

ally not how one spells the word, "was." Next year we will work harder to lower the instances of spelling and grammatical errors if not to uphold the integrity and credibility of the Black Ink, then to prevent a repeat of this year's "regonize" joke free-for-all.

"A Special Shout Out"

If you've flipped through to the Fashionably Yard page already (which I know you always do) then you know that Kelly gives about 10,000 shout outs in her last column of the year. I'll only give one. To the wonderful staff of the Black Ink, you're the best!

HOROWITZ CONT'D FROM PAGE 10

7. Horowitz argues that the existence of a black middle class proves that all blacks in America do not suffer economically from the consequences of slavery. This is an invalid argument since the wealth of African-Americans was accrued despite slavery and legalized segregation, and because the wealth of the black middle class pales by comparison to that of the white middle class. Furthermore, the argument for reparations does not rest upon the present financial status of African-Americans but on the historical fact of an inhumane, government-sanctioned, system of slavery and racial segregation that existed in the United States for more than 250 years. You cannot steal the monetary equivalent of billions of dollars in labor from a people and say, "Well, you seem to be doing okay now, so I don't owe you anything." This line of reasoning wouldn't stand up in criminal law and it won't stand up under the international law upon which advocates of reparations are basing their claim.

8. Horowitz claims that the average income of West Indian blacks in America is equivalent to the average income of whites and nearly 25 percent higher than the average income of American-born blacks of all classes. Horowitz then goes on to ask, "How is it that slavery adversely affected one large group of descendants and not the other?" This argument is rife with errors. If one wants to get a

sense of how slavery has impacted West Indian people, one would do best to look at the West Indies itself. Haiti, for instance, is currently the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and cities like Kingston, Jamaica suffer from both poverty and disturbingly high rates of crime. In other words, the economic well-being of Caribbean immigrants to the United States is in no way reflective of the economic situation of the Caribbean as a whole. Additionally, it is not that slavery adversely affected one large group of descendants and not the other, as Horowitz suggests, but rather that it affected African-Americans and Afro-Caribbeans differently. Unlike Africans in America whose traditional culture was destroyed by white slaveholders, Africans in the Caribbean lived in societies with majority black populations and were thus able to retain significant aspects of African culture. One of these retentions, the susu or rotating credit association, has been crucial to the success of West Indian immigrants to the United States. Commonly thought to have originated in West Africa, susus have enabled West Indian immigrants to the United States, Britain and Canada to finance small businesses, buy houses, grocery stores, operate real estate agencies and more by pooling the economic resources of families and friends.

9. The suggestion by Horowitz that African-Americans have already been paid reparations in the form of "trillions of dollars" in welfare benefits and

racial preferences "all under the rationale of redressing historical racial grievances," is absurd. Contrary to Horowitz's claim, welfare was created to assist poverty-stricken Americans during the Great Depression and not to redress racial grievances. The largest recipients of welfare are whites. Although affirmative action came into existence as a result of the political struggles of African-Americans, the primary beneficiaries of these programs have been white women. American citizens from a variety of ethnic groups that have been historically underrepresented in the workforce, in higher education, in the assignment of government contracts have also benefited from these programs. Hence, the "multi-ethnic" nation that Horowitz seems to think has reason to resent African-Americans, would do better to thank them for opening the doors of opportunity just a little bit wider for everyone. Furthermore, Affirmative Action programs have been under continuous attack since the Bakke decision in 1978.

10.. Outrageously, Horowitz accuses other people of being ignorant of the history of slavery while yet again demonstrating his own ignorance on the subject by claiming, "Slavery existed for thousands of years before the Atlantic slave trade was born.... But in the 1,000 years of its existence, there was never an anti-slavery movement until white Englishmen and Americans created one." Not only were there anti-slavery movements before the 19th Century aboli-

tionist movement, there were outright insurrections and slave wars. For almost all of the 17th Century, escaped African slaves from Suriname and Brazil maintained a federation of quilombos that served as centers for resistance from which to help liberate other slaves in their countries. Anthropologist Richard Price has referred to these maroons as "the first freedom fighters in the New World." From 1789-1804, Toussaint L'Ouverture vanquished the British, the Spanish and the French during the Haitian Revolution, the first successful slave revolt in history. Finally, Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey, Gabriel Prosser, David Walker, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass and many other African-Americans committed their lives to the destruction of slavery. The honorable whites who supported these abolitionists' efforts were the exception and were considered to be fanatics by their contemporaries.

In conclusion, the call for reparations is an affirmative, healing act rather than one that perpetuates the "victim" status of African-Americans. If anything, our victimization would be reinforced by passivity in this matter, just as it was reinforced by some blacks' acquiescence to segregation before the Civil Rights Movement.

Therefore, we reiterate our support for reparations for African-Americans and all victims of U.S. oppression.