



JULY 2011

# THE CAPITAL CITY COURIER

So 1 Creep:  
Why Is There  
So Much  
Infidelity?



## The New Balance of Power - Women Out-earning Men! by Kimberly Conner - pg. 4



Men account for three out of 4 jobs lost during the recession, representing seventy-five percent of the 7.5 million unemployed in America, the figure two years ago. The number of households with both adults out of work is 1 in 500 families. The figure is even higher for families with children; one in 160 families with children has two parents out of work.

## Naimah Fuller: Documenting Our Lives! - pg. 5



Naimah Fuller is the award winning producer/director of the ground breaking documentary project HOME: The Documentary Movie, the first film about the south since the Civil Rights Movement. Fuller wore several hats in the process of creating this incredible project, including producer/director/writer/cinematographer.

## Michael Clarke Duncan, The "Green Hornet" Interview - pg. 7



Born on December 10, 1957 in Chicago where he and his sister were raised by a single-mom, Michael Clarke Duncan is a survivor who went from homeless to body-guard to aspiring actor to a Hollywood star with an Oscar-nomination on his resume'.

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# JULY 2011

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# From The EDITOR

Michael Pittman

Over the last two years, several couples that I know have decided to end their relationships with their spouses or significant other. I have also heard over the years both males and females state that they cannot find a suitable person to enter a relationship with. Different people have different qualities that they seek in a spouse. Some desire looks, money, personalities, the ability to become a mother or father to children that either one may already have, sharing similar religious beliefs, as well as a list of

other reasons. I would think that one thing that would be high on the list is that person's ability to remain faithful. However, because of the times that we live in, so many people are willing to share a partner with another. The whole "I'd rather have half of the hog than have no hog at all" thinking is so prevalent in today's society. I'm sure many of you have been following the news recently of so many high profile people being involved in extramarital affairs with others. I would submit to our readers that those of you who are involved in happy relationships with their spouses or significant other should consider talking or mentoring others that are having problems in their relationships. It can make a difference in their lives. Oftentimes when couples are having problems, they don't want others to know that they are having a hard time and they feel that they are the only ones going through these problems. Nothing could be further from the truth. Transparency, openness, and the ability to set pride aside can go a long way in healing many of these relationships. Let me be the first to say that I am not an authority on this issue, but I am only giving my opinion. What do you think?

Organized labor all over the country

has been under attack from all angles from those seeking to destroy decades of gains with the stroke of a pen or the passage of certain legislation that turns back the clock on things labor collectively fought for as a group. Although I have mixed feelings when it comes to organized labor, most notably the construction trade, where blacks have for years been systematically shut out of positions in these fields and denied opportunities because of racism and the "good old boy" system, I do however realize that there have been a "small number" of blacks that have been able to do well in these fields. When I think of organized labor, I am reminded of A. Phillip Randolph, who was a pioneer in the labor field as it related to blacks in his work in organizing the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. So, it is in honor of his spirit that I am saddened by recent events and attacks that have been aimed at organized labor recently and the attempts to break the solidarity that has carried them for generations. I would hope that there would be some common ground that both sides can live with and thereby stop the eroding of these collective bargaining agreements that were negotiated in "good faith" by both parties. Enough said.

The late singer Lou Rawls recorded a song once titled, "One Day You'll Be Old," some years back. In that song Rawls sang about how one day we are full of life as well as it won't take long for your youth to be gone and father time starts passing on.

Many of us, as we age, all have some "back in the day" stories that consisted of us being able to do things that our bodies won't let us do anymore. Additionally, as we age, those of us that have parents that are still living will see them age, too. We have fond memories of when our mothers or fathers used to play with us or race us to see who was the fastest. To some of us, our parents seemed superhuman. While it is a blessing to have our parents still living as we get on up there in years, we oftentimes have watched helplessly as sickness and disease in their old ages take away the vibrancy that many of us have grown accustomed to our parents having. If your parents are still living, make sure that you stay on them about the importance of maintaining a good diet as well as maintaining some type of exercise regime as they age, so that their waning years here on earth will consist of a good quality of life.

This month's cover story, written by Kim Gordon is titled "So I Creep: Why Is There So Much Infidelity?" Also in this month's edition are interviews with filmmaker Naimah Fuller, written by yours truly, a story titled "New Balance of Power: Women Out earning Men," written by Kim Connor and an interview with actor and Chicago, Illinois native Michael Clarke Duncan, written by Kam Williams.

I hope you enjoy this month's edition.

Michael Pittman

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# THE NEW BALANCE OF POWER

## Women Out-earning Men!

by Kimberly D. Conner

**M**en account for three out of 4 jobs lost during the recession, representing seventy-five percent of the 7.5 million unemployed in America, the figure two years ago. The number of households with both adults out of work is 1 in 500 families. The figure is even higher for families with children; one in 160 families with children has two parents out of work. In 2009, twenty million working women had husbands that were out of work. Job loss has had an undeniable impact on our lifestyles. There are a disproportionate number of men out of work. One in ten married women between the ages of 18 and 24 has a husband that is unemployed. In the African-American community, women, by and large, earn as much money as their counterpart, and always have, even before the recession. Today nearly one quarter of married women in America over the age of 30 are the breadwinners in their households.

Forty years ago, only 7% of women earned more money than their husbands. A 2003 survey concluded that a third of married women earn more than their husbands, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Studies indicate that wives bring home nearly half of the household income today. Close to half, forty-four percent of women earn as much or more money than their mates. In today's society, women are calling the shots, in many cases. These shifts are making a difference in the way we relate to one another.

Money is associated with power in America. With more money comes more power, with more power, more control, in a

society that is driven by money and power. Generally speaking, the person bringing in the most money, more often than not, determines how it's spent. With the shift in control come sizeable adjustments. For many men, being out of work is a real struggle. Women that out earn men is becoming more and more common though. Men make up the majority of workers in industries hit hardest during the recession, such as the construction and auto industries. Ironically, women in those industries in specialized positions often out earn men, with the help of unions and fair labor. Two years ago, 15% of women were supporting their households as the sole source of income, in two parent homes. Women have long dominated in career fields such as education and healthcare, with fewer cutbacks, offering more stability. Ninety-one percent of teachers are women.

Unlearning customs, beliefs, and tradition are an uphill battle for families in today's society, presenting a real challenge for many couples, as we move away from familiar ideas. Who would have ever believed that there would be "Stay-at-Home-Dads"? A study found that working women contribute more time and attention toward the children and spend more time on domestic duties by comparison to unemployed men, ironically. A recent study indicated that nearly 70% of Americans believe that a man should be able to provide financially for his wife, 30% of women agreed. Traditionally, men have taken on the role of primary provider, the protector, and breadwinner, while women generally assume the primary responsibility of caring for the children and performing household duties, such as cooking and cleaning. In America, our ideas are evolving, some women maintaining the belief that it is still the man's responsibility to be the breadwin-

ner, and others demanding an equal playing field in terms of earnings. Many modern day and liberated, single women expect a man to earn as much as they do, or more, with matching credentials. Today's society signifies an undeniable shift in the dynamics.

How are our relationships impacted when the woman has to financially support the man? What are the effects of this shift? There are some serious implications. Studies indicate that women that out earn their husbands are more likely to be cheated on. A study found that men that were completely dependent on their wives income were five times more likely to cheat than husbands that brought in equal income. A woman that out earns her husband is less likely to cheat than a husband that out earns his wife. The men least likely to cheat were married to women earning 75% their salary, studies indicate. Female breadwinners are 40% more likely than women that are not, to be divorced. Interestingly enough, Psychologists believe that men cheat because they are dissatisfied with some aspect of their own lives, themselves, rather than dissatisfaction with their wives. The loss of a job can result in psychological issues such as depression, feelings of inadequacy, feelings of inferiority, feelings of failure, affecting one's self esteem, all of which can lead to problems in the bedroom, and issue important to most folks. There is a direct correlation between a man's ability to provide for his family and his feelings of self-worth in American culture. It's a blow to a man's self-esteem if he is unable to support for his family, and as any could imagine, very scary. Some men experience embarrassment when they lose their job and their position in the household. Others feel emasculated, powerless, stripped of their roles, no longer the primary breadwin-

ners. Women, reportedly, experience issues in terms of control and independence; they deal with feeling of guilt and resentment, for being the breadwinner in many cases. Other women, on another hand, feel resentful for having to take on the added responsibilities, on top of taking care of the children and performing domestic duties. Then, there are the women that don't mind wearing the pants, and the men that don't mind letting them. On a national average, 5% of working and married White women have husbands that are unemployed. In African-American and Hispanic families, close to 8% of husbands are out of work, while the wives work.

This new balance of power brings old challenges to the surface, too. While women are holding it down, maintaining households, sadly, they still earn less, 81 cent for every dollar earned by men, up 5 cent from 2000, when women earned 76 cent per every dollar, according to statistics. The good news is that in recent reports by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, that gap is tapering. Another challenge facing families is health-care. When the breadwinner loses his/her job, the families lose access to health care.

But the recession is not the lone culprit in the shift in roles and finances. Education is another factor to be considered. The fact remains, more and more women are attending college and earning upper level degrees, compared to men. According to the U.S. Census, between 2006 and 2008, thirty-two percent of women within the ages of 25 and 34 had a bachelor's degree, while only 25% of men earned a degree. While men dominate the trades and blue collar jobs, women dominate the classroom, giving females more options and flexibility in a sunken economy. Financially free, independent, and secure, college educated women want men to step up their game. By furthering their education, women are securing higher paying jobs upon graduation, raising their earning potential. For men without a college degree, one out of 4, are married to women who earn more than they do. Of women and men under the age of 30, women's salaries were nearly 10% higher. Married mothers over the age of 30 subsequently earned less than their husbands, according to statistics.

It's important to remember during hard times, that you are to operate as a unit, a team, when it comes to husbands and wives, operating with a common goal. "For better or for worse". Take ego out of the equation. We may need to compromise, a part of any relationship, reassuring one another of our love and commitment, especially in the tough times. Single ladies, let us not discriminate against a brother that has fallen on hard times due to job loss and the recession without looking at his potential. In the meantime, we can do away with the term, "Know Your Role".

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**N**aimah Fuller is the award-winning producer/director of the ground-breaking documentary project *HOME: The Documentary Movie*, the first film about the South since the Civil Rights Movement. Fuller wore several hats in the process of creating this incredible project, including producer/director/writer/cinematographer. As the project nears completion, Fuller has taken a seat in the editor's

# IN THE NEWS

## Naimah Fuller: Documenting Our Lives!

by Mike Pittman



chair. Five years in the making, the film connects the historical dots between the current mass migration of African American relocating to the "new South" to the era of the twentieth century now known as the Great Migration, when six million blacks migrated to the West and to the North. Fuller's project looks at how the new South is attracting a whole new generation of young Africans Americans who are the descendants of parents and grandparents who fled the terror of the Jim Crow South. Fuller is the recipient of the prestigious National Media Women's award in documen-

tary film production.

**CCC:** What inspired you to do this documentary?

**NF:** *Really, it was a personal experience where I had relocated from New York to Atlanta, and everybody that I met in the first year that I was there was from somewhere else too, either from the Midwest, the East Coast. It was very rare that you met anybody that was a native Atlantian. My background was television, so that's what got me going in believing there was a story there.*

**CCC:** Did your work take you to Atlanta?

**NF:** *No. I wasn't working when I moved to Atlanta. I had my own company manufacturing fashion clothing in New York. I went to Atlanta to expand my business into retail.*

**CCC:** What was the most compelling reason that you found that blacks were moving

back to the South?

**NF:** *I think overall the biggest factor that creates mass migration, which is actually what this film is about, mass migration. As you know this is a reversal and trend of a 100-year-old trend that started in 1910 with the great migration from the South to the North. At that time, over a period of sixty years from 1910 to 1970, which is the conclusion demographers have come to in terms of when the migration began and when it ended, but 6.5 million African Americans left the South and went to the*

*North and the Midwest and the West. It was the largest internal migration in the history of this country, and that migration changed the North, the West, and the Midwest into urban centers and the urban culture that we have become so familiar with, and created enclaves of what has to become traditional black communities in those areas like Harlem, Chicago, Bronzeville and so many other places that became specific communities of African Americans. This migration, which is a return migration, which is a reversal in trend, the reason those people left the South was economic as well as getting away from Jim Crow south and the harshness of that life. But the primary reason was survival and that is usually what causes people to do mass migration. It has to do with economics and survival. So I think the most compelling reason, although there are many that people are relocating to the South now, is become of economic reasons, the hardships and the changes and the shift in the economy in the industrial North, the Midwest, and even in the West. Those places have become very depressed economically, high crime rates and drug-infested, and people don't want that. They want opportunity, and that's the primary reason they are coming to the South. The South is the most prosperous part of the United States right now.*

**CCC:** When you talk about the economy, what type of opportunities exist in the South now in terms of industry and business opportunities that don't exist in other parts of the U.S.

**NF:** *As you know, in the North, one of the main reasons that people that left the farmlands in the South was the industrial jobs, the steel mills and the car manufacturers. All the jobs that sprung up at the beginning of the 21st century were plentiful. Even in the West Coast in Oakland, in California you had industrial jobs on the docks and building the docks. People don't know that Kaiser was the big dock builder in California. They sent buses to get people in the South. Those jobs didn't require a lot of skills; just cheap labor was all that was needed. Those jobs don't exist anymore. Those factories are closed. They don't even make that many cars anymore. The steel mills have closed. There is a very depressed kind of economy in these areas. In the South you have diverse economies. You have manufacturing jobs in the South, food processing manufac-*

*turing, even automobile manufacturing in Alabama, South Carolina. Toyota is in Alabama. Also you have a huge IT industry in the South. Also a huge financial center is located in Charlotte, North Carolina, which is second only to Wall Street. So the South has come up in a variety of diverse opportunities. So for the first time in several decades, the largest percentages of African Americans live in the South. Fifty-nine percent of the total African American population in the United States now live in the South. Africans Americans aren't the only ones migrating to the South. Many other people are migrating there also, but the reason I chose to focus on African Americans was a reversal of this 100-year-old trend. In the last 20 years, the number of blacks that have returned or relocated to the South exceeds the first great migration that began in 1910. This migration now is the largest migration of any ethnic group in the history of this country.*

**CCC:** I'm assuming this migration covers all age brackets?

**NF:** *When you think of 59% of African American returning to the South, it would include a wide range of people in different age groups. Retirees, for example, are leaving and going back to the place where their parents left them land or going back to places where their friends went to. Their pensions last longer; they get more for their money, they're in less crime-infested areas. There is a huge group of baby boomers and people that are older going to the South. Then you have families that are looking for better schools and communities for their children as well as a better quality of life. Those people are also going south. Then you have people who are college graduates who are starting their careers. For example in New York City in the past ten years, 53% of African American men are out of work and don't have jobs. 51% of African American women in New York don't have jobs. New York is a very expensive city to live in. Over the last several years, the South has developed in a number of ways that the North has not developed. It's just common sense, and people are on the move in every age range that you can imagine.*

**CCC:** In your opinion, what impact

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## SPOTLIGHT

## Coming Soon the Feature Film “Jump In”

by Filmmaker Kimberly D. Conner

**P**redestined Arts & Entertainment is bringing you the feature film, “Jump In”, another socially-conscious piece, in early 2012. In pre-production, the film will be shot entirely in the city of Springfield in late August with the help of local businesses and the Central Illinois Film Commission.

“Jump In” tells the story of Troy Alexander, a single mom, and recent law school graduate determined to start her own practice when the unexpected happens, where she finds love and forgiveness.

**“JUMP IN” THE SYNOPSIS..**

Troy Alexander returns to Chicago, armed with an airtight plan, to pass the bar exam and start her own practice if it's the last thing she does. But, her love of law takes a backseat to Jordan, her six year old son. Law provides an escape from realities that include a marriage turned sour, a distant relationship with Dililah, the mother that provides for her financially, but far-gone,

emotionally. The Alexander family is complete again, but not perfect, not by a long shot.

Troy is convinced that she doesn't need love to be truly happy. She's content. Love is just a distraction. Or, so she thinks until her partners in crime, Tarin and Camryn, stumble upon Malik Bond, a southern born and bred middle school math teacher. Certain that they've found the perfect guy, the duo stage a “chance meeting”, at a welcome home bash. As “fate” would have it, they meet, but the scheme doesn't unfold according to plan.

When Malik finds himself on her door step, Troy realizes that what he lacks in his wallet he makes up for in other areas. But sparks fly when Jeffrey, Troy's ex-husband, catches wind that there may be a new man trying to fill his shoes.

Insidious circumstances creep beyond Troy's control, bringing her plans to a

screaming halt. Will Dililah respond to the call? Troy is forced to confront issues she left behind long ago. Life flashes before her eyes, just as love lands at her door.

Family ties are pushed to the limits. Astounding revelations unfold, affecting the Alexander family in different ways, when the unthinkable happens. Tarin questions whether, “soul mate”, Eric, will ever take the plunge. Camryn abandons the façade when she meets an eligible bachelor. “Jump In” is a romantic comedy-drama about taking risks in life and love, forgiveness, and destiny.

“Jump In” placed as a finalist in the University of Southern California – Guy A. Hanks & Marvin H. Miller Screenwriting Competition & the Hollywood Black Film Festival. I have written other screenplays as well. Before ‘I Do’ placed as semi-finalist in Creative Screenwriting Magazine AAA

Screenplay Competition. This Life Aint Pretty placed as a finalist in the Urban Mediamakers Film Festival and was also named in the Top 5 Best Short Films of the Year.

Predestined Arts & Entertainment is looking for original music and Extras for the upcoming feature film. We are also seeking sponsors and investors. Please email kim@predestinedartsandentertainment.com or mail submissions or letters of interest to: Predestined Arts & Entertainment, P.O. Box 8345, Springfield, IL 62791-8345. Visit the website at [www.predestinedartsandentertainment.com](http://www.predestinedartsandentertainment.com) to stay tuned. The casting call is July 14th at the Screen Actors Guild in Chicago.



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**B**orn on December 10, 1957 in Chicago where he and his sister were raised by a single-mom, Michael Clarke Duncan is a survivor who went from homeless to bodyguard to aspiring actor to a Hollywood star with an Oscar-nomination on his resume'. And his career has continued to flourish since that critically-acclaimed performance in the pivotal role of gentle giant John Coffey in "The Green Mile."

The towering, 6'5" thespian has enjoyed a long list of credits, and is set to star in his first full-time TV role in the new drama series "The Finder," on FOX. He also has several movies upcoming, including the independent horror thriller "The Sibling," with Mischa Barton, and the sports drama "From the Rough," starring Taraji P. Henson.

His recent film work includes "Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li," "The Last Mimzy" and "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby." Among his other film credits are "The Island," "Daredevil," "The Scorpion King," "Planet of the Apes," "See Spot Run," "Bulworth," "The Whole Nine Yards," and "Armageddon."

Big Mike has lent his distinctive, deep voice to such animated projects as "Kung Fu Panda," "Racing Stripes," "Brother Bear," "Delgo," "Dintopia: Curse of the Ruby Sunstone," "George of the Jungle 2," and both "Cats & Dogs" and "Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore."

Duncan's television credits include guest-starring roles on the hit shows "Two and a Half Men," "Chuck," "Family Guy," "The Jaime Foxx Show," "The Fresh Prince of Bel Air," "Weird Science," "Married With Children" and "The Wayans Bros." Here, he talks about his latest outing as the voice of Kilowog in the Green Lantern.

**Kam Williams:** Hi Michael, thanks so much for the time.

**Michael Clarke Duncan:** Hey, how're you doing, Kam?

**KW:** I'm fine, thanks. I think the last time we spoke was when you were doing *The Island*.

**MCD:** Man, that was a long time ago. But I remember that we share the same birthday. Isn't that right?

**KW:** Almost. Mine is December 11th; yours is the 10th. But I also have a few years on you.

**MCD:** That's alright. It's all in your mind.

**KW:** I have a lot of questions for you from fans, so why don't I jump right into them. Editor/Legist Patricia Turnier says: I think you're a great actor and you should have won the Academy Award when you were nominated for *The Green Mile*.

**MCD:** Thank you, Patricia. I have to admit that I agree with her. I think I should have won the Oscar and I believe *The Green Mile* should've

## INTERVIEW WITH KAM WILLIAMS

### Michael Clarke Duncan, "Green Lantern"



won for Best Picture. It was the best movie made by anybody that year, hands down.

**KW:** Patricia asks: Is there a movie genre or type of role that you haven't had the opportunity to do that you would like to?

**MCD:** Yes, what I have not done is play the lead in a romantic comedy. I have a comedic side and I bet people would enjoy seeing me get the beautiful woman in the end. Something like that would definitely work.

**KW:** Patricia also asks: What advice can you give to young people who to follow in your footsteps?

**MCD:** First off, have a plan. Know what you want to do, because if you don't know what you want to do, you'll get stuck. It's not as easy as people think. A lot of kids think they can just go to Hollywood and become an actor or actress. It's not that easy. There are millions of kids who come out here wanting to act. So, you have to have a plan, and you have to stick with that plan, because it's not going to be easy by any means. You're aware of that, Kam, because of all the degrees you have. You had to go to school and study. And aspiring actors need to take acting classes... know your craft inside and out... and get a job when you arrive

in L.A. Don't depend on acting as your sole source of income. Work nights, so you can have your days off to attend auditions. Have something to fall back on. That's what my mother taught me, and it's critical in Hollywood.

**KW:** You play voice of Kilowog in *Green Lantern*. Did you ever have to be on the set for this role?

**MCD:** No, I was never on the set, Kam. Martin [Director Martin Campbell] had me in a studio in Burbank. He knew what he wanted and was very specific. He's an excellent director who really drives you and pushes you hard.

**KW:** Teresa Emerson wants to know whether you enjoy doing voiceover work.

**MCD:** Oh, of course you have to love it any time you can go to the studio in pajamas, and the only preparation you have to do is take a shower and brush your teeth. You don't even have to memorize your lines. The script is right there in front of you. So, yeah, I love voiceover work. It's right up there with acting.

**KW:** Harriet Pakula Teweles says: Because of your size, you are often cast in a role of "The Heavy." Since that is not the real you, how difficult is it to assume that role?

**MCD:** It's kind of difficult, because once people enjoy you as "The Heavy," they want to see you as that all the time. And if you become pigeonholed, then there are only certain limited roles you can play. To help, I've trimmed my weight down to a solid 275 instead of being over 300 pounds.

**KW:** Judyth Piazza asks: What is the most important lesson that you have learned working in Hollywood?

**MCD:** Save your money. Save your money, because you could be very busy for a year, but then have the next one off. That's happened to me, but I put my money in the bank, Kam. I don't splurge. So, my best advice about working in Hollywood is: Save your money!

**KW:** Judyth also asks: If you could change one thing about Hollywood, what would it be?

**MCD:** How they do business. Kam, if you shake my hand and tell me we're going to do this or that project together, I'd believe you. But when I first got to Hollywood, I'd believe all the people who'd tell me they were going to put me in a movie. And I still haven't heard back from a lot of them to this day. I don't like it when someone can look you in the eye and lie

continued on page 8 >

## Michael Clarke Duncan, "Green Lantern"

continued from page 7

to you, or pretend that they're more than you.

**KW:** Is there any question no one ever asks you, that you wish someone would?

**MCD:** [LOL] No, I just like answering the questions posed, because people can really come up with some off the wall stuff.

**KW:** What is your favorite dish to cook?

**MCD:** I made myself some pancakes this morning that were off the chain. I have to admit that I love pancakes and vegetarian meatloaf. I am a food connoisseur, although I don't eat pork. I'm lucky my girlfriend is a great chef, since eating is one of my favorite pastimes.

**KW:** What is your guiltiest pleasure?

**MCD:** Cheesecake! I just had some Cinnamon Chocolate Cheesecake, some German Chocolate Cheesecake and some Pineapple Upside-Down Cheesecake at The Cheesecake Factory the other night. So, I had to work my butt off the next day, because I'm trying to get in shape for my new television series, "The Finder."

**KW:** When you look in the mirror, what do you see?

**MCD:** An accomplished actor who was homeless twice. A person who was down on his luck in Chicago in 1996, crying his eyes out

on the lakefront. I see a guy who told himself: There ain't no use in crying because nobody cares. You can either be a bum or follow your dream and try to make it. Today, I see a successful person when I look in the mirror.

**KW:** The Ling-Ju Yen question: What is your earliest childhood memory?

**MCD:** [Chuckles] My earliest memory is of the Christmas my mother bought me an Aurora race car set. That was the only gift I got that year, but I was the happiest kid in the world when she bought me that. I didn't care about anything else. But that was back in the day, I don't even know if Aurora's still in business anymore. That and Electric Football were my favorites when I was a kid

**KW:** Tudor Electric Football! I had that, and an HO-scale race car set, too.

**MCD:** See, you know what I'm talking about, Kam. I can reminisce with you without sounding weird.

**KW:** If you could have one wish instantly granted, what would that be for?

**MCD:** That's a no-brainer. Just to have my mother's health restored. Arthritis and other ailments have taken their toll, and she's not as vibrant as she used to be. My wish would

be to have her health back the way it was in the Sixties when she would play catch with me, throw a football with me, and teach me how to hold a bat. Yeah, my wish would be for my mother to have excellent health.

**KW:** The Columbus Short question: Are you happy?

**MCD:** Yes, extremely happy. You gotta remember I was homeless. Whenever I think I have something to complain about. I go outside, walk across the street and look at my home, and remind myself of the time I was living on the damn lakefront in a car full of garbage bags with clothes, and ask myself, "What do you possibly have to be upset about?" Kam, I have nothing to complain about. A friend of mine was just murdered, shot five times last Thursday as he was driving on a freeway entrance ramp. The last thing he did was dial 9-1-1. Another thing my mother told me as a child was, "Always wake up with a smile on your face, because a lot of people who went to sleep last night are not with us this morning." So, I'm extremely happy, Kam.

**KW:** Looks like your mother has given you a lot of sound advice over the years.

**MCD:** Yeah, she's never steered me wrong. I remember when Martin Luther King was shot and people started rioting in Chicago. My mother whacked me on my butt just because I balled up a piece of paper and threw it out the window. She asked me, "Why did you do that?" I said, "Because they killed Martin Luther King." She said, "Just think, where are we gonna buy our groceries, if they burn all the stores down?" I hadn't thought of that.

**KW:** I had the impulse to riot when King was killed, too, but I was lucky to have a teacher who suggested that maybe I should channel my energy constructively and become a revolutionary student instead of a rioter.

**MCD:** And look what happened, from those words to you now. That teacher had a profound impact on the way you think by saying that one phrase. And then you went on to Ivy League schools. Growing up back then, people cared about you. If you misbehaved, the elders in the neighborhood would pull your coat. You got all your degrees because of the way that your parents, your teachers and your community raised you and helped you get there. You probably had some excellent teachers who inspired you whose names you can still recall to this day, just like I did.

**KW:** Yep.

**MCD:** Did you know that Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan is from Chicago? His mother ran a center for underprivileged black kids in the hood. I told him to let me know whenever he wants me to speak on behalf of education. I believe that teachers committed to the community are the ones who deserve to earn the top dollar, a starting salary of a

quarter million dollars a year, because they're the ones that get the Michael Clarke Duncans and the Kam Williams ready for our careers. I'm sorry for going a little off topic, Kam.

**KW:** No need to apologize.

**MCD:** Believe me, Kam, I'm the biggest sports fan there is, I love sports, but I'm still convinced that it's teachers who deserve the big salaries, not athletes. When I reflect on my childhood, I could always count on my mothers and my teachers the most.

**KW:** The Teri Emerson question: When was the last time you had a good laugh?

**MCD:** I try to have a good laugh every day. Every day, Kam!

**KW:** Well, thanks for another great interview, Mike, and best of luck with both Green Lantern and the new TV show.

**MCD:** Hey, much love, Kam, and give your wife and son my regards.

**KW:** Will do, brother.

**MCD:** Take care, man.

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# LIFESTYLES

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by *Lincoln Christian College*

**D**o you feel called to make a difference in the city? Are you interested in transforming your urban community? Consider a college degree as a step toward that goal. Beginning this fall, Illinois Central College (ICC) and Lincoln Christian University (LCU) are offering a new 2 + 2 program in Urban Ministry that prepares graduates to serve in urban communities in new, life-changing ways.

This program combines the best of a public community college education and a private Christian college education. Graduates will learn how to understand their local urban communities and to use their skills and passion to change them in meaningful and long-lasting ways.

The first two years of ICC classes provide students with a general education background, leading to an Associate of Arts and Science (AAS) degree from ICC. Students will work with an ICC advisor to choose appropriate courses but two options are the Psychology or Social Work

transfer programs. Currently enrolled ICC students and students with an associate degree from other schools may also apply.

The last two years are provided by LCU at ICC's North Campus. Students have a specialized focus in Bible and ministry and earn a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Urban Ministry degree from LCU. The LCU classes combine classroom-based courses and field-based credits. The 18 hours of field experiences can be earned in approved settings in Peoria, such as area churches and non-profit agencies like Dream Center Peoria. All classroom-based courses are delivered in an accelerated format. Classes meet for six weeks on Monday afternoons (3-6:30 p.m.) each fall, spring and summer.

Partnering with ICC and LCU in this venture are a number of Peoria-based pastors and community leaders, represented through a local advisory board. The program director is Dr. Gary D. Jackson, a professor of Urban Ministry in LCU's School of Adult & Graduate Studies. This program is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission: A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and by the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

If you truly want to make a difference in your community, you should consider this partnership program. Students work toward an associate degree from ICC and a bachelor's degree from LCU. To make getting to class more convenient, all classes are offered at ICC's North Campus in Peoria, Illinois.

The ICC tuition rate of \$102 per credit hour and a discounted LCU cost of only \$299 per credit hour for the 42 hours of classroom-based courses and \$150 per credit hour for the hours of field experiences make this program more affordable than most private college bachelor's degrees. Federal grants and other forms of financial aid are available to qualified students (both schools provide this information on their websites).

For more information, visit [www.LincolnChristian.edu/Hargrove](http://www.LincolnChristian.edu/Hargrove) or call Lincoln Christian University admissions at 1-888-522-5228, ext 2332.

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## HE SAID:

**M**any of us have set goals for ourselves whether it was for personal growth, physical fitness or career advancement.

In doing so, we have had to commit to these goals either by writing them down or by sharing them verbally with someone who would hold us accountable. Once we set the goal, it was as if an automatic mechanism was switched on inside of us to do whatever it took to accomplish our desired results. This mechanism works the same way in our goals for achieving healthy relationships, especially in marriage. It takes great persistence to not only establish a goal but to follow through completely to the end to enjoy the results.

When my wife and I were standing at the altar, on our wedding day, we verbally set some lifelong goals for our relationship, before a church full of people who were to hold us accountable. We stated goals like I promise to, “love you in good times and in bad; in sickness and health, for richer and for poorer, till death do us part”. At the time, neither one of us



## THE WINNING TEAM

## The Power of Persistence

by Aeneas &amp; Tracy Williams

saw ourselves setting goals, but that is exactly what we were doing. From that day forth, for almost eighteen years, we have been persistent in trying to reach our goal of a happy, loving, healthy marriage as referenced in those vows.

Anyone who has set goals in any area of their lives, knows that there will always be internal challenge with yourself as you move toward taking action in reaching your goals. In an exercise program, you may have to force yourself to workout when you are tired, or if you have career goals you want to reach, you may have work extra hours or attend networking events that take up personal time. Whatever the goal it is critical to your success to be persistent at all costs. It's the joy of reaching your goal that makes this hard work, in time of fatigue and personal sacrifice worth while. I know this principle to be the same in marriage.

As a corner back in the NFL, I set several goals for interceptions, touchdowns,

and tackles. I had every intention of meeting everyone of them. I still have the notebooks where these goals were first put on paper. In order to reach some of my lofty goals I had to give up personal time with my family during the summer to workout with trainers on my own time. I had to reach out to Hall of Fame players who had reached the pinnacle of their careers, so that I learn from them. There was no one telling me to do these things, but it was the internal mechanism that was on the inside of me pushing me to meet my goals. During this process, persistence was leading me.

Just as in my football career, I have done the same in my marriage, in being persistent. I have chosen to do whatever it takes to make sure Tracy and I have a good relationship, where we are the best of friends, and enjoy being together, sharing our lives until ‘death us do part’. This has not come without challenges. I have had to be persistent in getting around other happily married men, read books that gave me a greater understanding of marriage.

Any goal worth accomplishing, is going to take hard work, and persistence. Do you remember when you finally reached a goal that you had been pressing toward? Didn't it feel like you were standing on top of a mountain, declaring your success? When I made my first of eight pro bowls in the NFL, I felt like there was no challenge I couldn't conquer! I have found that having a good, healthy relationship with my wife, is just as rewarding. The only difference is that this goal is for a lifetime, and I am up for the challenge, because I have learned to persist against all obstacles, to continue to enjoy the fruit of a great marriage.

he was getting the information, so that he could practice the skills in our marriage. As a young bride, this was quite comforting to me, to see my husband seeking wisdom on how to improve our marriage!

In our almost eighteen years of marriage, I too have found that persistence is key in having a healthy marriage, especially as the cycle of life changes. It is critical to be persistent in those seasons where adjustments have to be made due to career changes, as the family grows, or just as each spouse is getting older and discovering new things about themselves and each other. Aeneas and I have found that as we have faced life's challenges head on in our marriage, by persisting even when we both were frustrated and irritated with one another.

In the NFL, research shows that 75% of marriages fail. Among pro bowlers the percentage is even higher. During Aeneas' career we have seen many of these marriages fall apart, even in our own circles. Given these numbers, the odds are against us, but with our foundation in God and persistence, we refuse to lose!

In our persistence, we each personally, have set our hearts on having a great marriage. We have set our date night every Friday to hang out together, away from the kids. We read books and listen to messages on how to have a great marriage. When we were newlyweds, in Aeneas' 3rd season of his career, we even went to stay a month with Gil Byrd, an all pro cornerback with the San Diego Chargers at the time, and his wife Marilyn. We wanted to be around an NFL couple who had a great marriage. Even though our parents had experienced long, enduring marriage, the lifestyle in the NFL was different. We had to seek out those who had successful marriages in the NFL. We learned a lot from them and in turn we became examples for other NFL couples. One of our greatest nuggets for them is the power of persistence.

*Aeneas Williams, played 14 years in the NFL as a cornerback and safety for the Arizona Cardinals and the St. Louis Rams. Pastor Aeneas and his wife, Tracy, founded Spirit of the Lord Family Church, currently located at 206 Emerling Dr. St. Louis, MO, two years ago. The Williams' have shared marital concepts and mentored couples since Aeneas was a football rookie. The couple resides in Creve Coeur, MO, with their four children.*

*To purchase Pastor Aeneas Williams book IT TAKES RESPECT go to [www.slfchurch.com](http://www.slfchurch.com) click on book cover on the home page.*

*Also you can follow Pastor Aeneas on twitter [Aeneas35](https://twitter.com/Aeneas35) and he also keeps a blog at [pastoraeneas.com](http://pastoraeneas.com)*

## SHE SAID:

**W**ow babe! That was good. As Aeneas shared on how he set goals in becoming a better husband, I can remember when I would find books in his car or his office on topics like, “Understanding your wife”, or, “Things that every man should know about his wife”. He never told me he was reading them, it was as if

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# INSPIRATION

## How to Make a Marriage Work!

by Sherry Pittman

Let me be the first to admit that marriage is not easy. Anyone who has ever been married knows that there are many adjustments, compromises and challenges to put it mildly. Though there are benefits to being married, some of the “compromises” are not only unexpected but seemingly unreasonable as well. Other adjustments often leave the adjuster seriously asking themselves, “Why?” Whether you find yourself in a marriage for five weeks or 50 years, you’ll be way ahead of the crowd if you get it that the commitment in marriage is first and foremost to God and second to the person who you said “I do” to. This, coupled with the decision to trust God to be what I call “The Great Equalizer,” sets the stage for a successful marriage.

Most of us take vows that include God, as a witness, in one way or another. These are not just words that disappear into thin air once they leave our mouth. Instead they are words that create an invisible contract with God, as well as, a legal one before man. God wants an example, on earth, of what Godly commitment looks like. Marriage is a mystery in that it is to exemplify Gods’ eternal relationship with the church. Just as He is in relationship with us as individuals (making up the church), He wants us to model that we are in the marriage relationship with each other until death do us part.

In marriage, God expects that the world would witness the transference of Godly commitment. This independently acquired commitment with God is to be duplicated and exemplified between husband and wife. Ideally, both the male and the female would already have established committed relationships with God, as individuals, prior to marriage.

Once the initial relationship with God has been established individually, the two can become one because the two are both fully submitted to the God Himself.

As believers, Christ is our groom and we are His bride (the church). His love for us (the church) is everlasting. This “contract” then is a very serious matter. Without the correct spirit of implementation of the contract, we lack clear examples of God’s goal of showing the world what the relationship truly looks like. Gods’ love for us, exemplified to the world, by a marriage submitted to Him, is loving, forgiving, faithful, selfless, and

trusting to name just a few characteristics.

The marriage contract is broken only by man’s unwillingness to yield to God. God alone, decides when the natural contract ends, the way its’ finalized and completed. So let’s first get things going the right direction with God by recognizing a few basics.

First, submit to God; decide once and for all whether or not you will trust God or not. The issue is not the other person, but do I trust God. Will he really take care of me and look after my needs? What if things aren’t going well? Does God really see me, does He really care? These questions must be answered first. If you do not know without question that the answer to these questions is a resounding yes, then you need to ask Him to make himself known to you in ways that are without question. He is more than able to do this, just ask.

You see, it’s really about trusting God to take care of you regardless. That includes regardless of what man does or doesn’t do. Regardless of what woman does or doesn’t do as well. Trusting God always works in our favor, even when we can’t see what the end of a situation holds. One of my favorite passages is Romans 8:28. “All things work together for our good because we love God and are called according to His purpose.” With this passage, we need not worry as to the end result because God has already staged a fixed fight. In the end, we win.

Secondly, be like Abraham; reckon that God will be with you regardless. As long as you walk upright before God, you can be confident that He has your back. Abraham could have asked why he should take the short end of the stick when he and lot separated. Instead, he trusted God.

Third, trust God to be the Great Equalizer especially when things go wrong. Don’t take matters into your own hands. Remember that God is trustworthy and faithful. Have you ever trusted God before? If you have, then keep your record and keep trusting Him. If you haven’t, then now is a good time to start.

Fourth, follow directions and forgive that you may be forgiven. Review the basic lesson to forgive; take a large dose on this one. It’s what Jesus said when he was in pain hanging on the cross, “Forgive them for they know not what they do.” Forgiveness is the key for keeping your own heart from hardening. By the way, a hardened heart can be softened with sincere ongoing attention to this one.

Fifth, be willing to not get everything you want; know that your God

faithfully meets your needs. Contentment with Godliness is indeed great gain.

In summary, put your marriage in God’s hands and watch how He makes the crooked straight and the rough smooth!

*Sherry Pittman is a monthly staff writer for the Capital City Courier Newspaper. In addition to public speaking, she hosts two television shows “Heart to Heart” and “House to House.” She is a licensed real estate broker and holds a Bachelor of Science in Speech Communications and can be reached for speaking engagements or comments and questions at [SPittman@ameritech.net](mailto:SPittman@ameritech.net) or 217.528.2998*

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# COVER STORY

by Kim Gordon

## SO I CREEP: WHY IS THERE SO MUCH INFIDELITY?

It's true that women can be fooled in some situations, but it doesn't happen often. That's because we tend to devote a lot of time thinking things out in advance.

Therefore, when we decide to hire a nanny, nursemaid, housemaid, or personal assistant, if there's a husband or boyfriend in our lives, the potential candidate's appearance is vitally important. Most of us are not dumb enough to hire 20-year-old "Pretty Penny" and her perky breasts; only a fool would bring that much temptation under her own roof. No, we'll install the safe, older (we call it "experienced") "Plain Jane" who reminds him of his mother. Once hired, her main duty is to keep her hands off our husbands/boyfriends. If she actually works and performs her job duties well, that's an added bonus. And with our Plain Jane employee running things at home, we feel secure in our choice.

Unfortunately, many of us fail to learn by example. What experience teaches us is that there are some men who are just dogs; and like dogs, those men will have sex with anything that stands still long enough. So, our careful scrutiny of the woman's face and figure to make certain she is not too attractive, is useless because the fact of the matter is she is there, and that's all that matters. In the wake of the Arnold Schwarzenegger

scandal, someone made the remark that the reason Arnold cheated on his lovely and talented wife of 25 years with the rather plain and unattractive (see what I'm talking about?) housekeeper was because, "It was free a\*\*." Exactly! He didn't even have to go outside to get it. Didn't have to order and have it delivered. No sneaking around in hotel rooms or the backseats of cars. All he had to do was wait until his wife left the house.

Now, just in case you don't know what I'm talking about because the rock you've been living under doesn't get cable, let me fill you in. In May 2011, the news came out that Arnold Schwarzenegger, staunch member of the "family values" Republican party, had cheated on his wife, Maria Shriver, one of the Democratic Kennedy dynasty, with a housemaid who worked for them for 20 years. To make matters worse, over ten years ago, the maid had given birth to a child who was Arnold's. In fact, she and Maria were pregnant at the same time and both delivered within days of each other. And she still continued to work for them for the next 13 years, raising Arnold's son in the same household and keeping quiet about the child's paternity, until her recent retirement from their employ. Meanwhile, Schwarzenegger, acting like some old-fashioned patriarch, kept both families under the same roof while paying the maid for support of their child. Also, while lying to the maid's

husband. Oh, didn't I mention that little tidbit? Yes, the maid was married at the time.

### I KNOW I'D GO FROM RAGS TO RICHES!

It seems that in addition to the one concerning adultery, Schwarzenegger learned there was another commandment he was breaking: "Thou shalt not share thy rod with thy staff." Historically, that commandment has been an easy one to break. The rich and/or famous have always found it easy to justify the practice of dallying with "the help." There are those celebrity examples, such as 32-year-old British actor Jude Law taking up with his children's 26-year-old nanny while his fiancée was out of town. Or 37-year-old actor Ethan Hawke cheating on then-wife Uma Thurman and, after their divorce, marrying their children's nanny. And if you want to crank up the "creepiness" factor, there's always 56-year-old screenwriter Woody Allen, who, in 1992, was caught with nude photos he had taken of his 21-year-old adopted daughter...evidence of an affair going on right under the nose of his long-time partner, Mia Farrow. Allen's defense was that it was Mia who had adopted the girl, not him. And since he never actually married Mia, he wasn't technically the girl's father or stepfather. So, even though he had helped to

raise her, it really wasn't incest, so to speak... not exactly. Well, when you put it that way...!

The convenience of all that "free a\*\*" living under the same roof is just too much for some men to pass up. Of course, it's not a new phenomenon. During slavery, men purchased women of color, especially young girls, for the expressed purpose of service, both in and out of the bedroom. This is how so many children of mixed parentage came to live in southern slaveholding households. Women in bondage or in domestic service to wealthy men have been in a particularly vulnerable position for sexual abuse or pressure to "give in" to their owner's/employer's sexual demands or requests. Often, it comes with a certain air of entitlement. "I paid for you; I own you." Or, "I'm rich enough to buy you, or buy your silence." Take the recent case of wealthy French banker and head of the International Monetary Fund, Dominique Strauss-Kahn. In May 2011, as Strauss-Kahn was preparing to leave his \$3,000 a night Manhattan hotel suite, he allegedly attempted to rape the 32-year-old West African maid who came to clean his room, ripping her pantyhose and forcing her to perform oral sex on him. The 62-year-old banker claims the sex was consensual. Seriously? Most women that I know who work as

*continued on page 13* >

# So I Creep: Why Is There So Much Infidelity?

continued from page 12

maids are rushed and stressed to get so many rooms cleaned per hour or find themselves out of a job. It's hard to believe that any one of them would open the door, see this arrogant, white-haired geezer in his 62-year-old birthday suit (yeah, he was naked when she came in, hiding in the bathroom) and decide to stop in the middle of her shift to have sex with this man she's never seen before. I'm just not buying it. The media has also suggested that it's simply a matter of different cultures between the French and the American. What, are they saying the French think that if a man is rich, he deserves to take whatever he wants from working class women and they should be grateful for the attention? I can't buy that, either. Strauss-Kahn has been accused of being sexually aggressive with other women in the past and intimidating or paying them out of testifying. It will be interesting to see how his trial pans out, and whether he manages to buy his way out of this, as the wealthy often do.

And then, there are the "rags to riches" Cinderella fantasies that young girls grow up watching. Movies and novels play to that theme of the poor or working class woman who becomes the wife of the rich-but-lonely-and-unhappy-in-his-marriage, upper class man, who goes against high society's wishes

in order to be with her...the love of his life. It's a cliché, but one that is apparently thriving, given the number of nannies and housekeepers who are all-too-willing to hop into bed with the man of the house in the hopes that he'll leave his wife for them. Sometimes, it backfires on them, as in the case of Jude Law's nanny/girlfriend...who, after she was dumped by him and fired from her job, cried to the press, "I thought we had this friendship...Now I realize he was just using me for sex!" Ya think?

## IF YOU CAN'T BE WITH THE ONE YOU LOVE, LOVE THE ONE YOU'RE WITH!

So, first on our list of reasons that people cheat is convenience. In the case of Strauss-Kahn, what the housekeeper saw was one more room to be cleaned. But what the French banker saw was a quickie before he checked out; one of the amenities he thought should be available on his \$3,000 a night bill, an a la carte choice from the "room service" menu delivered right to his door. For the rich who hire service people, sex is sometimes an unspoken possibility. One joke that is a feature

in many stories is that of the wealthy socialite or bored housewife who has her afternoon trysts with the handsome gardener, pool boy, or tennis instructor. Meanwhile, the husband is upstairs with the maid or on a business trip with his secretary. It seems that if another person is around, that may be all it takes.

When it comes to out-of-town events, from conventions to vacations, the freedom and independence along with the novelty of different cities and different people present opportunities that some folks find absolutely irresistible. ("What happens in Vegas...") There's a belief that they'll have a fun-filled fling and won't get caught; that they'll never see this person again and their loved one will never know. But it's never that easy.

The advent of the electronic age has made the preamble to infidelity much more convenient than the days of sneaking out to a pay phone to arrange meetings or trying to intercept the phone bill before the spouse sees it. Now, cyber-flirting is accomplished through emails, electronic winks, and sexting. Naturally this leads to some very poor judgment and ill-advised decisions, as demonstrated by former Representative Anthony Weiner (D-NY), who sent pictures of his...you guessed it!...online to various women that he hoped to have sex with. What is it with these guys who seem to think they have to live up to their names, literally? As the Capital City Courier's editor Mike Pittman pointed out, Ponzi scheme con artist Bernie Madoff "made off" with people's money; there's Weiner's wiener; and former Senator Bob Packwood faced charges of sexual harassment from 29 different women over the "wood" he was packing.

## HOW LONG (BETCHA GOT A CHICK ON THE SIDE)

Another reason that people have cited for cheating is unhappiness, either with themselves or with their current relationships. The most common line that a married man will give to "the other woman" is, "My wife doesn't understand me." A favorite trick of cheaters, in fact, is to badmouth the current partner. They insist the marriage has been over for a long time, the passion has gone out of the relationship, their wife doesn't want to have sex anymore, they're on the verge of a divorce any day now, they're staying only for the kids, or because they're Catholic so divorce is out of the question. And the list of excuses goes on. I'm familiar with quite a few of them, not from personal experience...although I've heard a line or two in my day ("Oh, the ring? Well, yeah, I'm married, but...."). I have friends and acquaintances who have fallen for both sides of the story, as the cheated-on wife who learns about the lies her husband was telling his girlfriend(s), and as the other woman who is hanging on just a little while longer because

"this year, he's finally going to leave her." As a friend, all you can really do is be there to pick up the pieces when everything goes south. I learned my lesson about speaking up when, in college, I pulled a friend aside and told her that her boyfriend was cheating on her. She sided with the boyfriend (who actually was cheating, but lied to her about it), and our friendship ended because she got mad at me.

These excuses ring hollow when the woman examines them closely. If he's so unhappy, why hasn't he left already? If the passion is gone, what has he done to try to rekindle it? And, as someone pointed out in an online blog, if his wife isn't interested in sex, maybe it's because he's not offering sex that's interesting. When a person divides his/her time and attention with outside folks, it's usually the spouse at home who gets the short end of the stick. That's why one of the telltale signs that a man's cheating is when the husband stops even asking for sex. If they've had a healthy sex life before, and he's suddenly not concerned with getting it at home, then something is wrong and he's probably getting it somewhere else. Also, is he really doing the children a favor by staying? Children are smart and they can sense when there is tension in the air, when there is constant fighting, or when Mommy and Daddy are leading separate, unhappy lives. It's not the best atmosphere for raising a child.

All of these are indicators of a broken marriage/relationship: one that either needs to be fixed or ended altogether. However, if he says his marriage is ending and they can be together soon, but years go by and he's still stringing her along, then she needs to realize that she is simply "the other woman" that he is having a fling with. He has no intention of leaving his wife. Some men just want to have their cake and eat it, too. She needs to cut her losses and get out before she wastes any more time on a liar and a cheat, and yes, he is both. He's lying to his wife about seeing someone else. And if he cheats on one woman, what's to stop him from cheating on the next one. Lying and cheating are never good ways to start a brand new relationship. It's the same with women who say they will leave their husbands for another man. Usually, the husband represents security and money, both of which the woman isn't likely to give up. But, she'll string a man along for what he provides...either sex or the emotional support she craves. Again, he needs to cut his losses and find a good woman who will love him the way he deserves.

There can't be a discussion of infidelity without mentioning the strong influence of society. Just a few decades ago, cheating was the disgusting skeleton in the closet that nobody believed would happen to them. Or, if it did, there was enough money and power to make the spouse look the other way. And while people who cheat still try to hide it,

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## So I Creep: Why Is There So Much Infidelity?

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infidelity is not the shocker it once was. We've become the "throwaway" society, where if something breaks, we don't attempt to fix it, we simply throw it away and get a new one. Also, our consumerism has led us to want instant gratification and temporary fixes to long-term problems. This has spilled over to our relationships. Now, if we're going through a "bad patch," instead of talking it over with our spouses, we reach outside for someone to make us feel good about ourselves. And with the popularity of writing our own vows, "Til death do us part" has become "Until something better comes along." Prenuptial agreements speak to the expectation that people's feelings for one another will change down the road and a third party (or parties!) will enter to drive a wedge between the couple.

## AND YOU SAY HE'S JUST A FRIEND!

Marriages and other love relationships change over time. Which is why they often involve a lot of work. Jobs, careers, children, hobbies, and shifting interests can pull a couple in different directions and create stress on a fragile partnership. Both people have needs, and if those needs are not met at home, there is a real danger of finding the solution

outside of the home. One of the biggest needs for men is sex. And if it looks like there might be a long, dry spell, they start to worry. Some of them begin to look elsewhere. Women go through various things in their lives. Having a child places a huge demand on a woman's body, which is not a rubber band that can just snap back into shape right away. It takes time after delivering a baby for her body to return to its pre-baby shape and feel. Also, the demands of a newborn, who will go weeks or even months before they realize they should sleep at night like everyone else, can cause chronic exhaustion that leaves her without enough energy (or time!) for sex. So, when she says, "I don't feel like it tonight," what she's really thinking is "I could pass out right here in the middle of the floor!" In fact, as much as we love them, children are notorious energy-sappers that can cause a healthy sex life to fizzle to next to nothing. Certain health conditions or illnesses can also cause a woman to lose interest in sex, as well as some operations. A total hysterectomy that removes the ovaries as well as the uterus throws a woman into early menopause, and the fluctuating hormones can put a damper on her desire. The removal of just the uterus causes changes in a woman's body that can make sex uncomfortable or even painful (a fact that few doctors will explain prior to doing a hysterectomy).

Even the addition of a few extra and unwanted pounds can make a woman feel unattractive and lower her sexual desire. Sometimes, it might be due to a bad decision on her part, such as withholding sex as punishment or ignoring him completely. As a woman, I can tell you that such things are the result of her thinking, "If he truly loves me, he'll wait." But, as comedian Chris Rock put it, "Women, you know when you've got the crazy kind of man who needs his 'medicine.'" And no, I'm not saying he's justified in cheating. I'm only saying that if you know he goes a little crazy without his "medicine," you could possibly prevent him from making a huge mistake by not putting the cap on the bottle! In the movie "The Red Violin," starring Samuel L. Jackson, a priceless violin's history is traced through the centuries by the stories of each of its owners. One man was a passionate virtuoso who told his girlfriend that she was his inspiration; he could only create such beautiful music after they had made love. They were happy, and life was good. Now, she was a writer, and one day she told him she had to go to Moscow in order to do research for a book she was working on. So, she takes the long carriage ride, but once she reaches Moscow, she comes to her senses. She realizes that her lover is a vibrant, impulsive man who loves sex, and she's just left him alone. Back into the carriage she goes headed home, and as soon as she rushes into their house she hears music. Sure enough, there he is in the bedroom passionately playing the violin for another woman who has just finished "inspiring" him! Oh, yeah, and there's a gun, there are bullets, there's screaming. But my point is that she figured out (too late!) that she couldn't take away his medicine without him looking for a new pill bottle.

For women, their needs tend to center more around the emotions. Women want to be listened to, talked to, consulted, flattered, romanced, pampered, and paid attention to. And that's just for starters! After awhile, however, a man might begin to take his wife or girlfriend for granted. He expects the marriage machine to continue chugging along without the necessary fuel: communication, consultation, and compliments! In their defense, men might be busy with careers or family situations that they have to deal with. Or, they could be burdened with health conditions that place the focus solely on them. They could even be involved in affairs of their own that take them away. (An affair is time-consuming.) Needless to say, his wife begins to feel neglected and unloved. Then, along comes a co-worker, mentor, friend, or even someone new that she meets who talks to her, listens to her, flatters and romances her, and the next thing she knows she's knee-deep in a sticky affair that could ruin her marriage. Often in those cases, sex takes a backseat to the emotional needs that are not being met at the time.

In these changing times, though, more and more women are using pure, unadul-

terated physical sex as their rationale for infidelity. And new words have sprung up to describe this trend, such as "cougar" to describe an older woman who pursues younger men mainly for physical reasons, and "milf" ("mother I'd love to f\*\*\*") to describe an older woman that young men consider "hot." A woman is considered a cougar if she is 40 years or older and exclusively dates men who are at least 10 years her junior. The most famous example of a cougar relationship is that of Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher, with a 15 year age difference between them.

Men, too, have had their flings with partners who were so young it was bordering on pedophilia. In the case of men and women who seek young lovers, the psychological reason seems to be control and power. With those May/December romances, it's the older person who has the experience, usually along with the firmly established career as well as the money. The young person receives a career or job boost, security, and the guidance of a mother or father figure. But it's clear who has the power in the relationship. In fact, a case could be made that the older man or woman who seeks out that type of relationship has a need for a partner he or she can control.

Another possible reason is the infamous midlife crisis. In our 20's and 30's, we are on our ascendancy. We are starting out in a career, our bodies respond the way we expect them to, we feel great, and the possibilities for relationships seem vast indeed. "There are plenty of fish in the sea!" we say, when one relationship ends. But somewhere in our 40's, things begin to change. We feel stuck in a job that's going nowhere. Our bodies seem to betray us with new aches and pains, stiffness and disease; we discover we're not invincible, and we might have to worry about the diabetes and high blood pressure that our parents had after all. And that sea of fish seems to evaporate with each passing year. We start to hear about old friends who have passed on, and we're confronted with our own mortality. It's at this point that some people become vulnerable to infidelity, especially with a younger partner. We want that reassurance that we've still got it; that we're still attractive. And even if our partner is in tune with our needs, it might not be enough. But if we can weather that storm, we can see that it's far more important to have a loving and loyal partner than simply eye candy. And we might find out that being a cougar is not all it's cracked up to be.

## YA DOWN WITH O.P.P.? YEAH, YOU KNOW ME!

Those of us who work full-time spend the majority of our waking hours in the company of people other than our families. It's natural, then, that strong friendships develop. And

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# So I Creep: Why Is There So Much Infidelity?

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sometimes, feelings evolve into intimate relationships between co-workers. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than among entertainers. Celebrities struggle to maintain a normal home life with normal marriages. But when you shoot a movie and you go on location...often to some of the most beautiful places on earth...and you are filming, working, living, eating, and sleeping with the same co-workers every day for months, things can get pretty rough. Especially if the role you are playing is romantically involved with a sexy co-star. This is why we hear about happily married actors and actresses cheating with their leading man or lady. Meg Ryan was married to Dennis Quaid until she worked with Russell Crowe on the set of "Proof of Life." Brad Pitt was with Jennifer Aniston until he worked with Angelina Jolie on "Mr. and Mrs. Smith." Ingrid Bergman was married to a dentist, Petter Lindstrom until she worked on the film "Stromboli" with Italian director, Roberto Rossellini. The list goes on.

Politicians and celebrities find themselves in the news for their transgressions. England's Prince Charles was in love with Camilla Parker Bowles, but he was told by the royal family that theirs was "not a suitable match." So, he married Diana Spencer and proceeded to cheat with Camilla throughout their marriage. Of course, Princess Diana was not without her own affairs. People who cheat often play "tit-for-tat," and for celebrities, each indiscretion is reported in the media.

There are these scandals that have involved prostitutes and famous people, such as Hugh Grant and Eddie Murphy. There are also scandals involving Washington politicians having inappropriate sexual contact (either physical or through written and photographic material) with underage congressional pages. The most well-known of the Washington scandals was the infidelity of then-President Bill Clinton with White House intern, Monica Lewinsky. In fact, politics and sex scandals seem to go hand-in-hand. Perhaps it's the power and prestige of public office that makes people feel justified in stepping outside of their marriages. Powerful men cheat because they feel they have the right to. And women who are attracted to powerful men cheat because, well, they have all that power. It's crazy. And like many people, I'm just trying to make sense of this stuff. The thing that baffles me the most is the hypocrisy. Many politicians who get caught cheating have been hard-core Republicans who espouse family values and a rigid morality. Like the case of former Representative Mark Souder (R-IN), who felt so strongly about the whole morality thing that he and a female staffer (who was also married) made a film together talking about the importance of abstinence, and then promptly started having an affair! I guess he should have paid more attention to the aforementioned 11th commandment about "sharing thy rod." And before Anthony Weiner exposed his pride and joy online, former Representative Chris

Lee (R-NY) sent shirtless photos of himself to a woman on CraigsList hoping to start an extramarital affair. Ex-Senator John Edwards (D-NC) cheated on his wife who was dying of cancer, and ex-Representative Newt Gingrich (R-GA) was having an extramarital affair at the same time that he led the Republican committee to investigate Clinton's affair with Lewinsky and try to remove him from office. I ask you, is there no integrity in politics?

## LET'S JUST KISS AND SAY GOODBYE!

If people had a crystal ball and could see their future after the affair, they probably would not enter the relationship at all. The consequences of infidelity are often devastating to all parties involved. The ultimate result to the cheater is loss. Loss of family, friends, and possibly even his or her job. Emotionally, there is the loss of self-esteem, loss of respect, as well as the loss of trust that people, not just the spouse, had in them. There's usually a divorce, breakup, or separation of some sorts. Sometimes, the intense emotions lead to traumatic events that result in physical injury or even death, such as the case of Joey Buttafuoco. When the then-36-year-old auto body shop owner started an affair with 17-year-old Amy Fisher, Fisher decided she should get rid of his wife so that she and Joey could start a life together. She got a gun and shot Buttafuoco's wife, Mary Jo, in the face. Mary Jo survived the shooting, but it left her with her face partially paralyzed and deaf in one ear. Fisher served 6 years in prison for the shooting and Buttafuoco served 6 months for statutory rape. Scott Peterson was convicted of murdering his wife, Laci, and their unborn baby (she was 8 months pregnant), possibly due to one of numerous affairs that he had and a desire to be free to continue pursuing them. It was his mistress, Amber Frey, who alerted police to Peterson as a suspect.

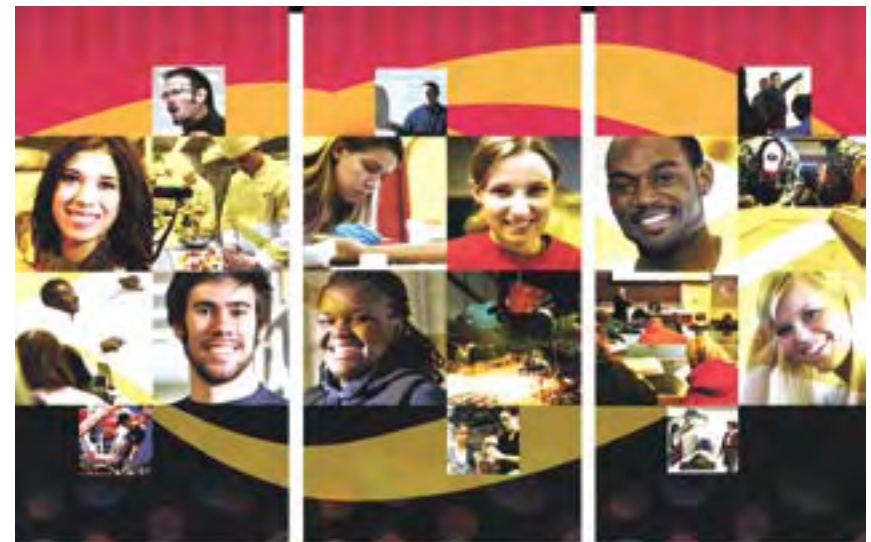
Infidelity can also result in contracting an STD, which is proof of the affair. A friend of mine found out about her husband's homosexual affair after she paid a visit to her doctor. It seems that her husband was hanging out with his best friend one day, and he wanted to "see what it was like." Well, his "voyage of discovery" brought him a case of gonorrhea (which he passed on to his wife) followed by a swift divorce. A co-worker at a previous job had a brief affair. Her husband learned about it after he was diagnosed with genital herpes. Talk about the gift that keeps on giving! The person who has been cheated on has to struggle with feelings of anger, betrayal, inadequacy, loss of self-esteem, and sometimes the effects of an STD. My friend discovered that gonorrhea's effect on women is often worse than on men, and she had to have surgery to repair the damage the infection caused.

Children are a huge factor in infidelity as

well. The ones left behind with the cheated-on spouse blame the cheater for ruining their home life. The "outside" children who were born as a result of cheating are usually angry that they were deprived of a "normal" family life with two happy, loving parents in the home, or hurt when they discover there are previous children (siblings) who were abandoned in the first relationship. Women who cheat often hide the paternity of children resulting from infidelity, as in the case of a relative of mine, whose children were all dark-skinned like he and his wife. All except for one, who was very light-skinned with light eyes. The rumor going around the family was that his wife was having an affair with her White boss. She gave the child her husband's name, but the appearance left doubts. Just like the tale of the man in the iron mask, made popular by author Alexandre Dumas. It was based on the true story of a mysterious prisoner held in a French prison, whose face was covered at all times by a mask (actually made of velvet). He was treated very well, but his identity was kept a secret, even from the guards. One of the speculations on who he was is that he was the real father of the reigning King Louis XIV, and that his striking resemblance to the king would have caused embarrassment to the King's mother, Anne


of Austria. An affair is difficult to deny when kids come out looking like their real dads!

With all of the devastation...the anger, the hurt feelings, the betrayal...it would be great if people would think twice before wreaking all of that havoc. Is it really worth it? Why do it, if these are the consequences? It's not just about looks; if it were, the husbands of beautiful women like Halle Berry and Sandra Bullock would never have strayed. It's not just about convenience. So, is it just a tragic flaw; a gigantic tear in the fabric of a person's moral character? Or is it a sense of entitlement, like the world owes them the ability to have their cake and eat it, too? Maybe all of the people who are predisposed to cheating should have to declare themselves (a big letter "C" on their driver's license), and should only be allowed to date and marry each other. In the meantime, we'll just have to trust the people we love, and strive to be the best and most loyal people we can be. And realize that no matter what has happened, we don't deserve to be cheated on, but we do deserve love and respect. Then, hold out until we get it!



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# Naimah Fuller: Documenting Our Lives!

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has Tyler Perry had on blacks moving to Atlanta to pursue opportunities in the entertainment industry?

**NF:** *Tyler Perry is like so many other models and industries that are moving to the South. No one would have imagined that Toyota would move its factories to the South. But what is unique about Tyler Perry is that he has followed Oprah Winfrey's model in building his own studio. Tyler Perry's business partner is a man by the name of Rueben Cannon. Rueben is a black man from Los Angeles who was born in Chicago, but his parents were originally from the South. But he grew up in Chicago with the idea of getting involved in the motion picture industry. When he graduated from high school, he got on a bus and headed to California. He built one of the most prosperous talent agencies in California with his own studio on Universal's lot. Steven Spielberg called him when he was ready to cast the Color Purple. That was just one of many accomplishments that Rueben Cannon achieved as the premiere casting company in Hollywood. When he met Tyler Perry, he had always wanted to be a producer. That opportunity never existed for him in California, because to be a producer, you have to be financed or a financier. So he moved to the South and went to several of his friends and was able to raise several million dollars according to Rueben, who was in my film. He could have never raised that type of money in California, even though there are a lot of actors and people that he has known. People go to banks out there to finance their own; they're not entrepreneurial. So he and*

*Tyler Perry together have built the first studio owned by a black person ever, in the South. They could have never done that in California. There is nobody that owns a studio that is black in California. I don't care how many years black people have been in California or in the movies, you have never heard of anyone Black building their own studio and you probably never will. Tyler has created work in all areas of the motion picture industry. That is another example of the type of opportunities for African American entrepreneurs in the South.*

**CCC:** Can you tell us about your career path in becoming a movie producer?

**NF:** *I started my career in the motion picture industry as a script supervisor. I worked in New York at a time that there were a lot of changes going on in the motion picture industry. The labor force of motion pictures is people that are in various trades in the industry. Be it props, electricians, gaffers, or camera people, those positions were pretty much shut down for minorities. Opportunities were created to bring a few minorities into the industry, and the union that I was involved in was Local 61 for Script Supervisors. So I started working on motion pictures as a script supervisor. I did that for about three years. It is a very difficult career, working in movies. You just go from one job to another. You don't work for a particular company. It's like when one production comes you do it for a period of 8 to 10 weeks. You get paid a lot of money. Then you go and collect your unemployment checks until another opportunity comes along. So I had an oppor-*

*tunity to make a career change and go into broadcast television for ABC, where I started out as a desk assistant, where I kind of took a few steps back from working in movies to television. However, in a short period of time, I worked myself up to being a producer/writer and I did that for 8 years. After that I decided to start my own production company and do some projects of my own. Then I started my own business. When I came to Atlanta, I had made up my mind that I was going to launch my own company. My company is called Earthlight Media. We offer services in marketing and audio visual services. That's the kind of work that has led me and gave me the ability to launch this project as a producer.*

**CCC:** I read where you said that Gordon Parks was one of your mentors. How did you come to meet Gordon Parks?

**NF:** *There was a friend of mine that was like a son to him and worked with me named Adgar Cowans, who was one of the first motion picture film photographers and was in that union and had been working in motion pictures for many years. He was close to Gordon Parks Jr., who was Gordon's oldest son. We were all like family; all of us were doing the same thing. My major in college was Commercial Photography, so I hung out with a lot of photographers in New York and photographers groups. Then a lot of us made the transition from still photographer to motion pictures. Gordon was just like our mentor and was very available, he was like a teacher. I met him through friends and family.*

**CCC:** Do you have any other plans for any other projects?

**NF:** *I have a lot of them. I have another screenplay that I developed with Laurence Fishburne that I'm looking to get to market. I'd like to start another documentary once I complete this project. I would like to do a documentary on the economy and how it impacts African Americans. I'm also writing my first novel in which I've already completed the manuscript. When you're a creative person, you just have all sorts of ideas. I'm happy that I have the wherewithal, because having my own production company and my equipment gives me the opportunity to be able to do certain projects that may be difficult to launch otherwise.*

**CCC:** Do you feel that creative people are often taken for granted?

**NF:** *Yes. More often than not, most people are so fascinated by the end product that they*

*don't give any thought on what it took to get to point A from point B. One of my favorite sayings is that I am the product, and anything that I create is a byproduct of me. If people understood that concept, they would note that whatever they create, they are really creating an aspect of themselves. We as humans possess so much within us that we never tap into. As the economy changes, we will go into an entrepreneurial model of an economy that's going to be based on people producing products and services and sharing those products and services with each other. I feel blessed that I come from a family of entrepreneurs all the way from my great grandparents all the way through my parents; all of them had their own businesses. They weren't millionaires, but they were all self-sufficient.*

**CCC:** So, do you think entrepreneurship is the wave of the future?

**NF:** *We need to understand that for total success that is sustainable we need to be able to create a chain link that is strong through other entrepreneurs. Although I'm a filmmaker and a producer, I can create the product, but at some point we have to reach out for help. One of the things that I am most in need of and am campaigning for is the opportunity to distribute my film. I'm not a distributor. That's not something that I do or aspire to do. But there are those people that are in the community that have those kinds of connections.*

**CCC:** Who are some of the people that are in your documentary?

**NF:** *Maya Angelou, Danny Glover, Rueben Cannon, Morgan Freeman, Reverend C.T. Vivian as well as a host of others. I shot over 200 hours of footage and I went to all of the major cities in the South. What this is a combination of over 100 years of Black people in search of the Promised Land in the country. No one could have foreseen that those people who went to the North, that their descendants would be coming back to the South in droves. The key to the whole thing is the people who do did not leave the South. Reverend C.T. Vivian, who was a lieutenant for Dr. Martin Luther King, said something so poignant in that if it hadn't been for the Civil Rights movement and the people who stayed and fought for freedom, there would be no place to migrate back to. People can't even imagine the South being that Jim Crow South that it used to be. When you talk about the New South, it consists of a handful of states. They are Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Florida. Those five states are considered the New South. Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina*

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are considered the Old South, in that a lot of their policies have not changed. They still fly the confederate flag, they have not developed their human resources or the infrastructure and when you think of South Carolina, it's very difficult to think of a major city there. I guess Charleston would be the biggest city in South Carolina. It is a port city as well as a tourist city. When you think of Atlanta, it is ground zero for migration just like Chicago and New York were ground zero for the other migration. Now for the first time Atlanta is the second largest city of African Americans, second only to New York. Chicago was the second largest up until about 10 years ago. Atlanta has the largest and busiest airport in the world, and it is the only airport with direct flights to South Africa and West Africa. So it is an international port of entry. It's a very diverse city. This is the new South. I've been New York, Chicago. It is important to realize what is taking place. When African Americans move in mass, huge amounts of money are going to shift in this country. The Gross National Product of African Americans is larger than most European countries, even combined. Just to give you an idea, one of the experts of social psychology, Dr. Phillip J. Bauman, who was at the University of Illinois, who I interviewed for the documentary, told me that he had just gotten back from Europe where he was with a contingent of several academia's from around the world who was called to a conference that was underwritten by the Rockefeller Foundation. They were asked to come there to discuss the migration of African Americans. That was five years ago, and that blew his mind that I had started to do this project. I feel that certain works that we do, we are called to do. I dedicate this project to my ancestors; it's in homage to my great-grandparents, because we still stand on their shoulders. We as black people are very diverse, and we are not a monolithic group. The one thing that we have in common is that spirit of struggle. It kind of stigmatizes us, but in a good way. The largest enclave of wealthy Black Americans resides in Dekalb County, which is fifteen miles outside of Atlanta. It replaces Prince George County, which for years had been on top. Our stories do not get told by the major media. When you give people information, it inspires them and provokes them, it gives them another way of seeing something. If you skew something a different way, it kind of takes the wind out of someone's sails. But if you give them information that empowers them, because we know there is power in numbers. South Carolina carried Barack Obama in the 2008 election. That had never happened before that, a Democrat carrying South Carolina in a Presidential election. Already we saw what impact this migration had in a Presidential election. In the South, you have always had more black elected officials. The Civil Rights voting act changed the South in

a way that, again, if it had not been for that movement, we would be in dire straits because we would not have known where to go. Georgia would be like South Carolina or Mississippi.

**CCC:** What did you enjoy most about doing this documentary and what was the most challenging?

**NF:** Well, I'll answer the later first. The most challenging part of the documentary was and continues to be pushing past some of my own fears, because, for example I worked at ABC as a producer and a writer. I was never a technician, and when I started the project, I knew I was onto something good and I started looking for camera people. Every time I would interview someone, their price would be about seven hundred dollars a day. So the big challenge was always financial. But also just getting past my own fears of having to meet the challenge and learn that technology and become a cinematographer. I then fell in love with that craft and I started shooting. Then I had to become a lighting technician and a sound mixer. Those things really made me be a better filmmaker. The thing that was most rewarding about this project is that I was so encouraged and inspired by the people that I met and all of the knowledge that I gained and the perspective that I was shown through the experts that I spoke with and having the opportunity to sit at their feet, people such as Dr. Maya Angelou, who I became a guest in her home for several days. I also saw something else that was very incredible that I really want people to understand about sustainability of survival, because migration is not a sustainable tool for survival but a pattern we've had to follow. Like other people and animals in nature, you go where the resources are. One of the most poignant things that was said by Dr. Howard Dobson of the Schaumburg Center in New York City was that this whole gentrification that is going on is the big push factor because when demographers look at migration, they look at the push factor and the pull factor. What pushes someone out of a place and what pulls people to a particular area. One of the big push factors from the North is the gentrification of urban centers. It is a policy that has swept across the entire country. Why is that? Is it to look at Black people and say let's get rid of them and get them out of the city? That's not what it is. Is it racist? No. But is it inhumane? Yes. It's not compassionate; it's about business, because cities have to grow and in the North those cities have so little space. Unlike the South, like Ambassador Andrew Young said, the South can keep on growing because there is so much farm land there. But in the North, that real estate must be recycled. And here is the pattern. When we were on the plantation, the cabins were just a few feet from the field. They were provided with housing. Nothing

fancy. You took a few steps out and you were in the field. It made it very accessible. This model has never changed and that's what we don't look at. It's so subjective to us from an emotional point of view that we don't see the model. When they asked black people to come to the North, they created housing for black people and those are the public housing projects. It was the same thing. You were close to the factories, public transportation was right there. You were provided with cheap housing so you could get to those factories, because they needed that labor to build those industries. Now, it's a new industry. It's not factory work anymore, it's office work, it's desk work, computer behind desks. These people demand high salaries and they are coming in from all over the world. Now, if you have a group of people that is left over from another era and they are occupying some of the most valuable real estate in the urban center, you have to figure out a way to get them out of there so that you can provide housing for the new work force so that they can easily get to their jobs so that industry can continue to grow. So that's what the gentrification thing is all about. People have to pay high prices for the real estate. But they do because they can afford it. Now as we move back to the South, the sustainable thing is to own the property and the land. Ownership like it was before the Civil Rights movement when black people owned land only to be swindled out of it. We have to do that again because there won't be any place to migrate to because the population of people coming from other countries is going to make space competitive. That's what made people vulnerable in New York and Chicago, the fact that they didn't own real estate there or California.

**CCC:** Do you think that there is more unity among blacks in the South verses other parts of the country?

**NF:** I totally do. Somebody asked me from National Public Radio what kind of culture is being created in this New South with all the people coming from new places such as California, St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit and everywhere? The thing that's different from before is that when people left to go to the North, people knew where they were going. I don't care where you were going or whether you were a doctor, lawyer, ditch digger or whatever, you knew what neighborhood you were going to live in and you were going to the same night club or whatever. Now, people can go wherever their money can take them. I find that the thread that keeps everything together is that we all have this commonality of Southern culture from our grandparent and our parents. That culture is kindness, politeness, hospitality. It's taking your time to know who your neighbor is. It's being involved in your community because people tend to be more humane with

one another than they were when they were in New York or Chicago, where people may not have even spoken to one another. People are really excited about being in a city in the South where they see all the prosperous black people. They come from New York where the streets are dirty, the police are mean, and you pay too much money, say two thousand dollars a month for a studio apartment, then you come to the South and buy a two thousand square foot townhouse for less than you were paying for rent. People are encouraged and happy and networking with one another, they're doing things with one another. So you have this new kind of energy of people supporting each other in the South in ways that you didn't get in the North before. Plus, you have more people in political positions. It's very encouraging. I think you are going to see a whole lot more civility among black people with each other as well as with other races. People that didn't speak to each other in the North now speak to each other in the South.

**CCC:** Do you have anything else that you would like to add?

**NF:** One interesting thing that I found that I didn't expect is that I ran into this community of Black Brits in Atlanta. People from Britain and London. Young families, young professionals. I met this one young brother and asked him, "Why are you in Atlanta and how did you get here?" He said that he is an IT consultant and that he travels a lot for his country out of London to the States. And then an opportunity came up for him to actually move his family to the United States, and they gave him two choices, either Atlanta or New York. He had been New York on many occasions, but he chose Atlanta. To his surprise, when he got here, he ran into a whole community of Black Brits. What you are seeing happening is an interesting diasporic migration of people of African descent from Africa and Europe whose ancestors built the South. That is our common thread. It's like coming home for sure. Their blood is in this ground here. There is a glass ceiling in Britain according to this brother, and they all envy Blacks in the United States because we have done phenomenal things. I'm excited. That's my story.

**CCC:** Thanks, Naimah.

**NF:** You're welcome, Mike. Make sure you get the word out that I am looking for distribution for this film. Additionally, we have also started a "kick-starter" campaign to raise the additional funds needed for the promotion of this project. Our website is [www.kickstarter.com](http://www.kickstarter.com). Thanks so much, Mike.

**S**o it's a love hate relationship. Truthfully, there's more hate than there's love. You can't stand her outlook on life, the way she treats her kids, the annoying small talk, why you argue every time you see each other, her short haircut, know-it-all mentality, quick temper and that overbearing perfume she drowns herself in. She's been fading in and out of your life for years. You really don't see or talk to each other often, but when you do, you pick up where you last left off. You know she's toxic and also there's no way you'll ever be together. You try to get rid of this woman almost every time you see her, but can't shake her. When someone asks you what keeps you going back, you find yourself shaking your head, looking into space with wrinkles on your forehead saying, "It's just something about her."

Now we've all had at least one of these in our lifetimes and probably just got a chill after thinking about them now! You could be in a relationship, have two kids, a house and a dog named Oliver, but when you get that call from her, your insides have that exciting tingling sensation. She claims she wants to see you and "just talk." You know what she wants and although it goes against where you are in your life, you give in like you always do. What is it about this woman you just can't resist? What type of spell has she cast on you? You really don't like her and know she's bad news, but in a twisted way you can't get enough of her.

# FOR THE FELLAS

## It's Just Something About Her

by Jack A. Daniels



Now most of you would say it's the sex. She got that "comeback" right? Ok, personally I'd agree with you to a certain extent because in my day I've had some...(clearing my throat) Nevertheless, I'd professionally tell you that it's not just the sexual escapades or the indescribable something about "her" that keeps you two connected; it's something about "you." Tough pill to swallow I know, but the truth hurts sometimes. Relationships are nothing more than cognitive conscious connections with people, places or things we choose to maintain. Our habits, attitudes, beliefs and expectations are a result of the decisions we choose to undertake on a daily basis. The woman you can't shake has become a habit for you. You've formulated an attitude of acceptance about her presence in your life. You've convinced yourself to believe there's no way you can resist her regardless of the repercussions or ramifications associated. Therefore, the expectations you set for yourself are to submit to her call for comfort, conversa-

tion, company and countless compromising positions of pleasure-filled moments! (sigh) Simply put, she's not the problem, you are.

As men, we have an undeniable connection to our egos and pride. That's why she can talk about you for being whipped, call you a punk and everything else in the book and you rush to her ridiculousness to prove her wrong. Our pride and egos get us into trouble every time. We know it's wrong, we know she's wrong for us and we really have nothing in common, but we keep stringing the relationship out because of our inability to be courageous enough to say no. No to our egotistical, pride-filled, lustful, childish, catch-a-girl-get-a-girl attitudes that keep us attached to the strings of those toxic relationships we know ain't good for us!

Fellas, life is about the choices and decisions we make which ultimately determine our direction. Although the temptation of the one you can't let go seems hard to reject or resist, it's possible if you trust God and

don't succumb to the subtle suggestions of your ever-present ego. I know it's difficult, I've been there, but I also know it can be done. There's something inside of you telling you, "its ok." It's not. Learn to step outside of yourself, view and think about the hurt, harm and damage being done to both of you as a result of this ongoing relationship. This isn't about her making the decision to cut the cords of convenience that keep you connected, you need to make it happen. So the next time she sends that late night text or calls with the need to just want to talk, be man enough to resist the temptation and stand by your decision to know its not about resisting her, it's about being disciplined enough to resist yourself.

*Jack A. Daniels is a renown psychotherapist for high profile individuals. Politicians, business execs & entertainers frequent his services. Bestselling author of "From Wounds to Wisdom" "Stay Out of Your Own Way." & "The Man's Handbook for Choosing the Right Woman." He's also an international Speaker & Syndicated Columnist based in Atlanta, GA. Jack can be contacted for interviews, speaking engagements, questions or comments concerning this column @ 866-496-9983 or www.presspause.org*

# THE ONE

by Kris Calmese

**A**s small children, it is explained to us that "outer space" is a place that we cannot travel. A place where there is no oxygen to breathe, where the pressures would destroy us immediately upon unprotected entrance, and that houses billions upon billions of different galaxies, stars, and planets. Our solar system is made up of several planets, thousands of moons, all permeated by one central source of revolution, the sun. The third planet from the sun is Earth, where there are thousands of land masses, each occupied by billions of living forms, and surrounded by a seemingly limitless body of water. This body of water is the home of a chain of natural life that lives effortlessly, and remains as time continues.

On land there is a bounty of life. This bounty includes mankind. Mankind is made up of a chain of life and death that is equally consistent and immeasurable. Neither rate of life nor death accelerates nor delays, yet both are overall consistent and seemingly uncontrollably equal. We share the air, land, and water of the trillions of lives of time's past, present, and future.

All the way down to the simplest forms of life on earth, to the farthest of galaxies in the universe, it has been proven that all of it is made up of the exact same entity: energy. Electricity has no building blocks and has been described as cannot be destroyed, always has existed, always will exist, and is inexplicable in its origin.

At some point, mankind decided to create a human correlation to this exact same description. Mankind created concepts that

would give this Origin human potential, and yet inhuman abilities. This choice has matriculated into a separation of one another on the basis of discrimination, greed, and perceived inadequacy. Boundaries were created and settled as life's normalities.

Electricity is used as the fuel for life, worldwide. We use it to heat meals, revive the beat-less heart, manufacture food, businesses, heat, travel, entertainment, and even execution. It is manipulated through a concentrated creation process and manifested with minimal effort, due to the intricate nature of the created concept in thought.

The human mind has been described, as discovered by trillions of revenue spent in research, as an operator fueled by thought and moves into the creation process with the use of electricity, energy, and all of its processes.

The movement to give the energy, the

characteristics of mankind, has created unlimited inconsistencies. Whatever the mind is focused upon, it will, in fact, create more of it.

What I propose is that we decide to take a moment to access the appreciation of the magnitude that is our Creator. We have been pulled together by One, continued to exist because of One, and will continue to exist due to the chain reaction that we call nature, that was revealed by One Unified Concept of Existence.

Over thousands of years, many have explained to us the relevance of this One. We have always been aware, and found ways of acknowledging this One, for as long as we have walked this land. The message was once clear, but grew distorted due to the fact that we have collectively chosen to deny those that have a differentiated opinion that was developed from information given to us by those we revere most. Though the message is still clear enough to understand today, due to our judgmental ties, have we truly grasped this message?

The human mind is capable of global cultural change once the differences are chosen to be shedded. It only takes a significant amount of collective thought to promote change. Anyone can focus on the messengers, but what was the actual message?

*Kris Calmese is the owner of Kalmese Fitness in Bourbonnais, Illinois*



**T**heresa Cameron is abandoned by her mother at birth and becomes “a ward of the state,” a term she hates. Her only wish is for a family of her own. But, this wish cannot be granted. For reasons Theresa does not understand, her mother retained her rights when she handed her daughter over to Catholic Charities. The result: Theresa cannot be considered for adoption.

The year is 1954, a watershed moment in the Civil Rights movement. Growing up in Buffalo, N.Y., Theresa pays close attention to the fight for freedom being waged on various fronts North and South. She and her second foster family silently watch the March on Washington. That night, Theresa cannot fall asleep. “I sat up in bed and stared at the star-filled heavens, believing that I, too, would be free at last someday – free from foster care and maybe even free from segregation.”

In 1973, Theresa graduates from high school and is summarily freed from foster care. For the first time, she is in control of her own life. Afraid and alone, she boards a Greyhound bus for Boston College.

In Foster Care Odyssey, Cameron, who holds a Ph.D. in urban planning from Harvard, gives readers a glimpse into the life of a foster child. For her, it is a life devoid of the love, affection, and the nurturing she desperately needs. Theresa survives by emotionally detaching herself from those around her. She begins detaching after being taken from Mr. and Mrs. Chester, the first foster parents she remembers. “I found myself in the back seat of an

**Q.** My friend was engaged. She broke-off the engagement and refused to give the ring back to her ex-fiancée because she caught him cheating. She feels that she is entitled to keep the ring due to her stress and broken heart. He has been stalking her, ‘allegedly’ broke some windows in the back of her house and kidnapped her dog, and constantly calls her every night trying to get the ring back. For her safety, what advice can I give to make her realize that keeping the ring is not worth the stress and drama?

**A.** Certainly your friend’s situation is stressful and creates drama, but in my opinion, at the core of the issue is that these two people are not “through” with each other. In instances of true love, emotions don’t stop overnight and hurt feelings take time to overcome. Keeping the ring through continued threats of violence, stalking and frequent harassing phone calls, etc., is your friend’s way of “holding on” to her ex while extracting vengeance; he is not out of her system and possibly won’t be for a while. Even though he may have been guilty of cheating, she is not out of his system and won’t be for awhile ‘if’ he truly had a sincere love for her. An order of protection may be in order to reduce the potential and cost of fixing or replacing damaged prop-

# BOOK REVIEW:

## A Black Girl’s Journey - by Theresa Cameron

by Donna A. Treadwell

ugly gray Ford sedan, in between two paper shopping bags filled with my belongings, being driven by a brooding woman who looked like her face might crack if she smiled. As the caseworker’s car passed through familiar blocks in my neighborhood, sharp tears stung the back of my eyes as I thought about Mrs. Chester and the only family I had ever known.” This initial move is followed by moves to at least two other foster homes, a group home and later a juvenile detention facility.

In whatever living arrangement she finds herself, Theresa spends much of her time alone. In her early years, Sophie, her imaginary friend; and Boomer, the neighbor’s dog, are her only companions. Sophie and Boomer accept Theresa unconditionally in contrast to schoolmates, teachers, and others who ridicule, ignore and generally add to her already miserable existence.

Theresa routinely skips school functions because she has no mother, no father, not even a distant cousin to attend with her. High school graduation is no exception. She foregoes the ceremony and stays home watching movies and munching on popcorn. Even this is better than

being surrounded by her classmates with their proud parents and, what to her must seem like, an army of cheerful, extended family members.

Teachers, policymakers, those who work in child welfare, parents, and anyone who cares about children should read Cameron’s memoir. While the book is a scathing indictment of indifferent caseworkers and the foster care system, it also pays homage to the people who help Cameron along the way: the teacher who recognizes her potential, a neighbor who tutors her, and those who take her in when she has nowhere to go. Theresa thinks she is alone, but, in fact, she is not. God strategically places angels along her path when she needs them most.

The book is also a testament to Cameron’s strength. Some days she doesn’t eat because there is nothing to eat. Other days, because she can’t. Understandably she suffers from anxiety and depression. Her caseworkers rarely see her and counseling and psychotherapy are unheard of.

Cameron survives by sticking to a regimented and sometimes grueling schedule of school, work and study. Catholic School may

not have been the most supportive environment for Cameron, but if nothing else, its strict discipline coupled with that of her foster parents gives her an incredible work ethic. She is not a gifted student, but overcomes by studying well into the night. “The busy schedule wore me out, but failure at this point was not an option. I kept plugging away, even on days when I could barely roll over.” Today’s teens would benefit from her example.

A good book makes you think and stays with you long after you read the last page. Cameron’s memoir made me think about the foster care system. Is it better at caring for the 500,000 children in its care today?

Finally, it made me think about individuals who overcome their circumstances and those who do not. Do they have a certain gene others don’t possess? Why is it they refuse to give up while others flee at the first sign of difficulty? Cameron’s story inspired me to keep fighting my own personal fights. Her success or failure was completely up to her. So is yours. And, so is mine.

-- Donna A. Treadwell



# ASK SARNIA

by Sarnia Cotton

erty or uncivil confrontations. From a legal viewpoint, the engagement ring is accepted with the idea of their being a ‘promise’ to marry from both individuals. If the promise is broken, the ring is supposed to be returned ... regardless to the fact that he was cheating.

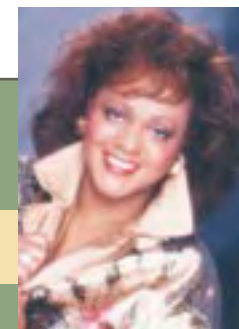
My advice for you is that you need to be careful of the things that you say to your friend about her ex, because it is highly possible that they may work things out, forgive and forget, and then team up against you. And it won’t be “worth the stress and drama” on you.

**Q.** A well known member of the community, a regular church goer, but also at least twenty years older than me, told me that the Spirit told him that I was going to be

his wife. He has been taking me out to dinner on Sundays and wants to be my one and only man. I do want a church man for a husband, but I don’t know if he could be for real. He is much more experienced than I am and has already been married twice. I don’t know if this relationship could work or if I should give him the chance. The age difference alone scares me. What should I do?

**A.** If you take a chance on this man and he disappoints you, will you believe him when he says, “the devil made him do it” and turn the other cheek? Your situation is a fifty-fifty gamble, and only time will tell how sincere your suitor is. Based on the facts as reported, I suspect that he perceives you to be innocent and someone whom he can easily control.

It is highly probable that you are being ‘preyed’ versus ‘prayed’ on. My opinion is that you should focus on your relationship with your higher power, and pray for wisdom and discernment ... asking if this man will be a compatible husband for you. If this man honestly thinks he sees something special in you and wants to make you his third wife, his behavior will back up his mouth. However, don’t get excited about the ‘idea’ of getting married, but rather who it is you will be marrying and what your life would be like after saying, “I do”. You will learn, if you haven’t already, that everyone ‘in church’ doesn’t have ‘church in’ them, and to beware of false prophets.



## MINORITY YOUTH MEDIA CONSUMPTION

## May Be Hampering Academic Achievement

by Nadra Kareem Nittle

**K**rystal Murphy received her first cellphone at age 13 and she used it solely to keep her parents in the loop about her activities. Four years later, her use of the phone has changed dramatically. Now 17, she relies on it to text friends, surf the Internet and send messages on Twitter.

"I'm on my cell all day, every day, as soon as I wake up and until I go to bed," says the African-American teen from South Los Angeles.

According to a Northwestern University study of youth media consumption, Krystal's habits are widespread among young people of color. Released in June, "Children, Media and Race: Media Use Among White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American Children" found that those between ages 8 and 18 use cellphones, television, computers and other electronic devices to consume an average of 13 hours of media content daily. That's 4-1/2 hours more than their white counterparts.

The study has renewed debate about whether minority youths spend too much time on media consumption and not enough on reading and studying. While some people insist that the disparity in media consumption contributes to the education gap between minority and white youths, others cite it as a positive that can aid a child's educational growth.

"I think that the results of this study coupled with the other factors that we know influence student performance," says Sharon Lewis, research director for the Council of the Great City Schools, an advocate for urban public schools and students. "When you combine all of this together, it's another indication that we need to take extra steps to reach [minority] youth.

"Factors such as health, such as preschool experience, such as a sibling that may not have graduated, such as coming from a single-parent household and then you add this [media consumption] to it—it's another indication."

Past reports have shown a correlation between television viewing and low academic performance. A 20-year study of 678 families released in 2007 by the New York State Psychiatric Institute found that teens who watched three or more hours of television daily had an 82 percent greater chance of not graduating from high school when compared with those who watched less than an hour. However, critics of that study say students who

struggle academically may be more inclined to watch TV to avoid the rigors of schoolwork.

The Northwestern study is said to be the first in the United States to examine children's media use by race. Nearly 1,900 youths participated. The study re-analyzed data from previous Kaiser Family Foundation studies on media consumption, finding that racial differences in children's media use remained static when accounting for socioeconomic status or whether youths came from single- or two-parent homes.

The results, which appeared to counter concerns about a possible digital divide and may give parents and educators new strategies to meet needs of minority youths, surprised Ellen Wartella, head of Northwestern's Center on Media and Human Development. She co-authored the study.

"Recreational media use is an enormous part of young people's lives, more than we ever thought," she says. "It's quite clear we have a group of young people who are tethered to their technology."

The report finds that black and Latino youths spend one to two more hours daily watching TV and videos, an hour more listening to music, up to 90 minutes more on computers and 90 minutes on cellphones, and 30 to 40 minutes more playing video games than white youths. During the past decade, black youths have doubled their daily media use, and Latino youths have quadrupled theirs, according to Wartella.

Asian-American youths also consume more media than their white peers. Asians lead all groups in use of mobile devices at 3 hours and 7 minutes daily, compared with 2 hours and 53 minutes for Latinos, 2 hours and 52 minutes for blacks and just 80 minutes for whites. Asians also spend 14 more minutes daily watching traditional TV than do white youths and more than an hour daily than whites watching TV online, via TiVo or on DVD. Nevertheless, Asian-American youths remain high academic achievers, challenging the contention that media consumption hurts student performance.

Kerry Riley, an affiliated scholar at the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, says media can help students of color in the classroom.

"For me, the issue isn't having more media," says the professor of ethnic studies. "It's access to higher standards of media." He adds that teachers and mentors of minority youths increasingly expose them to social

networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook to help them learn about many issues.

Riley says he has directed students to use cellphones in class to access music videos and shown them cartoons such as "South Park" and "Family Guy." Incorporating media in class to showcase popular culture, he says, has helped blacks and Latinos understand how music forms and television shows can function as parodies of Western society.

"We helped them to understand these weren't just elements of popular culture," Riley says. "They were existential forms of social critique that related directly to their lives. So I, as an African-American professor, was able to use popular culture via Google, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook as a pedagogical tool to help educate African-American and Latino youth and increase their academic performance."

Northwestern's Wartella agrees that greater media consumption isn't necessarily a drawback for youths but might put them at risk for obesity.

"One concern is exposure to food marketing, specifically television advertising for foods high in calories and lower in nutrients," she says. "We're saying maybe we should take a look at the negative consequences if they're watching television. Our hope is to start a national conversation about youth and media."

Her study's finding that, among children, 84 percent of blacks, 77 percent of Hispanics and 64 percent of whites and Asian-Americans have TV sets in their rooms is telling. Blacks not only lead youths in TV ownership but also are also more likely to be obese or overweight. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 22.4 percent of black children are obese and 44.4 percent are overweight, compared with 17.4 percent and 36.9 percent for white children, respectively.

Félix Gutiérrez, a University of Southern California journalism and communication professor who has written extensively about race and media, doesn't necessarily recommend advising youths of color to watch less television. It depends on whether they're intellectually engaged, he says.

The New York State Psychiatric Institute study found that students who passively absorb entertainment on television find classroom lessons boring. Gutiérrez advises parents that rather than leaving children alone to watch favorite shows, they should join them and initiate meaningful discussion about what's on the screen.

"Studies in the past have shown that when children saw a stereotypical portrayal

of an Indian or black or Mexican, it helped to have parents there to challenge the message," he says. "There weren't many Latinos on TV, so if a Ricky Ricardo type came on, the child could hear the parent saying, 'People think we're all like that.'"

Such critical feedback from parents helps children of color not to internalize racially demeaning messages, according to Gutiérrez.

Of course, not all minority youths spend much time watching television. Melissa Reed, 15, of the San Fernando Valley in California, says she rarely tunes in. Instead, the black teen exercises regularly and spends "maybe like up to five hours listening to music on my iPod." Melissa also spends about an hour daily on her computer but not necessarily for homework.

The Northwestern study found this trend among youths of all races. White, black and Hispanic juveniles spend on average of 16 minutes daily on computers for studies, with Asian-Americans using computers for that purpose a mere four minutes more.

That the Northwestern report showed little difference in numbers of computers in homes of white, black and Latino children surprised Gutiérrez. Homes of each of these groups have about two computers, while Asian-American homes average three.

"This runs counter to the digital divide talk of the late '90s and early part of the millennium when they said that black and Latino youth would be left behind technologically," Gutiérrez says.

Now that minority youths rely daily on new and traditional media, parents and educators should engage them by using these tools, says Lewis of the Council of the Great City Schools. "Educators need to be more familiar with this new media, so we can use this to our advantage, so young people can have an educational experience with it that's meaningful."

Krystal and Melissa say teachers routinely assign them homework requiring Internet use and that taking shortcuts that way is all too easy. According to Melissa, students must be motivated to use technology to develop better thinking skills.

"I think the Internet can easily give you answers if you use it just to look up answers for homework, but it doesn't really help," she says. "That's the easy way out. If you actually want to learn, that's not going to help at all."

Parents can help by monitoring how children use different forms of media and for what length of time, Lewis says. The worst thing parents can do is allow children to shut themselves in their rooms while using media because that offers no way to gauge whether critical thinking skills are being used, she says.

Wartella agrees. She says media shouldn't function as baby sitters but should entertain and inform youngsters, and connect them with parents.

"Parents should start talking to young people about what media they're using and why they're using it and try to figure out what's going on," she says. "It's the way we communicate with our children."

# OUR COMMUNITY

## Local Events, Comments and Announcements



### ILLINOIS COUNCIL AGAINST HANDGUN VIOLENCE BLUE RIBBON ESSAY WINNER

Derrick "Nigel" Perrin, Jr. a 6th grader at Capital College Preparatory Academy has been selected as a winner among hundreds of entries in a statewide contest sponsored by the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence. Over the past 15 years, this contest has been in existence there has never been a winner south of Chicago for any of the categories (poetry, essay, or art). It is noteworthy that Nigel was selected as a Blue Ribbon Winner for writing an essay in his perspective age category. Nigel will be awarded a computer and a \$25.00 bookstore gift certificate. Ms. Vykye Johnson, Site Coordinator with the Springfield Urban League After School Program, submitted the entry. Nigel is the son of Derrick, Sr. and Deirdre Perrin. Also, winning an award was Jada McLean an 11th grader at Springfield High School.



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Disadvantaged Business Enterprises: In compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation's regulations implementing 49 CFR Part 26, which encourages that at least 10% of the assistance authorized under the Act be expended with small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) hereby announces a proposed federal fiscal year 2012, 2013, and 2014 goal of 2.50% for the District's Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) goal. The proposed goal is based on anticipated procurements and/or contracting opportunities during the fiscal years. The proposed goal is available for inspection during normal business hours of the Springfield Mass Transit District for 30 days. Comments will be accepted through July 25, 2011. For additional information or assistance with the DBE certification process, contact:

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# EDITORIAL

## Circling The Wagons

by James Clingman

**T**ake it from LeBron James, folks; he spoke the truth. Most of us will wake up tomorrow with the same problems and the same life we had yesterday, namely, rising prices, inflation, foreclosures, unemployment, college loan defaults, and trying to pay for a fill-up in order to get to work or operate our small businesses. We can live vicariously through athletes and entertainers if we want to, but at the end of the day, as Mr. James stated, we will “have to get back to the real world at some point.”

We should be able to see by now that no one is going to ride into our neighborhoods on a white donkey or a white elephant to save us. We must save ourselves, and we must do that by working closer together in support of one another. Put away the selfishness, the pride, the ego, the zero-sum thinking, and the HNHC syndrome and get to work, collectively, doing what must be done to survive in this ever-increasingly desperate and disparate society.

On the political front, Black people are watching the game not from the sidelines but

from the bleacher seats and the nosebleed section, hoping for a play on our behalf, one that will change the game in our favor. While “Demopublicans” and “Republicrats” fight it out in Washington, deciding how much longer we are going to suffer through their latest economic squabbles, we wring our hands and take sides on radio and television talk shows; we get into heated discussions and vehemently argue our national political point-of-view while ignoring our local political issues.

Do you remember the words of Peggy Joseph of Florida, at a rally for Barack Obama in October 2008? She said, “I don’t have to worry about putting gas in my car; I don’t have to worry about paying my mortgage; if I help him (Obama) he’s going to help me.” Even with the ensuing election of our current President, that was such a naïve and, quite honestly, an ignorant thing to say. I know it emanated from the hype and emotionalism of the moment, which is exactly our problem when it comes to politics and especially having a Black President.

Emotions only make us “feel good”; they do not make politicians “do good.” The current plight of Black people in this country is worse now than it was two, three, four years ago. Yes,

we feel good about our President, but good feelings won’t fill up our gas tanks nor will they pay our mortgages. Gary Younge, the Alfred Knobler Journalism Fellow at The Nation Institute, wrote an excellent article titled *Obama and Black Americans: The Paradox of Hope*, in which he said, “But for all the ways black America has felt better about itself and looked better to others, it has not actually fared better. In fact, it has been doing worse. The economic gap between black and white has grown since Obama took power. Under his tenure black unemployment, poverty and foreclosures are at their highest levels for at least a decade.” He continues, “...almost every other Democratic president has failed in a similar way.”

We know the mitigating circumstances under which Obama took over the Presidency, but that still doesn’t help solve our local problems. Fact is, we rely too much on national politics by thinking Washington will solve our local economic issues. Younge went on to say in his article, “Obama should do more for black people—not because he is black but because black people are the citizens suffering most. Black people have every right to make demands on Obama—not because he’s black but because they gave him a greater percentage of

their votes than any other group, and he owes his presidency to them. Like any president, he should be constantly pressured to put the issue of racial injustice front and center.” I agree with Younge’s position, but I also understand that whatever Obama does for Black folks will take time, and we cannot afford to wait for him.

It’s way past time for us to circle our wagons and protect ourselves. How? Establish and grow our businesses through consumer support, strategic partnerships, and good management practices. We must adopt one of the goals of George Fraser’s FraserNet: To increase the number of Black people working for Black businesses. (See: <http://frasernet.com/>)

Teach our children the basics of entrepreneurship, which will allow them to access the opportunities therein, whether they own a business or not; if they begin to think like an entrepreneur they will be better at whatever career they pursue. Entrepreneurship should be taught in all of our schools.

Start local chapters of the Collective Empowerment Group, formerly known as the Collective Banking Group. By pooling our resources, via our churches, and leveraging our collective membership, you know, the way Sam’s Club and AARP do, Black people could have a very positive impact on our local economic situation.

Finally, circling our wagons and protecting ourselves – and our children’s future will demonstrate our willingness and ability to work together, define ourselves by our example, and grow our own internal economy far more than just the relative few Black folks we see on the news, in the papers, and on television. Economics is local.

In recent years, there have been many medical advances in the prevention of diabetes, but according to the American Diabetes Association, 3.7 million, or 14.7 percent of all African Americans age 20 years or older have diabetes.

Diabetes is an invasive and often debilitating sickness, which can lead to blindness, kidney disease, amputation, heart disease, stroke, and even premature death, especially in people who have other risk factors, such as obesity.

These alarming findings should strike a chord among African Americans because 25 percent of African Americans between the ages of 65 and 74 have diabetes.

The American Diabetes Association also shows that nearly 26 million people in the United States have diabetes, and that number could triple in the next 40 years. It is very important to not only treat diabetes but also help prevent its onset. One of the major steps should be weight loss and weight management.

In fact, studies have indicated that obesity and inactivity are primary causes of



# FITNESS

## Exercise is a Great Way To Prevent Diabetes

by Lyle Johnson CPT

type 2 diabetes: 67 percent of people diagnosed with this disease in the United States are overweight and 46 percent are obese.

Eating smart along with a regular exercise program will be beneficial in fighting obesity and, consequently, the risk of developing diabetes.

Exercise will help control the weight and lower the blood sugar level. A fitness program will also help improve insulin resistance, blood pressure, as well as cholesterol and glucose levels, it will also reduce the risk of heart disease, which is common in diabetics.

What kind of workout will help bring diabetes under control in the most effective way?

Research shows that any regular physical activity that raises the heart rate for an extended period of time will be beneficial. It is highly recommended that diabetics should get their doctor’s permission before starting a diet or an exercise program.

A popular fitness trend such as Kettlebell training has been proven effective in weight loss because it lowers body fat, increases the lean muscle, and burns calories more efficiently.

Still not sure how to work out safely and effectively? A fitness expert can show you exercises that will assist you in reaching your specific needs and goals.

*Lyle Johnson is a certified personal trainer and owner of St. Louis based MVP Fitness; he gives workshops and runs MVP Boot Camp. He is also the author of Get Fit 4 Christ. Before engaging in any exercise program, consult with your doctor. The materials and comments discussed in this article are to be considered general information only and may not apply to your particular health situation. For more information, log onto [www.getfit4christ.com](http://www.getfit4christ.com) or [www.mvpfitness.net](http://www.mvpfitness.net). He can be reached at [lyle@mvpfitness.net](mailto:lyle@mvpfitness.net) or call 866.487.4MVP (4687).*

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