2004

Black Rage V

Denison University

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Black Rage
The Unconditional Truths of Our Lives
Volume V
Black Rage
Mission
Statement

Black Rage is the Black Student Union’s literary publication that was created as a creative outlet for both the members of the Black Student Union and Denison community in an effort to uphold the sanctity of Black Art.

Editor’s Statement

I will begin by saying thank you to all of you who contributed this year to Black Rage. Without you, there really would not have been a publication. The artistic quality of your submissions are the best that the publication has ever seen. To you, much credit and praise are due.

To this year’s Black Rage committee, you really are the best. I admire your commitment and dedication to this year long project. The biggest compliment to the various pieces of literary art is the manner in which they are presented. The layout and design of this year’s publication can be attributed to the members of the Black Rage committee. So, to the 2002-2003 Black Rage committee and artists I say to you: “Thank you, Committee and Artists, for this good work and forgive us if we do not love it enough”.

Jessica Johnson
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My Autobiography

Looking in the mirror a reflection I see,
As I begin to ask myself,
Who do I want to be?
Yes, I say to myself I'm full of potential, intelligence and beauty,
But how far will I go?
What would I have accomplished if I died tomorrow?
I ask myself this repeatedly as I study my complexity,
And it hit me,
I have accomplished something honest, loyal and true,
Girl, I say to myself, you have accomplished being you.
It all began the tenth day of September in 1983
When I was brought in to this world,
My mother and I were no longer we.
From that day forth I began to realize that my goal goes beyond the skies.
Educating the world each and every day—soon racism will have no say,
It is possible,
I know there is a way.
I began to educate myself about life, about me,
My strengths, my weaknesses, culture, and diversity,
And that is all that I need to be.

This was interesting especially with the help of my family.
A family of seven—plus two,
My parents, oh parents what would I do without you?
You taught me that I hardly need friends,
I had God who loves me until the end.
Each day I acknowledge you and the way you raised me,
The way you struggled for us to eat,
That is why God gave you a child times seven,
His number complete,
Just the thought of how good God is makes me jump out my seat.
And to me in the mirror I see,
A woman who is free and full of integrity,
God-fearing Heavenly bound,
Thanking God each day it was him she found,
When she was alone he was around.
As hard as it may seem,
I work every day to accomplish my dream,
To live the American life that is sold to be true,
So that everyone could be treated same,
People can be known by name, not by face, and most certainly never by race,
Doesn't this dream sound familiar to you?
We must live on our ancestors have fought,
There is no need for us to be distraught.
A strong, intelligent, beautiful African-American woman is what I see,
And that is all that I need to be.

by Aticia Jamison
After The Rape

I am bleeding.
I am unclean.
My flesh is torn.
I am dirty.
I have no right to be here,
For God has forsaken me.
I'm unclean.
I am not the person I was before.
I am not human.
I am filthy.
Do not look at me.
Please do not look at me.
I am ashamed.
Ashamed of myself and my body.
This can't be my body.
I am dead now - I am not alive.
For I have no future now - no life.
I am tainted and tarnished.
I feel pain but pain is now part of me.
I will never overcome my pain.
I am unclean - and bleeding.

by Marisa Wikramanayake
Pools of its water collect in my brain
Now I'm remembering
Now I am recalling
All that came and all that there was to blame
I refuse to stay
With my head in my hands—
Heart in my head...
Remembering (what)...
Strengthened by the pain
Excited by the gain
I come to
Conscious,
Desiccated,
My feet still shifting,
My body still flowing
—Knowing—
My lips longing for
their liquid sorrow
—Knowing—
They were cried for her
Kids drowned
in the river wyld;
Souls still call to me.

by Abeje & Co.

It's so typical like everyday
When you look at and stereotype me
It lets lose the brat within, you see
I gotta rebel
Dance on tabletops for free
Then go to church confess
Nonetheless, in religion I don't believe
Don't try to pigeonhole me
Tomorrow I'll be back out there doing the same
Explosive
Showing no shame
I control my own name
And in my image you are made
See me hold my breath and seem to die,
Don't hold yours
Certainly I'll be back for another breath, back for more
But you, I'm not so sure
Yeah, I am extraordinary, no ordinary chick
So don't be so quick to judge
What you can never understand fully....
The enigma that is me.

by Adrienne Wells
**Untitled**

If I was an entertainer  
Dancing, swirling  
Pulling you into my rhythm  
Would you take me seriously?

If I was a kitchen witch  
Mixing potions of everyday life  
Conjuring consciousness,  
Would you fear me?

If I was a spider  
Spinning a web of truth and lies  
So intricate they become a sort of art form  
Would you respect me?

You are this ingenious, infallible human being  
An enigma of sorts.  
A recognized authority on nothingness and  
Ambiguity. I fear your power to analyze me into  
Nothingness. To morph me into so many disparate parts that I  
Become meaningless.

You make my struggle to integrate the parts impossible  
Move out of the way so I can complete my mission  
To change my vision. To see myself on my own terms,  
to gauge my success on my own pressure.  
Not yours.

*by Adrienne Wells*

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**LOVE**

Section Editor Erin Smith
My Ebony King

* Dedicated to the man that showed me what it's like to be a queen by simply being a king himself—Love Always

Stop right there! Stand back and let me look at you, for you look like a man that I can run to see I've been watching you.
You walk around here with your head all high and erect and in the presence of many you command everybody's respect and you ain't gone take nothing less cause you got this thing called PRIDE resting right here on your chest.
Aw, Black man you know you're the best. But wait a minute, Don't the rest of you misinterpret my "chocolate rock" ain't walkin' around here stuck up on some dumb shit every notch on his belt he deserves it!
For every sentence he writes, every word he will read, for every problem he solves and for every civic deed he has worked for it.
For every child he creates, everything he makes and even the queen he decides to make his mate he will fight for it.
With every mountain and every valley and every trial and hard time: HE HAS CONQUERED IT. And the pride of his heritage shall he never forget. See, This king ain't afraid to sweat And you ain't seen nothing yet. Cause everything about him his ROYALTY SET His mind is like a locomotive His words flow like water Vision that of an eagle Heart pure as gold And power is encompassed in the essence of his soul. Just being near him makes me feel whole. Black man I love you Protector I thank you King I reverence you Leader I acknowledge you Creator of life I need you Teacher, I'll listen Visionary I support you And When the road gets long and hard, I'll comfort you. So, for all that you've done, all that you're doing and will do, I will ALWAYS be here right next to you. TO MY EBONY KING FROM YOUR EBONY QUEEN

by Tina Marie Andrews

Black Nubian Queen

Black Nubian Queen, I see you. With your flowing hair and beautiful skin. I see you, The mother of my earth, The keeper of my soul. My queen, As strong and independent as you want to be, But at the same time, As passionate and emotional when the time is right. Beautiful queen, I praise you, And the wonders that you do. I honor you, And offer you... My love, affection, and protection. My queen, My sister, My lover, My friend, I thank you, For being the strong black woman that you are. For giving me hope, For showing me how to love, For being, My Black Nubian Queen. 

by Eric R. Norris
Destiny

Destiny must have brought us together
   on that day we first met.
   Attraction so strong,
   Nothing I would ever expect.
   I needed you in my life,
   As much as you needed me in yours.
Our love for each other unlocked so many doors.
   We both had shyness' and fears to overcome,
   And with the help of one another
   We did what was needed to be done.
   We opened up to each other and let our secrets out.
   We trusted each other and had no doubts.
Whether it was a shoulder to cry on or a pat on the back,
   You encouraged me and helped me pick up the slack.
   It's crazy what love can make you do
   It can make you cry, laugh, or be in a sexual mood.
   As natural as ice melting on a hot summer day,
   You could make me laugh and make all my pain go away.
   You being yourself is all I ever needed.
   You were confident without being conceited.
   I'm waiting for you because your love is all I need.
   And with that everything will be complete.

That's what I liked about you,
   You knew how to act.
   You were never out tryin' to be a pimp or a mac.
   We learned more and more about each other,
   And grew closer together,
   We stuck together like birds of a feather.
   My love for you will never die,
   And because you are not with me now,
   I want to cry.

By La'Tonya Edgerton

Black Rage
Asphyxiation

Love me now through all of my pain and glory,
For now is when I stand naked,
as a shameless concubine,
before you.
Take me, in full, as I come to you
with all of my imperfections in tow sharing the newness of my skin
with indigo satin—
reminding me of the darkness reflected in your eyes,
mirroring the true colors of your heart,
of a soul not yet singed
by the flames of love—
an inferno of passion,
so hot, but too compelling to let any room for air to pass through.

Breathless—
If even a slight wind were to pass,
my very lungs would (DEEP SIGH)....
breathless, on the verge of asphyxiation.

So delicate is my whole being,
whispers of "I adore" fill my ear, ping my head,
give me the strength I need to fill you with the
sticky sweet poison of liquid fire that chars the back of the throat,
leaving you, like a fish out of water, gasping for air as you left me
gasping for your love.
So here I stand before you,
As bare and as pure,
Take me in full with all of my perfect imperfections.
Love me with no regrets.

by Abeje & Co.

I'm In Love With A first Class Thug!

Could it be? Is it he? A thug from 55th street?
I'm approaching you; you gettin' closer to me
I see the ice in BOTH your ears and the Jordans on your feet.

Yea, you buy your pants 2 sizes too big
and that hat ain't ever gonna sit straight on your head.
You walk with a dip; invite me to the "tip"; offer me Kool-aid
But damn all your bills are paid.

You talk in code...Stay on your P's and Q's
Keep your name out of shit and fuck somebody up if they don't pay
their dues.
You drive your "whip" with tight sounds and bass
And when we pulled up and strolled down the block,
You know you got your "mean mug" on your face.

But that doesn't bother me... Naw naw Cuz
I'm in love with a first class thug

In between those Diamond rocks, you've got a thought process that
sends me into shock. Mixed in with that cussin' and talkin' street
things is the knowledge of a King.
In the midst of that sunny handshake he do, is the love for his fellow brother
And respect too.
Yeah he spits game; quick lil' lines to all the ladies just the same.
But in actuality he's just lookin' for his queen.

He has knowledge that surpasses that of any school book.
Has managed to stay out of jail in a county called Cook.

You may not have your stamp of approval on some of his bad boy deeds
And yes to relax sometimes he might smoke a lil’ weed.

But I'm gonna stick by him 'cause sometimes “Heaven he needs a hug”

Yes people... mind your own business
'Cause I'm in love with a first class thug.

Life is what you make of it. Love is what you give into it. Listening is
what you get out of it. Ladiness is what your lookin’ at!

THE HANDS OF A GOOD WOMAN

They say the hands are the most important part of the body.
But for a good woman, they are not too shoddy!
A good woman has so many uses of her hands.
In a world with so many demands.
She uses her hands to wash, cook, and clean,
And even uses them to make sure her make-up is pristine.
Hands on the steering wheel to drive to work.
And to give comfort to those who are hurt.

At home, she uses her hands to hug her children and listen to their problems,
Even when it comes to spanking their bottoms.
And when her man needs tender loving care,
Her hands go to..... you know where!!!
Hands, hands, hands, the most important part of the body
But for a GOOD woman, they're not too shoddy!

By Stefanie Woods

by Tina Marie Andrews

Black RageZ

Black RageZ
Untitled

I've heard stories of a great man with hair like lamb's wool,
Who claimed to be related to the King of Kings,
Raised with humble beginnings, with love and understanding as he tools,
He was betrayed, lied to and killed,
By people who thought he was mad and defiant,
His struggles remind me of a people who lived,
Their hair too, was like lamb's wool and skin of bronze,
They were hated and persecuted for the life they lived and the talent they
possessed,
Their similarities are so close, they have to be related,
When I heard of his physical appearance, I was elated,
Someone who truly understood my plight,
Who watches over me day and night,
A person respected and loved only here and there,
Who never placed more on me than I can bear.

by Erik Farley

The times I held you
Did you not question why
The way I held you
Did you not wonder
The way I looked at you
Do you not notice
It is obvious
That I Love You
I wish I knew
But when I tried
You left me behind
And found someone else
So you are happy now
But I am suffering
Can you not see
That I think of you
That I care for you
That I'd do anything for you
That I love you
No, you choose not

by Santiago Camilo Espinosa
The words of love begin with the heart
When I say that I love you it comes from my heart
My love will never completely go away
Even when the relationship is over
You broke my heart
But I still care
Why is that, you may ask
It is because I gave you my everything
And I can’t take it back.
If you think it is as simple as to say the relationship is over
And everything that we ever felt for each other goes away
Then you have a lot to learn in this love game.
Even after everything that has happened
I am willing to forgive, but never to forget.
But if you feel as if things are where they need to be
I have the ability to move on with my life.
I will never let one man control my destiny.
If it wasn’t meant to be
Between you and me
I know how to make my heart leave
I’m not saying that any of this is easy
But time heals wounds of all kinds
I’ve had my share of heartbreak and
I know that in my future,

More pain will come
That’s why I’m not bitter
About this outcome
Just a little hurt
Of all the people in the world
To break my heart
I thought you would be the last
I guess I should have known better though
Maybe that’s why this hurts me so much
I could have cheated
But I respected you more than that
And even though what you did wasn’t physical
Your heart wasn’t with me
Cheating doesn’t always meant touching
You cheated on me in a whole different way
You let your heart go away from me
You gave it to another
You always told me that you didn’t want to be like these other guys
But guess what
You are
You may not talk about sex, but you want it just as much as them
You may go to church every day, but you sin as much as the next
And you may not like me for the things that I have to say,
But like they say, the truth hurts
And if you think that I’m lying
Then you need to take a long look at yourself
Because you are no different from anyone else.

by La’Tonya Edgerton
**Untitled**

You have seen distortions of my true affection.
You have felt brief moments of my passion.
You have seen partially my devotion to you.
And when you added them all together and saw my potential,
You ran, from me, and yourself.
You lost yourself in the world
And even though I saw you,
I couldn’t rescue you.
I felt vulnerable, not having you there,
But you looked so happy.
So I acted like I didn’t care
And when that world blew up
I was mad,
I saw you there, but I couldn’t help
And again I felt vulnerable
Knowing you were in such pain.
And I could do nothing.
I who pledged to be your protector,
I who let our world blow up,
I am sorry
I didn’t mean to hurt you.
Please forgive me
For not protecting you when you needed me.

by Anonymous

---

**Untitled**

How’d you go from
The love of my life,
The beat of my heart to
Just a message on the machine?
Used to tell me
I had a mean walk
A sassy talk
A grace, an elegance about me
I believed it when you said it
You were golden
Do_I_Love_You
Do_I_Still_Love_You?
Can’t say that I do
Can’t say that I don’t
It’s just, it’s just
I don’t know how to explain
You’re like a far away dream
Didn’t happen to me
Didn’t happen to be
All that I needed
But all that I wanted
Or told myself that I could not
Live_without
You became necessary
That tick that twitch
That I just wasn’t me without
Wouldn’t be right—
You became my dysfunction, distraction... reality
Thank you,
for the message that you sent.

by Adrienne Wells

---

Black_Rages
The Chaos of Order

Among the guns and smoke, I raised my head and cried out. Out of the carnage rose the phoenix and I gave myself up to it. Reborn I stalked the streets. I gave way to the emotion of rage. All those around me bled and their wounds healed, but mine did not.

Frustration overcame me and the world felt my wrath. Out of clouds came Justice with her scales and at last she bade me lift the blindfold. I obeyed her command and Chaos and Order came together. United, they gave birth to me. The phoenix spirit was reborn for the third and final time.

My mortal body cascaded down to the earth, and the blood soaked into the earth and where it fell, my blood gave birth to legions of men and women. Legions of intelligence and of the strength that one can only receive from innocence.

I relinquished their command and they were loyal. To me and one another. I was their Creator and I was one of them. They spread out and took over the bodies of those who had fallen. One by one, the mortal carcasses arose, renewed with a hope and an intelligence greater than any they had had before.

They were my children, my lovers, my elders. I learned from them as they did from me.

And out of the world came forward two children - a boy and a girl. They were the pure ones - loved of their own efforts to love. I grew up beside them and I loved and cherished them more than any other.

I took the world under my wing and I bade them take care of each other, and I uttered a vow that Justice, Destiny and Fate witnessed. I passed the spirit of the phoenix on to the two children and they each went their separate ways. Wherever they walked, they loved and were loved in return.

And I walked on to the sea. There my body was washed away and my spirit rested. And I watched over my children.

I am the Creator. The people have been given a second chance. My children will guide them. The cycle is never broken only changed but the means to change lie in their own hands.

I am love. Hear my call.

by Marisa Wikramanayake
Cultural Poker

The winner can take all in this game 
power is the prize in the pot 
it is founded in luck and strategy 
there are rules for turn-taking, 
and hierarchies of card arrangements
learned by those who play

On the poker table,
assumption and perspective are the chips 
that are collected and isolated,
fixed and hoarded, stacked into little piles
of color and worth
by those who know the game

Consider for a moment
the risk-takers, the equity-seekers
who stamp into that room
where the game is being played
and step on the silence with their footsteps
crossing the black and white tiled floor,
maybe bumping into the green lamp suspended
from the ceiling on their way to the table

Then the light changes

They overturn the tables, chairs are flipped
until they're four legs up on the floor 
the cards, before helpless, accepted, what is,
jump into the air, and pause for just a moment

Faces turn—the Kings, the Queens, the Jacks,
the faces of those watching the game,
and everyone's hands in that hegemonic game
fall to the floor

by Julie Grasmeyer
STRUGGLE

Overcoming obstacles
Whether they are big or small
Is a part of life's challenges.
Situations can be personal or universal,
But what makes one great
Is the way he or she handles them.
In this section strength is tested
Not physical strength, but mental strength.
Each situation unique,
And each outcome different,
But each story is told
And the strength through the struggle is shown.

Section Editor: La'Tonya Edgerton
Quiet Storm

Twas' an August morn'
I arrived at Denison with unexpected fears,
The environment was quiet,
Little did I know about the tears I would soon shed,
Numerous classes resemble snow covered pastures with one black stone,
Monday through Friday the saga continues,
The poster boy of black culture, a person to mock,
Their only connection to African Americans seem to come from the idiot box
Students stare and silently envy,
While administration uses me as their token.
"He speaks so well," they say,
But little do they know in their dismay
The plans I have for my future goals
The idea to exploit Denison for everything it owns.
The four years of aggravation, prejudice, and hate,
Will pay off in later years as I put food upon my plate.

by Erik Farley

Scars of Silence

The sharp edges of sound,
piercing like a siren cutting through the night air,
swirl through my spinning head, 
as though to make my ears listen,
my mind pay attention.
I watch—
the screaming in my head
deaferening as claps of thunder slicing
through the cool atmosphere followed by
garish stabs of silver lightening.
You look back at me,
your eyes, so cold and alive,
it haunts me,
eager, desperate, determined
to make the noise stop.
The instrument of your relief comfortable,
familiar to your hand like the feel of a warm, flowing bath
after a day spent out in the bitter, biting cold.
I watch you, and you do not hesitate.
I cannot stop you now.
As you immerse yourself in this coveted pain,
the noise, once so ear-splittingly loud, echoes like a melody.
Slowly, with each practiced, calculated line,
silence settles upon you, taming the chaos,
as ribbons of crimson dance upon your skin.

by Erin Fox
Where is home?

Kind waves along the Euphrates,
   Egyptian hieroglyphics, pyramids, and the Sphinx,
Men of bronze or is it regal black, it does not matter, I see them in my
complexion,
   Everyone cares for each other, because “It takes a village to raise a
child,”
Today my home is full of anguish, lasting impressions of colonization
   and disease,
I am a part of this place, but besides my skin, how can I prove it?
   Stolen legacies are all I know, how can I truly research my roots?
   Heaven only knows were I am destined or where I am from,
   on the rising of the sun in the east I see civilization starting and end-
ing in the west,
My life legacy, strength, and genetic make-up contains the blueprint
   for life
Erik Farley is my westernized identity, but the truth lies in a far
   away place.

by Erik Farley

“Once I asked”

Once I asked, “....What do You asked of me, of us all?”
and the answer came, well before I ever asked the question,
   woven on the tapestry of our universe,
flowing as a river through all creation,
   through space, time, dream world, thunder and lightning,
the bewildered look on a newborn’s face,
   the firm, caring hug of our elders,
through all the countless souls, creatures who are here and those who
   are on their way,
whispered in the wind, by the spirits of our ancestors,
   and in the eyes of all the battle weary crying out for peace,
   emancipation, and justice
and more timeless, than the age-old wonder Horemaket (the Great
   Sphinx of Kemet), even the stars,
though I and we must listen, with our souls this time,
   to the resolution which has forever been unchanging, my life, our lives,

.....and I thought for a mere moment compared to the existence, of one
whose age, consciousness spans all eternity,
“WHAT IF I REFUSE!!!!,”
and You knew me best, so much better than I had ever known myself,
You knew us all,
   and You had so much faith in us, in the universe,
more than I had in myself, more than we had in ourselves,
   and You never gave up,
even during the times, when we lacked, the faith, which brought of
here, and cared little, for Your Great Song, LIFE
... and in each great, small step,
I take in accepting You, as my guide,
then one more step . . .

toward standing on those things,
which can never be broken, Truth,
toward finding the right way or ways, Wisdom,
toward not merely being without fear as irrespective of fear,
enduring to do the right thing,
and not just for me, but for us all, Courage and Honor,
toward more than knowing the law
and accepting,
but ever searching, calling, and fighting for, rightness within the law,
Justice,
toward more than learning how to speak,
to tell others what they must do,
but greater still, remembering how to listen,
ask questions,
and how does one LIVE, Leadership and Character,
toward not always or only attempting to break the chains, in the
physical realm, but ultimately breaking any and every chain, shackling the
mind, Freedom, Liberty,
toward not so much asking for physical appeal
or trying to amass worldly wealth, fame,
but far above these,
endeavoring to build a rich life based on caring, loving family,
and real, true friendship the kind which last for here, now, and evermore,
Joy and Happiness,
toward doing, giving everything I can,
no more, no less,
for anyone, who is in need, Charity,
toward more than vanity, caring, thinking only of myself,
but even having compassion, regard for all life,
even for those who wrong me, Goodness,
toward more than looking at the faults, misgivings of others,
thinking I am somehow better,
but ever looking inward to know, accept who I am,
and that I too have been lost, have much to repent, a long road to travel,
Humility,
toward releasing all the resent and anger within my spirit, Forgiveness
and Peace,
toward trusting, wishing, and even possibly going against nearly
everything I know,
but despite how disheartening life may (sometimes) be,
forever believing, praying that
in due time, all things will work out, Hope,
toward discovering, knowing that all I (we) ever need,
to rise above life's trials, is forever with me,
even before I was, and with me hereafter, Faith,

....and in each measure, I embrace regarding what You ask of me,
then one more measure to....

no longer accepting hatred of myself and others,
who maybe somehow different or perhaps the same,

no longer merely acknowledging the existence, voices of the powerful and
the have ,
but further the powerless and the have nots,

no longer trying to give death, life,

no longer living for the finite,
but (for the greatest, highest meaning),
living for the infinite,

by Jerrell Kevin Beckham

Night Train: 151

The 12:90 Night Train
runs through my veins,
pumps black diesel
through my heart.
Polluted already is my body
with stale heartache.

Moody blue-black oil pours out
from underneath tightened slits

Once open, they protrude
white, glossy headlights,
Warning
everything in the way
of the mighty locomotive body
Charging
through the muddled darkness—
a never-ending midnight.

Bounded to the tracks,
by the criminal-smoother helmets,
is the massive body
keeping me through time and space
Wheels rolling
like the bolts and screws rotating
to keep the engine running—
(One is late in my head.)

by Jerrell Kevin Beckham

Black Rayee
Clumps of agitated steam
pulsate against thin temple walls
exposing inflamed blue wires—
They are quite visible on either side of
my head.

The caboose rocks in a sturdy stride
covering each step of a mile
in glide.

Salty grease seeps through tears in
the sheet metal
frozen and heated,
contorted,
distorted
by metaphorically equated 'isms
that
just
don't
add
up.

As the blood exceeds the boiling point and flows to areas of my body where
it lacks

Snatches of vaporizing breath escapes in
between sighs
I often find my lips lapping up rushes of air
to occupy
the absence of logical thoughts in my
mind.

Hindsight sees the roots
from which stemmed these irrational
impulses
I try to leave behind.

In a drunken haze of blackness
I put to end what misery
was causing this high.

by Abeje & Co.

Black Ragers
Untitled

Little girls wear bows, clips, barrettes
They smile snagle-toothed smiles
Jump rope, sassy double dutch
They almost never cry

Tough little girls are stand-in Moms
Strong and calm, they control situations
They watch cartoons to forget innocence lost too soon or did they ever have it?

Little too grown girls place hands on hips
And say what they are and aren’t going to do
A slap from Mom is taken with a scowl, a hidden roll of eyes
They dream of numbers one and eight,
And count down years ’til it’s time to leave,
To make their own way in the world
Definitely they’ve learned what not to do by watching Mom.

Small woman that I am
I want to big, larger than life.
Bigger than dreams that don’t come true and little girls that cry

Small woman that I am I want to be powerful,
Hold the essence of life in my hand, to be crushed at my will
I want to be strong and feared,
So unlike the crying girl, so scared of herself and no one else,
Because they don’t really matter.

Nothing does it seems
Except the creeping thoughts of inadequacy
Small woman that I am I look out and see the world as an oyster or a clam.
I stand up shaky on my feet like a baby girl just learning to walk
Unsure so insecure,
Maybe I’ll just have a seat.

Magenta stained slacks reveal war gone by, tears shed, contrite poems traced on floorboards in purple/red liquid. Told stories of never ending sorrow, loneliness and abandonment. Salt-water blue tears betray hard edge eyes creases in the corners of mouths from womanhood, smirks on the regular remind grown minds of childish rebellion. Smitten lips love tastes and licks of red. Clear pools of dreams succumb to fingers splashing through, tunneling weaving creating life, change—flow, time. I imagine myself floating encased in a bubble of blood, juicy red—coppery smell in my nostrils. Trapped in blood drawn from my veins tested for life in my womb. Eyes closed, enclosed in warm darkness, bitter—even sour taste in the air. I remember why I came here today. I know so well what happened weeks ago, but knowledge and understanding seem two ends of a continuum. Dialectically flowing back and forth absorbing into one another, separating back out. It’s all an illusion. I fight for control of mine self—oh it’s ever elusive.

by Adrienne Wells

Black Kaye 06
Black Kaye 07
Name: Eric RaShad Norris
Year: Sophomore c/o 2009
Major: Communication
Hometown: Columbus, OH

Inspiration:
I draw my inspiration from life. I have seen a lot of things in my 21 years that have made me the man I am today. I just feel that what's the point of experiencing them if you can't tell anybody about them and I feel the best way to do that is through poetry. Also, I am inspired by my family, but most importantly by my mother. She is my everything and without her I would be lost. I owe all I am to her and God and I am thankful for that. My inspiration is simple for I live it everyday.

Name: Erik Shawn Farley
Year: Senior
Major: History and Education
Hometown: Warrensville Heights, Ohio
Inspiration:
Throughout my four years here at Denison, I have been in a quest for clarity and understanding of my identity and responsibilities as an African-American male. I truly believe that these poems, as amateur as they are, accurately articulate that particular quest, biblically and eternally. It is my hope that these simple words serve as a reminder to the Black Student Union and the Denison community of our illustrious heritage and potential.

Santiago Camilo Espinosa
Year: 2009 - Sophomore
Major: history - Education
Hometown: Chicago a.k.a. Chi-Town a.k.a. Windy city a.k.a. city of broad shoulders

Inspiration:
What inspired me to write? The experiences that I have gone through have fueled my writings, and my writings have been like a release of the emotions that I have encountered during those experiences.
LaTonya Edgerton  
Columbus, Ohio  
Class of 2005  
Inspirations:  
The poetry that I write is inspired by the events that have occurred in my life. The particular poems that I submitted deal with the good and the bad sides of love. I wrote these poems at very different times of my life and I chose to submit them as a reflection of how deep love can be. Through all the ups and downs I do believe it is better to love and lose, than to never love at all.

Name: Tina Marie Andrews  
Year: 2005  
Hometown: Chicago, Illinois  
Favorite Quote:  
“Life is the greatest teacher. For it always gives the lesson after the test!” This quote is a direct reflection of my writing style. Experience is my motivation and focal point for genuine literature. Often times my poems are geared toward many of the issues that have been presented to me as well as my people for generations. Womanhood, motherhood, Black men, God, African American Culture, and my background environment have proven to be spring boards for writing that flows from my inner most being.

Stefanie R. Woods  
Class of 2004  
Biology and Pre-medicine  
Inspirations:  
Dear Lord, You have brought me through three years of being at Denison. I want to pause and say thank You for being so good to me, and blessing me. For three years I have fought this battle to get to this high calling you have for me, and I want to tell You thank You. All the times people mistreated me, all the times I struggled, all the moments when I cried and felt so alone, You always replaced them with brighter days and wonderful people, and I pause to say thank You. When I think of your goodness and all You have done for me, my soul shivers and cries out Hallelujah! Lord, I thank You! A special thank you to my family, my mentors, my brothers and sisters from Shiloh Baptist Church, my dear friends, and to anyone who believes in me. Thank you!!!! :)

Jerrrell Kevin Beckham is a Denison graduate from the class of 84. He is currently pursuing his PhD in Education from the University of Illinois. He is also a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Rho Upsilon Chapter.

Julie Gravenmeyer  
Class of 2007  
French Major  
From Columbus, Ohio  
Favorite Quote:  
“Two sleeves touch / because they were going to / since the world began” -W.S. Merwin

Name: Erin DeLaine For  
Class: 2004  
Hometown: Bowling Green, Ohio  
Major: Religion and English  
Favorite Quote:  
“To be nobody - but - myself in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make me everybody else means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight, and never stop fighting”  
- E.E. Cummings

Adrienne Wells  
Class: 2004  
Hometown: Columbus, Ohio  
Major: Women's Studies & Studio Art  
Note: All art submissions were done by Adrienne Wells.

Black Rage Committee  
Sheranita Hemphill — Biography Section Editor  
LaTonya Edgerton — Struggle Section Editor  
Erin Smith — Love Section Editor  
Jessica Johnson — Editor  
Neille Warford  
Vanidty Bailey