of the world and things just happen."

After the interview with Beanie I talked to Sparks, also in the film, to try to get more insight on the plot of the film. Sparks basically reiterated what Beanie had said about the movie. The movie "State Property" is in movie theaters now. The success of the movie will speak for itself and whether or not audiences will relate to the common plot of the film.

Q: So what's next for you?

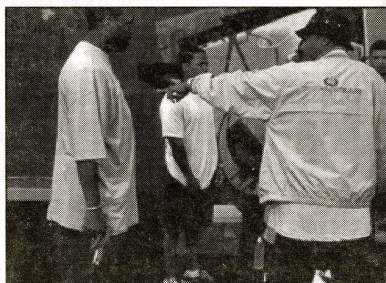
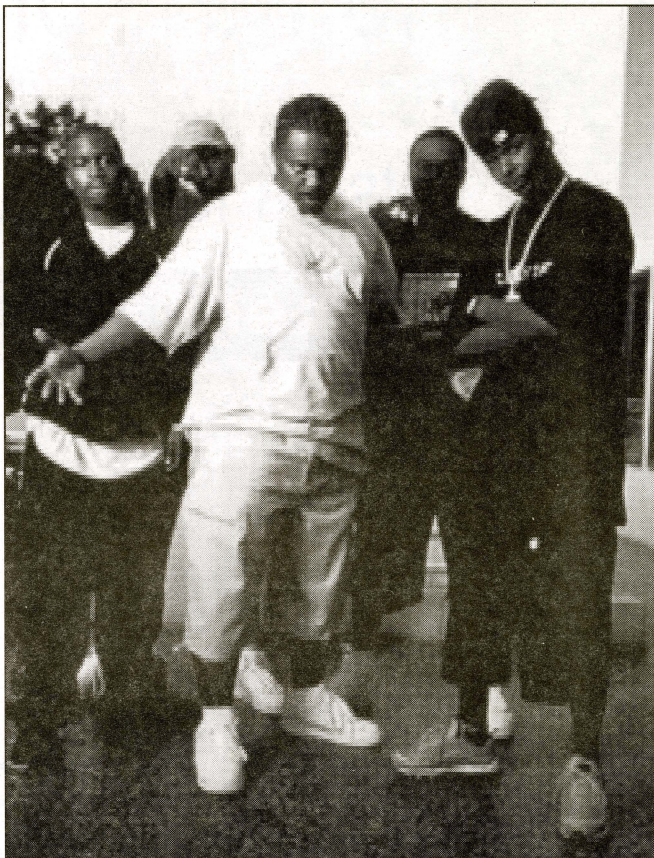
A: "I got a clothing line Glock Wear coming out with Roc-A-Wear, me and Damon Dash working on a juvenile prison tour of all maximum facilities, some more films with Roc-A-Fella films, a comic book and cartoon with Damon Dash."

Q: Tell us about the soundtrack for "State Property" and some of the new talent on there, like on your first single "Rock the Mic"?

A: "Soundtrack is crazy, everybody's personality is on there we got Freeway and Sparks, it was a chance for people to hear everybody so nobody would have to drop no EP's or nothing, and actually it's an album and not really a soundtrack. It is like a compilation album coming off my label."

Q: How do you feel about the beef between Jay-Z and Nas?

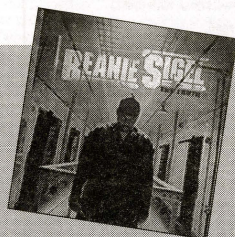
A: "I just think that its good for the game and I love it."



bean's discs

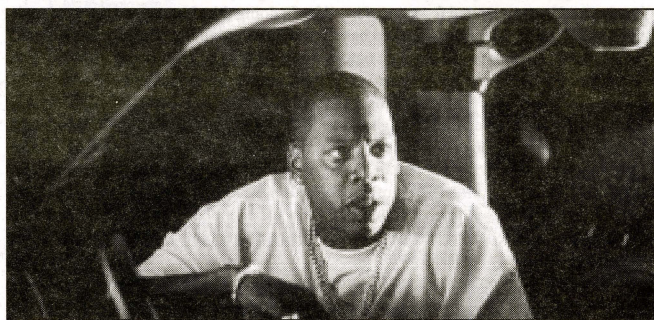
truth (1999)

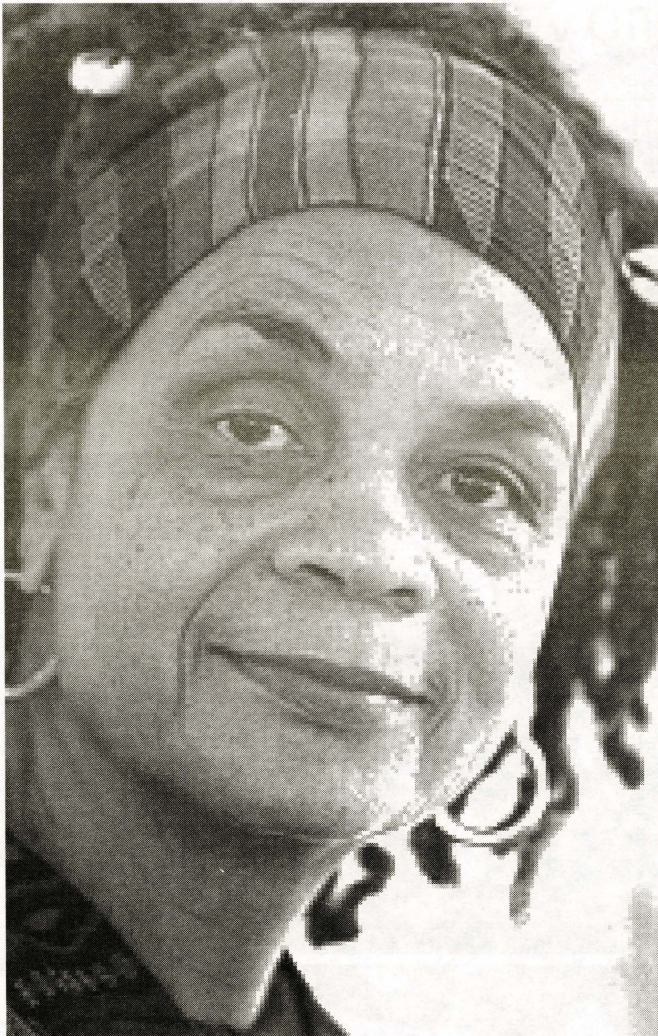
This is the album that helped Sigel earn his street credibility. Tracks include "Raw & Uncut," "Mac Man" and "Playa."



REASON (2001)

As the follow-up to 1999's "Truth," "Reason" focuses on the pleasures and pains of the streets life. Tracks include "Nothing Like It," "Get Down" and "Don't Do Much."





sonia sanchez: can you feel it?

by SARAH SOROUJ

While living in Philadelphia, I spent a lot of time trying to discover the artesian in me, a region that had been untapped for most of my life. In doing this, I immersed my weekends in blues cafes and low-key smoke filled basement clubs containing young poets with old thoughts waiting in their mouths next to nature sticks for their chance to spit. I abided with my atmosphere when it was time to clap or nod but not even Shakespeare at the time could begin to explain to me the "profound-ness" of some of the poetry I heard. I couldn't feel it. Regardless of what I understood though, I was insistent to make myself understand their deep truths. It wasn't until I heard her read in a ritzy downtown restaurant did I realize that my approach to trying to appreciate poetry was completely contrary to the unspoken rules of this spoken art form. There are no words to describe her words, and though limited, the little knowledge I have of contemporary poets can lead me to say with ease that the work of Sonia Sanchez speaks for the unspoken truths that infect our society. I and all of her readers can really feel her.

Sonia Sanchez, born on September 1934 in Birmingham Alabama, moved a year later when her mother died. After living with her paternal grandparents for a while, she moved to New York City where she and her sister stayed with her Father. One of my favorite poems is entitled "Poem for my Father" that paints a vivid picture of her younger life, a bit similar to mine. She received a BA in Hunter College, and did her post graduate degree in Poetry at New York University but withdrew after a year. It was around this time when Sanchez formed several poetry groups such as a writer's workshop in Greenwich village and along with other poets like Nikki Giovanni (another one of my idles) and Etheridge Knight, she formed the "Broadside Quartet" a place for young poets. She met and married Albert Sanchez, a Puerto Rican immigrant, whose surname she used as her pen name. She eventually married Etheridge Knight which she had 3 children with.

What captured me in the poetry of Sonia Sanchez is the powerful way she makes her political statements. Much of her poetry reflects the issues of her time. During the early 1960's she was an integrationist and a supporter of Congresses attempts for racial equal-



Sanchez was also a pioneer in our society by developing a Black studies course at San Francisco University.

As a minority, though not of African-American descent, Sanchez's poetry has been able to reach me through the universal messages that are conveyed in her words. Messages like how corruption in our society destroys not single persons, but people and communities. Perhaps the most influential message that her poetry has given me is the way to find acceptance in a place where it is hard to do so. In her poetry is held society's unspoken secrets that are not sugar coated in dizzy words or obscure metaphors. Not only can you see the words but can feel them.

Sonia Sanchez, author of numerous books and plays, has received many honors such as the Community Service award from the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, and the Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Excellence in the Humanities, to name a few. She has lectured at more than 500 universities across the globe and was the first Presidential Fellow at Temple University, where she taught until her retirement in 1999. She resides in Philadelphia today.

What makes Sonia Sanchez poetry so real is the way she speaks to the reader about not only a cause but a piece of her life experience. The best way to really understand her magnificence and her importance are to pick up her book and feel her...you feel me?

Blk/Rhetoric (I've Been A Woman)

(for Killebrew, Keeby, Icewater, Baker, Gary Adams, and Omar Shabazz)

who's gonna make all
this beautiful blk/rhetoric
mean something.

like

I mean who's gonna take
the words

blk/is/beautiful
and make more of it
than blk/capitalism.

u dig?

i mean

like who's gonna

take all the young/long/haired
natural/brothers and sisters

and let them

grow till

all that is

impt is them

selves

moving in straight/
revolutionary/lines

toward the enemy

(and we know who that is)

like, man.

who's gonna give our young

blk/people new heroes

(instead of catch/phrases)

(instead of cad/ill/acs)

(instead of pimps)

(instead of wite/whores)

(instead of drugs)

(instead of new dances)

(instead of chit/ter/lings)

(instead of 35 cent bottle of ripple)

(instead of quick/fucks in the hall/way

of wite/america's mind)

like, this, is an SOS

me, calling...

calling...

some/one

pleasereplysoon.

-sonia sanchez

the writing's on the wall

Looking out into the starless night
The crickets sing in the distance
The sound of the rain ever so light
I think what could make this magical
Then I remember the twinkle in your eye
The warmth of your body in my arms
And a smile that could brighten the sky
The sound of your enchanting voice
Like that of a heavenly bird's song
Your elegance of no greater limit
When I'm with you nothing seems wrong
Though I know I can't promise you
All your days without pain
The feeling of joy without sorrow
Or all your days without rain
But I know I can promise you
Strength to carry you through the day
Heart filled comfort for you fallen tears
And light to guide you along the way
Then I return to this gloomy night
Wishing you were here with me
To save me from this solitude
For me to show you Midnight Ecstasy
-Derick Washington

lamar gary's black man on campus

Episode 5: Love'em and Leave'em

Leonard, Johnny Shadow, Lydell and Lynell were sitting in the lounge of GRC, tripping off of the good times that they had last semester. Leonard's first semester was filled with lots of ups and downs, but if he had to do it all over again he figured he would.

"Yo man," said Shadow, "remember that girl Kim last semester? Damn, now she was nice." Everyone leaned back in remembrance. "What happened to her?" asked Leonard.

"I dunno really." "Shadow don't know?" asked Lydell, amazed. Shadow had the low down on everybody. But Shadow just shook his head. Lydell and his brother just looked shocked, but Leonard knew better by now. After living with Shadow for half a year, he knew that if he didn't know it usually meant he did, but he was involved. "Speaking of dime pieces, what happened to Evelyn yo?" Lynell

never said more than one or two sentences a day. Why did he have to mention her in that last one? Everyone looked at Leonard. All his friends knew he had something for her to the point where he was about to step to her boyfriend and back him down. However, lately Leonard was neither seen with her nor spoke of her.

"Well, we don't talk too much these days." Leonard watched his sneakers sway back and forth as he thought about it all. Shadow's ears perked up. "What happened dog?" After much persistence Leonard gave in. "You really wanna know. All right. Check it. I'll tell you all about it:

It was the day before the damn September 11 attacks. It seems Evelyn was real upset about something so I left class to see what was wrong. The whole way back to her room she was tugging on my arm, crying, I mean the whole works. We got to her room and as I looked around, I could see that she had a girl's room, you know? Frillies and lace on the windows, Tweety bird stickers everywhere. If she wasn't so damn fine, I don't know if I could take it. Anyway, we sat down on her bed and we were talking about that punk ass Alexander the wack. It seems the big time basketball player is a horrible boyfriend. She said she was just growing tired of him. She said that I offer stuff that he can't get me. He's not romantic; she wants something different. All that is just a girl's way of saying, 'Yo, I wanna try screwing someone else for awhile.' Well, she was open, so a man like me, I was all for it. I mean, I wasn't her man, and I wanted to be, so she should know what she's missing out on right? I gave her a hug and I said I understand. The next thing I know she's slobbering me down, my hands are all over her body and I'm feeling good, you know? She gets on top of me and starts to get wild. I mean wild! So everyone knows what comes next. And I mean it was on! All day long. I rocked her for a long time; damn near made the girl pass out. But I know I was tired, so I go to sleep. The next morning, I'm lying in her bed and she's tugging on me telling me she wants some more. She starts blowing on me, thinking that's going to affect my decision. And I'll tell you, wrapped in those sheets of hers, she looked good as hell. I wanted another round too, but then I heard it outside her door. 'They said the plane crashed right in the middle of the World Trade Center.'

I didn't think it, like I was still in Evelyn's bed dreaming. I don't think she heard it either cause she kept nibbling on my ear, rubbing on me and what not. I mean she was determined. Downstairs, in Evelyn's living room, the door opened and someone walked in. 'Evelyn! Baby, did you hear what happened?' It was that sucka Alexander, right. He came upstairs, and opened the door before Evelyn could even think about an excuse. Yo, it was the funniest thing to see that punk's mouth hang open like a damn cartoon character. I looked at him and did Evelyn like Ghostface. 'Yo, you better tell him something...'

Everyone in the lounge was rolling around on the floor, dying with laughter. "Leonard, you are an ill cat yo," said Shadow. "Yeah, I know." Lydell almost choked on the chicken wings he was engulfing and Lynell was in tears.

"Man, the worse part is, Alexander's uncle was working in the section of the Pentagon that got hit." Everyone sobered up. "After he found that out, I guess he forgot about me doing Evelyn Spence the ODB ain't really seen too much of either of them after that. Ask me if I care though."

Little did they know, Alexander Stevenson had been doing some reminiscing of his own that day in his room. "That mother, he thinks he can just get away, doing my girl the day uncle Jimmy died? Alex pulled out the Desert Eagle .50 he recently purchased from his sock drawer. "Now you're gonna see what happens to you when you try to take what's mine."

Next: If You Want It, You Get It!



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just two **MCs** and a **MIC**

by **REBEKAH FRIMPONG**

In the hip-hop world, battles between MCs have always been about codes of honor. One MC will battle another hoping to gain the crown of the world's greatest (Master of Ceremonies for those who don't what an MC is). The MC can either make or brake their rap career with just one verse. The most famous battle to date has to be that between Queens, New York MCs and Bronx/Brooklyn, New York MCs. Since hip-hop culture spawned out of the New York neighborhoods, it seemed only right that the battles take place between MCs from there.

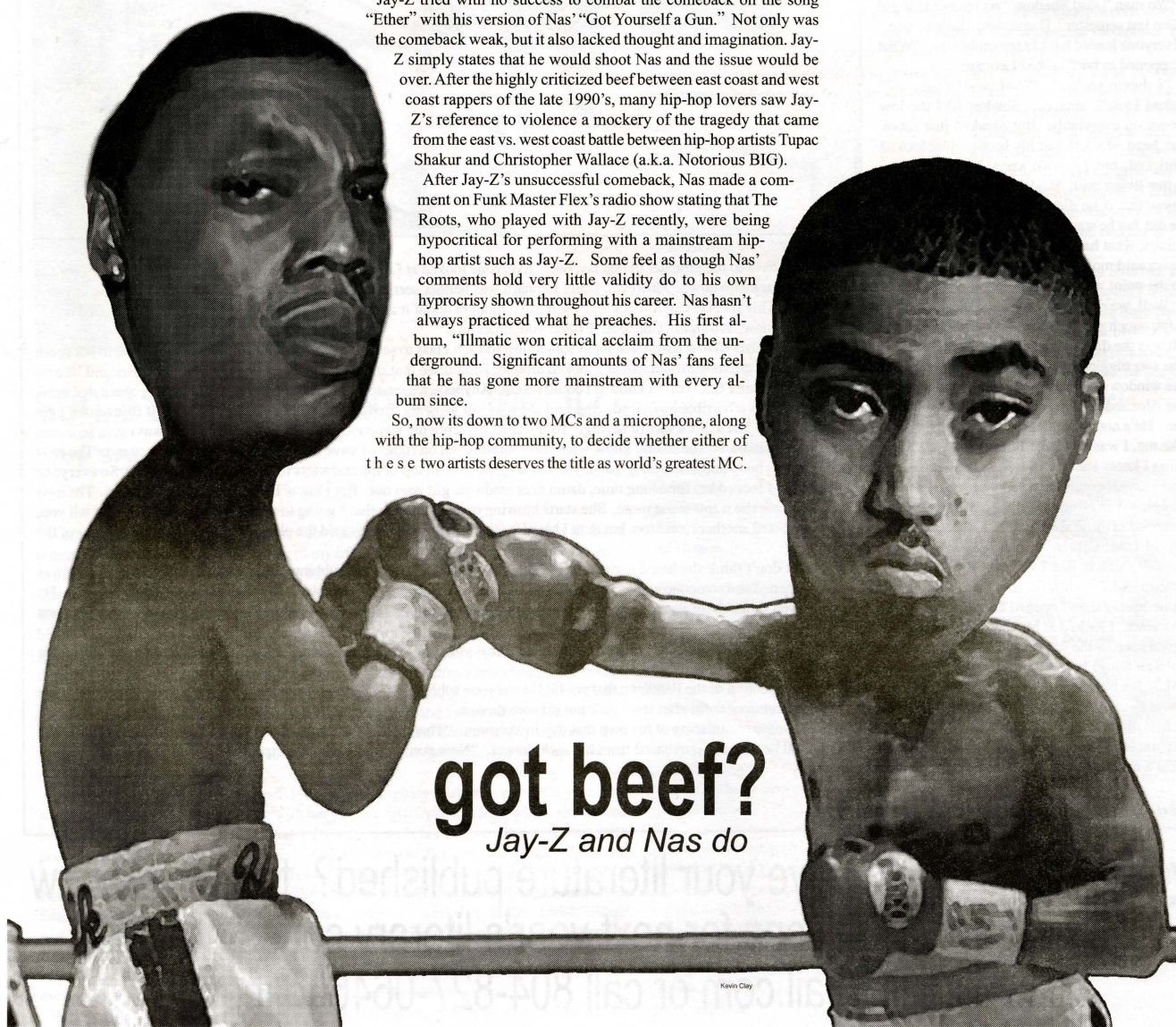
Recently this ancient art of poetic fencing has been exploded open by mainstream hip-hop music artists Jay-Z and Nas.

Jay-Z struck the first blow by counterattacking Nas in a song called "he Take Over." After hearing the lyrics spoken by Jay-Z, Nas came with a terrifying comeback on the track "Ether." The track just happens to be on NAS' new album "Stillmatic." On the album Nas not only proves his right to be an MC, but also claims back his title, for now, as the winner in the battle of Jay-Z vs. Nas.

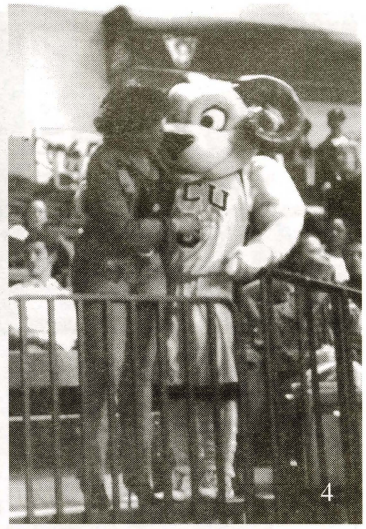
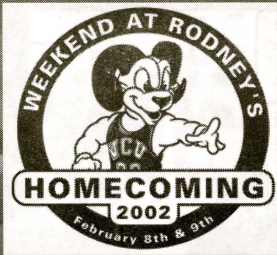
Jay-Z tried with no success to combat the comeback on the song "Ether" with his version of Nas' "Got Yourself a Gun." Not only was the comeback weak, but it also lacked thought and imagination. Jay-Z simply states that he would shoot Nas and the issue would be over. After the highly criticized beef between east coast and west coast rappers of the late 1990's, many hip-hop lovers saw Jay-Z's reference to violence a mockery of the tragedy that came from the east vs. west coast battle between hip-hop artists Tupac Shakur and Christopher Wallace (a.k.a. Notorious BIG).

After Jay-Z's unsuccessful comeback, Nas made a comment on Funk Master Flex's radio show stating that The Roots, who played with Jay-Z recently, were being hypocritical for performing with a mainstream hip-hop artist such as Jay-Z. Some feel as though Nas' comments hold very little validity do to his own hypocrisy shown throughout his career. Nas hasn't always practiced what he preaches. His first album, "Illmatic won critical acclaim from the underground. Significant amounts of Nas' fans feel that he has gone more mainstream with every album since.

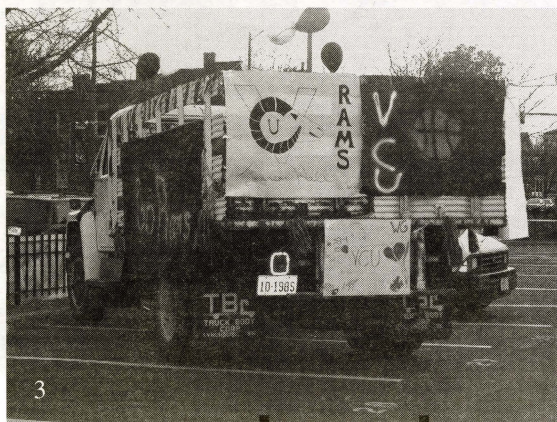
So, now its down to two MCs and a microphone, along with the hip-hop community, to decide whether either of these two artists deserves the title as world's greatest MC.



got beef?
Jay-Z and Nas do



1. The crowd at the Siegal Center during the men's basketball game. 2. VCU cheerleaders. 3. Old truck from Gladding Residence Center parked outside the tailgate party. 4. VCU student clowning with Rodney Ram during the Friday night pep rally and spirit competition. 5. Old Dominion University cheerleaders. 6. Player from VCU's women basketball team during a time-out..



Friday, February 8. The beginning of the big weekend. Planned for weeks, perhaps maybe even months. It's been done before, but not quite this big, not this much excitement, not this much energy. Pinned to the outside wall of Gladding Residence Center hangs a huge banner. "Weekend



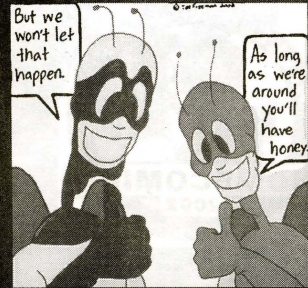
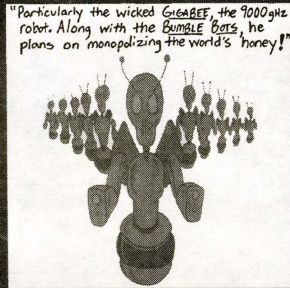
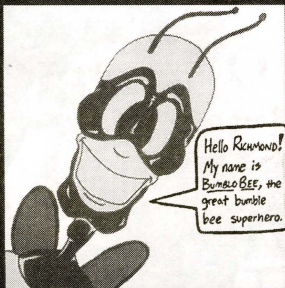
less than packed. The game itself, no less than great. The ones in attendance, no less than amped. The spirit competition, by sheer numbers and enthusiasm, unsurpassed. Mello D, great; Carbon Leaf, just a little better. Maybe more people tomorrow. February 9. The tailgate party. The cold air made the small group of dancing, mingling bodies shiver. Then the band warms up for the parade to the Siegal Center. No one really followed, but they

at Rodney's" reads the mural of motive. The Student Commons plays the supporting role with its windows painted with paraphernalia of weekend activity. The women's game is

played like there was hundreds. Then there was the men's game. 7,410 rowdy rams supporting the team to victory in the 7,500 capacity facility. This is more like it. The seed's been planted, lets see what happens next year. -randy gaskin

new horizons

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lorenzo bradley and seo on the rise

Lately, there has been a lot of buzz and conversation about Def Jam artist Ludacris' performance at VCU's Siegel Center. Some may never realize the planning and promotions it took to bring this concert to the university.

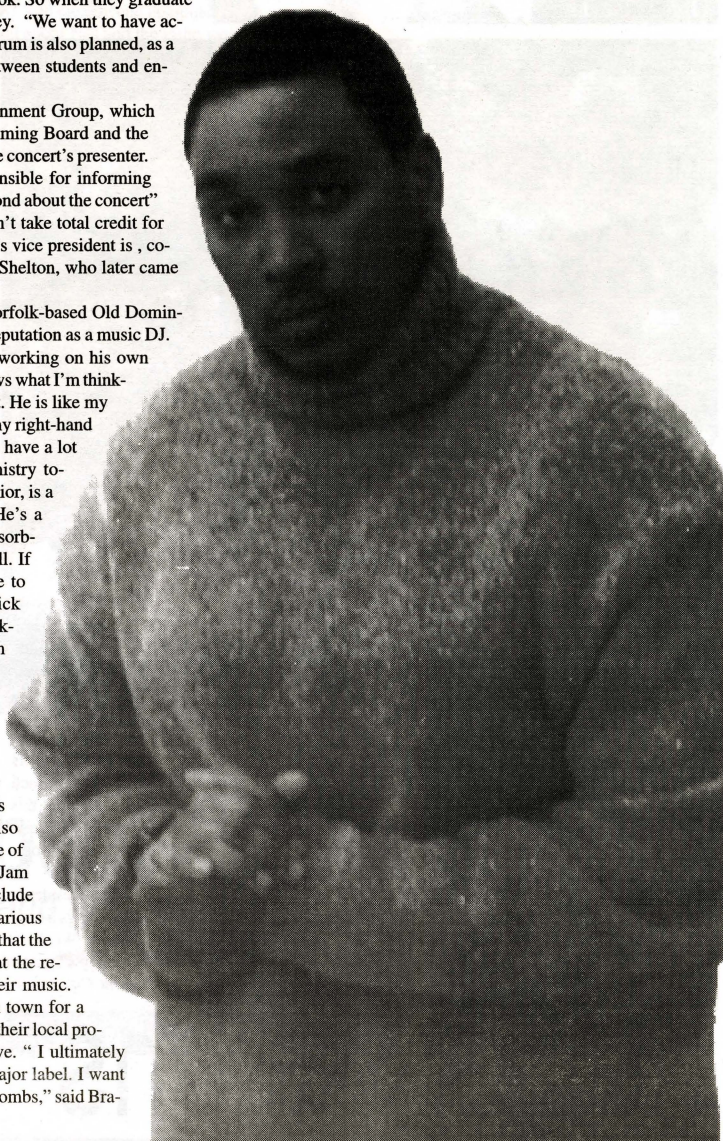
"There has not been that many urban shows. I and Ray Shaw went to Felicia Keelen, Associate Director of Student Activities, with the idea of bringing an urban artist to VCU. They chose to go with a promoter versus going the route of going before a board for funding. Which made it easier for us," said Lorenzo Bradley, a mass communications junior. "I commend VCU for giving another chance, considering last Summer's celebrity basketball game hosted by Johnny Newman."

Bradley is President of the Students Entrepreneurs Organization (SEO), a new student organization he cofounded, with Shaw, to teach students business savvy. "We are working on putting together a seminar to bring experienced entrepreneurs in the Richmond area to speak on their experiences. We want the students to see how they did it, get an idea of the steps they took. So when they graduate they can use these tools" said Bradley. "We want to have actual pamphlets for the seminar." A forum is also planned, as a follow up, to provide a dialogue between students and entrepreneurs.

SEO makes up the VCU Entertainment Group, which also includes the Activities Programming Board and the Student Government Association, the concert's presenter. "As an organization we were responsible for informing the student body and Greater Richmond about the concert" said Bradley. However, Bradley can't take total credit for SEO's quick rise. The organization's vice president is , co-founder, Shaw ,and treasurer, Chris Shelton, who later came aboard.

Shaw is a transfer student from Norfolk-based Old Dominion University, where he built up a reputation as a music DJ. Shaw, also a producer, is currently working on his own music compilation album. "Ray knows what I'm thinking before I can even finish saying it. He is like my Harve Pierre to my P.Diddy. He is my right-hand man. I say that to him everyday. We have a lot of history and we have good chemistry together," said Bradley. Shelton, a junior, is a Business Administration major. " He's a very smart guy. He's like a sponge absorbing information and listens very well. If he doesn't understand he will come to me and ask questions. He is a quick learner. He has lot of experience working in banking. That's why I trust him as my treasurer," said Bradley. When asked what advice would he give to students, he replies, "You have to put God first. You need to think, feel, and act as how you think God will think, feel and act in your life".

Aside from making time for his school and community, Bradley also helps handle street promotion for one of the world's largest rap labels, Def Jam Music. His many responsibilities include that of delivering new music to the various local radio stations and making sure that the music is played. He also checks that the retail stores have nice displays for their music. When one of the label's artists is in town for a promotional visit, Bradley serves as their local promotions liaison and/or representative. " I ultimately want to work in promotions for a major label. I want to model myself after Sean 'Puffy' Combs," said Bradley. -antione green



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I'll Be A Slave 4 U

Blond pop sensation seeks any member of N'Sync to hit me one more time. Don't let me be the last to know that you're in to me. We can practice choreography all night long and then go sing karaoke and watch my new film *Crossroads*. It's in theatres nationwide now.



I Did Not Have Sexual Relations...

That was in the past. It's behind me now. Former president of the United States of America seeks new White House intern to ummm... discuss foreign policy. Yeah, that's it. Must have many years of experience.



Nasty Girl Seeking Nasty Boy

Attractive and talented singer seeks handsome man to cross my velvet rope. I'll be all for you. I get so lonely. We'll be up all night because we won't get no sleep and we'll get so deep until the break of dawn. It doesn't really matter what your friends tell you. All that matters is that I'm in love with you.



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- *Richmond.com*

"Best Place to Buy a Snowboard"
- *Punchline Magazine*

"Dealer of the Year"
- *Watersports Industry Association*

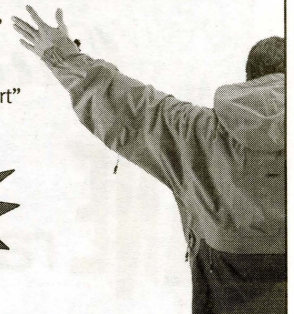
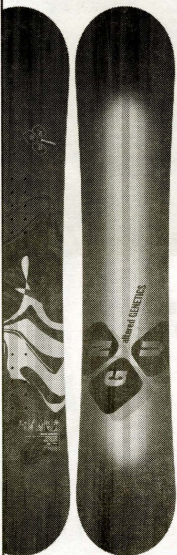
"The shop is devoted to snowboarding. . .the new shop is nearly four times bigger!"
- *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

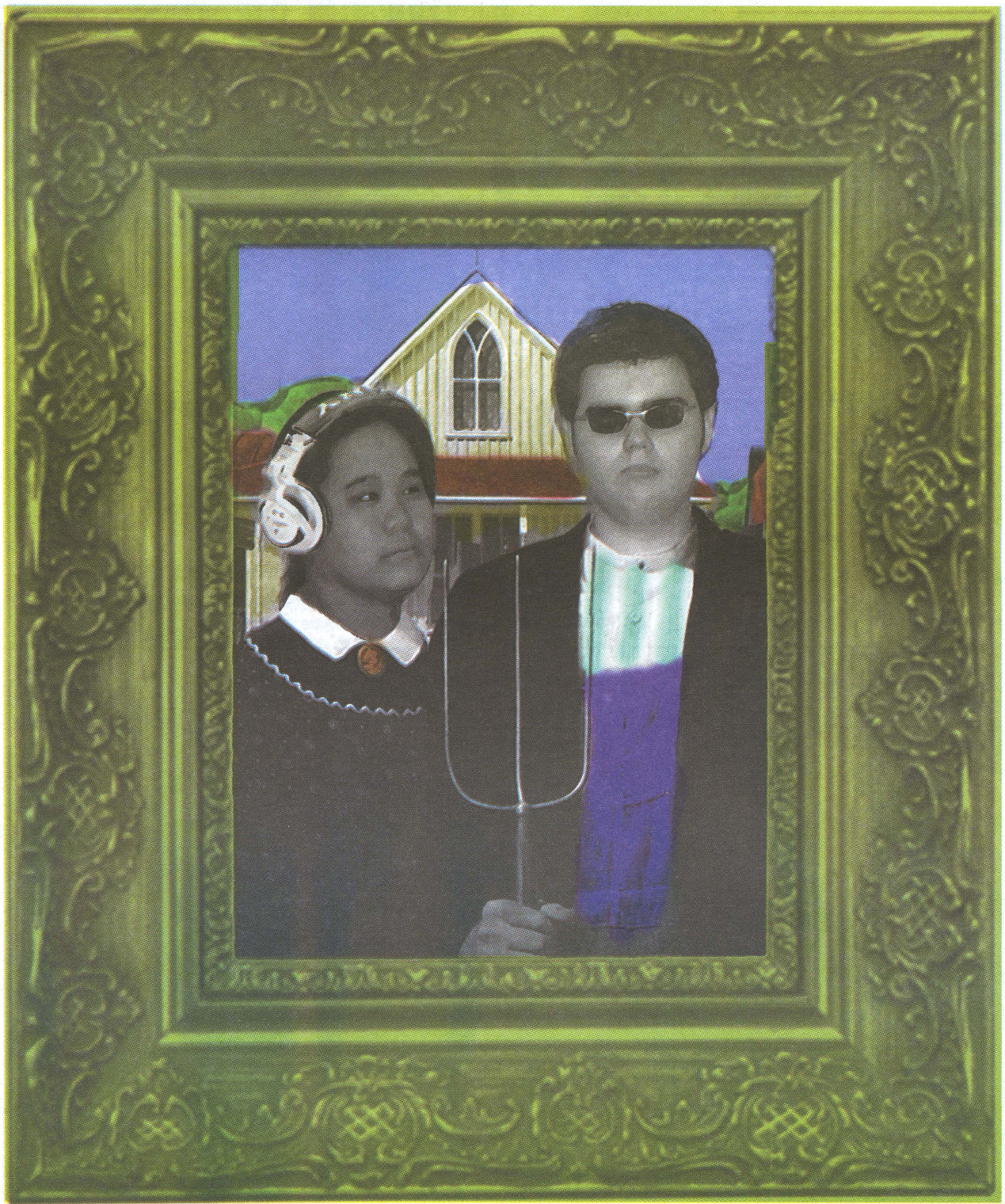
"...very friendly. Everyone involved has a sincere love for all things to do with the sport"
- *Alliance Magazine*

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