Valentine's Day: Spirit and History

By Brittany Cozad

St. Valentine's Day either makes people complain or rejoice at the opportunity to spend time with their significant other. Although this day has been labeled the infamous "Hallmark Holiday," Valentine's Day hasn't always been a day full of flowers and candy. Instead, this tradition has been linked to several legends dating back to Ancient Rome.

According to an online Web site, the true identity of Saint Valentine remains a mystery. Some believe he was a third century Roman priest who continued to perform marriage ceremonies after the Emperor Claudius banned young men from matrimony. The Emperor believed these men should serve as soldiers before becoming husbands.

Another story surrounding the Saint contends that Valentine was the author of the first ever Valentine card, which he sent in prison. Prior to his execution for his crimes against Emperor Claudius, the legend states that Valentine began a secret affair with his jailor's daughter and sent a letter to her signed "From your Valentine."

Although many believe this holiday could be a remembrance for Valentine's death, this day has also been rumored to worship Faunus, the Roman God of agriculture, and Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome.

Every year on Feb. 15 in ancient Rome, Roman priests would meet at the cave where Romulus and Remus may have lived. The priests would sacrifice a goat and the men would cut the hides off the animal, dip them in sacrificial blood, and slightly hit the women with the skin to make them more fertile. Following this unique ritual, the men would pick a woman's name out of an urn, and the two would begin a courtship and eventually marry.

While the history of Valentine's Day is surrounded by religions, traditions and love affairs, feelings on the holiday seem mixed. Although we begin celebrating this holiday by exchanging little cards and feasting on sweets with our classmates during our elementary school years, maturing into adulthood causes people to alter their perception on the February holiday. Is Valentine's Day simply an obligation to spend money on a loved one? Or, should we remember the past when it was okay to just say, "I love you?"

Some Daemen students believe that a relationship shouldn't be celebrated only one day out of the year. If you love someone, everyday should be Valentine's Day," said Amber McKenzie, a senior secondary education major. "You don't need a special day to celebrate love."

(Continued on Page 3)

Health Officials Show Smokers' Warmth

By Amy Dehn

For all those Daemen-ites who know what it's like to withstand bitter cold temperatures just to have a smoke, there may be a warm front coming your way.

After only six months, the New York statewide smoking ban is loosening its restrictions by allowing businesses to apply for exemptions. Last week, criteria for obtaining these exemptions was released in Erie County based on rules previously established by the New York State Health Department and almost every other county in Western New York already granting waivers.

The waiver application will require local bars and restaurants to provide documentation that the smoking ban has caused at least a 15 percent decline in sales. All other counties in Western New York require businesses to prove a 25 percent loss in sales to obtain waivers, with the exceptions of Niagara County, which requires proof of only a 10 percent decline, and Allegheny County, which is not allowing waivers.

Already 150 businesses in Erie County have shown interest in applying for waivers, indicating that the smoking ban has in fact significantly impacted sales. Waivers will also be granted to businesses that can show a major investment was made to accommodate smokers for restrictions before the state ban was put in place.

Establishments granted waivers will be required to set up separate ventilated smoking rooms equipped with automatically closing doors. Employees will not have to enter these "smoking rooms," leaving customers to bring in their own food and beverages purchased elsewhere in the establishment.

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(Continued on Page 5)

A Tribute to Black History Month

By Sheimsa Ali

February is a very special month of the year. It's a time to reflect back on history. It's a time to recognize the extraordinary contributions made by African Americans that hadn't have been decades ago. Black history is also American history. Everyone is a part of Black history in some way. For example, by honoring those who fought for the struggle of equality also contributed to culture and technology.

Black history dates back to the hot sun and beautiful grasslands of Africa before slavery began. Africa, as evidence proves, was the origin of the first being on earth before the nature of evolution. There lived noble kings and beautiful queens who made Africa a flourishing land of art, music, and (Continued on page 7)
Promises to Keep

By S.D. Wright

It is summer at the starlit hour. The shade of this night is somehow more gray than black - as the vast concrete urbania, for all its shadows and inconsistencies, sprawls everywhere. And yet the oily creature sky hangs naked and close, this to all eyes the black belly of the panther, whose legs are hidden underneath, the horizon, its inky fur speckled with stars.

Alone, a fast-food restaurant sits on the edge of a parking lot, splashing arrogant and indecent amber light. My passenger and I are hungry as hell, and we pull in. The dazzling drive-thru menu spills into sight, offering much in the way of color and cholesterol. This night in particular the 'burger lust' in us is strong. Another car blocks our way, though, and we sit waiting for their order to be taken.

But wait. Fate, according to its nature, has prepared for us a scene, a study, a cause to be defended and a moment to be contemplated. The car ahead of ours carries some militantly indecisive customers. And a vicious exchange - as only fast food can elicit - suddenly escalates. The two young men switch their orders enough to annoy the restaurant employee. His voice betrays his frustration. Their gluttony deferred, the customers respond angrily. Another fast-food place is just down the way, and there the food might be a little quicker. Cursing at this employee, they drive off.

Amidst this, I observed something I thought incredible - in the shaky, indirect thought of summer nights, somehow hopeful-inspiring. The employee's voice is effeminate sounding - distinctly so - and yet my friend and I hear not one gay slur from the belligerent customers. Obscenities are thrown in mouthfuls, yes, but the employee may not be gay, but he is gay-sounding, and somehow one cultural boundary had been respected, in the heat of bitter argument. And then it occurred to me that modern America is reflected in this scene, and how far our society has come in what is termed the gay rights movement.

Oh, discrimination does exist, and will always, I imagine. But the world in which every human being should hope to live - where man doesn't pass judgment on man as concerns his personal rights - is so near one can feel it.

Our country has changed and is changing: from entertainment to law to government. Bravo broadcasts a television show entitled "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy," where five gay men, one wittier than the other, reinvent a straight man so as to improve his personal appearance and inner living space. On the same network contrasting views of homosexual men - one, more straight acting and the other less so - are depicted on "Will and Grace." A new show is scheduled on a different network, featuring lesbians. Gays represent their districts in Congress, with the most outspoken member being Barney Frank, a representative from Massachusetts. Over the summer, "Lawrence v. Texas" became a great milestone, striking down anachronistic sodomy laws. Fifty years ago straight America would have run into the streets screaming if they witnessed this cultural revolution; now they accept or ignore it, typically. Such is the nature of progress.

It is fundamentally un-American, after all, to violate a man or a woman's right to be what he or she longs to be - unless, of course, such behavior inflicts pain on others. In this great country, founded on belief in the individual, man (or woman) dare not question another's right to pursue happiness. The gay rights issue, therefore, is a test of our patriotic mettle; and the farther we proceed, the better. The same rights granted to heterosexual couples should be given to those of the same sex, marriage or otherwise. All evidence - the vitriol of Christian crazies laid aside - seems to indicate we are moving in that direction.

Steadiest and completely, the societal boundaries excluding gays and lesbians are being crushed and removed. The hunger for change will not be instantly gratified, as burger-lust is satiated in a fast-food setting on a summer night. We have, in the language of Frost, miles to go before we sleep. Indeed, future men will see these times as part of a splendid progression: reaching, in the end, complete social, political, and cultural equality for men and women of same-sex orientation. A new morning, after all, comes in degrees, and despite any momentary despair, we cannot but recognize daily the night sky always is with child. And so it is with the progressive social/sexual agenda in the great country that is the United States.

---

Phil McAndrew 'toon

I HATE ECONOMY!
MONEY IS THE CAUSE OF ALL OUR PROBLEMS!

I DON'T WANT TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH AN "ECONOMY" BLAH!

I FOUND SILVER MONEY!

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The Ascent

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The Ascent
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Who gave this idol a gun?" or The semblable consequences of an apathetic electorate

Josh Gallagher- Columnist

No one should be forced to be apart from those they love to celebrate love, counters disillusionment with poetry, "she said.

Marck holds a different view. "In a world too often inclined to be cynical, the slogan engenders the same kind of mindlessness and apathy that allowed his reign in the first place. Learn the truth of the human to whom you are granting such mighty power."

"Anybody but Bush campaign". As great as it sounds, the human to whom you are granting such mighty power."

"As a student body decide that you are tired of your ignorance, of course, it's too late, our generation is now responsible for death and violence in our names, nothing will change that, not electing a new leader, not contributing to aid agencies, not writing scathing editorials, the time is past. Our parents before us dodged the draft, wrote songs of love and peace, and dropped out of the military-industrial corporate society, we merely twiddled our thumbs, watched NASCAR and gladly filled our brains with mass line. At least I'll be able to kill whatever miserable spawn i have, that I spoke out. Can you say that!"

Unlike most doomsayers I propose some possible solutions.

A recent trend in Anti-War, Anti-Bush campaigns is the "Anodyne but Bush campaign". As great as it sounds, the slogan engenders the same kind of mindlessness and apathy that allowed his reign in the first place. Learn the truth of the human to whom you are granting such mighty power.

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Michael Gerster, an elementary education major agrees. "It's completely overrated," he said. "You shouldn't use Valentine's Day as a one-time deal to do something nice. It should be done all the time."

However, English Professor and Honors Program Director, Dr. Nancy Mears holds a different view. "In a world too often inclined to be cynical, Valentine's Day gives us a chance to celebrate love, counter disillusionment with poetry," she said.

During these times when many are forced to be apart from those they cherish, perhaps we should remember to embrace all types of love on this day and every other in the year.
The Life of a Journalist: Paul Chimera

By Shemisa Ali

Who said journalism was a stressful job? Paul Chimera, a savvy businessman, doesn't quite think it is. It can be but doesn't have to be. As a matter of fact, he loves what he does as a writer, a self-employed, independent journalist. For those who aren't exactly sure what journalism is, let me give you some examples. Journalists are employed and an independent journalist who works on his own terms; has stability, security, and a steady salary exclusively working and writing for one employer. Nevertheless, Chimera chose to become self-employed and an independent journalist who works on his own terms.

When I asked him about the pressures of being a self-employed journalist, he drew in a deep breath before he finally spoke. "It's a lot of responsibility," he replied. Chimera explained financially it can be difficult and sometimes a strain because he plays so many roles all in one. He is the marketer, the promoter, and the accountant. Meeting deadlines, approaching strangers, making sure the article is accurate can also be a bit stressful, he adds, without failing to remind me that as a journalist your work is under constant scrutiny. "I like being my own boss," he says proudly. Chimera perhaps could make more money working for someone else, but prefers to be an independent writer where he is in control of his salary. "We never close," he replies with a soft laugh, obviously referring to the dependency and responsibility that comes along with being self-employed. However, Chimera makes it clear he loves what he does, and is content with where he is in his life.

"How would you describe your life right now?" I asked curiously. Without hesitation, but with much simplicity he replied he is happy. He mentioned he has a happy home life. He and his wife Anne have two daughters, Catherine, 24, and Kristy, 20. Furthermore, Chimera is comfortable with his success so far.

I then asked him if he has other aspirations. He pondered a short while, and, said, "Not really." So far, he has many accomplishments in his life as a local success. Besides being an independent journalist, Chimera is a part-time college instructor at Daemen College where he teaches several courses: Media Writing, Writing for the Media, Introduction to Public Relations, and Journalism. He has taught courses at Buffalo State College, Erie Community College, and Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations in the Buffalo region. He is a writer for Business First, Buffalo Spree Magazine, the Buffalo News, and Daemen Today: College Alumni Magazine.

Several articles that Chimera has written, which are all great in writing and precise in accuracy I must add, include: "Winning the Detectives;" "Modern Technology Keeps Travelers (virtually) Tethered to the Office;" "Many Don't Understand the Role of a Newspaper;" "Getting Out of Town, but Not Out of Touch;" and "Big Ghost on Campus?" Those are just to name a few. He is also the author of the booklet, WINNING WITH THE NEWS MEDIA: SIMPLE STEPS TO BETTER PRESS RELATIONS. Moreover, Chimera has completed 43,000 words of a manuscript for a proposed book based on freelance writing and self-employment.

At the end of the interview I asked if he had any advice he would like to give to aspiring journalists. Another deep inhale and finally an exhale, he explained that journalists must understand how critical news gathering is, especially when you're dealing with people's lives. "Hone your writing skills," he advised. "Practice and read." He also recommends writers watch plenty of television and listen to the radio to become aware of what's going on around them. So as you've read, journalism doesn't have to be stressful. Furthermore, success in a particular field comes with how much you enjoy and value what you do, and Paul Chimera is living proof. How would he describe his business right now? With a slight smile, he replied, "It's working well."

Substance Abuse and Vocational Services

The Erie County Department of Mental Health designated Lake Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. as the home of the Erie County Vocational Resource Center. The Resource Center provides current information related to vocational rehabilitation for individuals with chemical dependency disorders, their family members and treatment providers. A website called RecoveryWorks has been established as part of the Center.

The goal of RecoveryWorks is to increase the emphasis on work as a component of rehabilitation and to improve the availability of services and supports. The website provides opportunities to share information on best practices. It advocates for greater integration of vocational and treatment services for individuals with substance abuse disorders, recognizing that this type of service delivery has positive impact on an individual's recovery and ability to retain employment. The RecoveryWorks website offers a centralized resource. It provides links to the latest research, best practices, training opportunities, community providers, and contact information. Visitors can link to information on resume preparation, interviewing techniques, job search, and retention strategies. They also can access personal stories of people who have successfully integrated employment into their recovery process.

The RecoveryWorks website has been established in conjunction with the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and the Erie County Department of Mental Health.

The Ascent is now accepting advertising and personal ads.

For Pricing Information:
Contact Josh Gallagher at jgallagh@daemen.edu
(att: Ascent)

Seantoon

Oh boy my first day as a forest ranger. I hope this is the best job ever.\n
Seantoon

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Seantoon

Seantoon

Seantoon

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Seantoon

Seantoon
Prof. Cuddy Responds to Critic

I read with interest and amusement Richard Laub's letter in the Ascent expressing "alarm" that Darmen students are exposed to a teacher with views different from my own. If only he could see the drowsy faces in my history classes when he would argue a point he strongly believed in. He really comes across as a bit of a fanatic.

Mr. Laub's broadside following the Israeli-Palestinian debate in November, I submit, was loaded with facts, selective in history, and supportive of the pro-Israel hard line that has repeatedly foisted the peace process in blood-soaked Palestinian lands.

Laub falsely links Palestinian terrorist organizations, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, with Yasser Arafat and his Fatah party, citing their common goal "to eradicate Israel." In fact, Arafat, despite his flawed leadership, long ago abandoned that goal and has actually provoked hostility from terrorists because of his commitment to the peace process. Admittedly, he has made accommodations with Palestinian militants under pressure from Israel's continued expansion into Palestinian lands.

In the 1971 Oslo Accords, Arafat recognized Israel's right to exist, conceding 78 percent of the original Palestinian lands for the Jewish state while willing to settle for the remaining 22 percent - the West Bank and Gaza - for a Palestinian state. Unfortunately, the continuing expansion of Israeli settlements in that remaining sliver of land - in violation of International law and several UN Resolutions - is only the latest in the series of broken promises from Israel's top anti-terrorism agency, Shin Bet, denounced the "disgraceful behavior" which had devastated Palestinian lives. Under Sharon's policies, they warned, "we will continue to live by the sword... and we will continue to destroy ourselves.

But hope springs eternal. Some political figures, Israeli and Palestinian, recently joined hands to forge a new peace plan supporting a genuine two-state solution while addressing issues heretofore neglected. Their efforts, Sharon glossed, were "shameful" and "pathetic.

Sharon's former President Jimmy Carter called it the "most promising foundation for peace" we are likely to see. Arafat, dubbed it a "courageous initiative" opening "the door to peace."

"People have begun to break free" from the paralysis of fear and hatred that has gripped them for years, observed Israeli novelist David Grossman. "How long will it be before the majority graps this fact, and how many more lives will be lost before that?"

His question should be put to American politicians - with their unconditional support for Israel - as well as Palestinian militants and Israeli officials.

Smoker's Warmth

(Continued from page 1)

half have actually paid the $250 fine, according to county health officials.

The exemptions are receiving mixed emotions from residents. Some feel the ban is comparable to a license to kill. One Derby resident called it an "erosion of freedom" in an editorial written to the BUFFALO NEWS. Smokers see the ban as discriminatory and infringing, and a punishment to loyal and contributing citizens.

Other Western New Yorkers would rather the health protection remain without a compromise. Non-smokers believe the economic worries of local businesses should not be weighed as more important than a citizen's right to breathe clean air in public. In another editorial written to the BUFFALO NEWS, a Williamsville doctor referred to a study done in Helena, Montana that found that a revoked smoking ban led to a significant increase in the rate of heart attacks in the area.

Local businesses, homeowners and bars and clubs to bingo halls and bowling alleys - feel the exemptions are necessary in regaining and maintaining solid business. Sales figures have reported over 30 percent declines in sales because of the anti-smoking law. Despite health concerns, many believe this may save small businesses from going under.

(Continued on page 6)
Hello? Hey Zia it's me Twinkie, we still on for the mall? I don't know my Mom has us all on lock-down because of the tornado that came through last night. She had. What dream, what are you talking about? I don't know, she's been going on about some dream she had that the tornado didn't want any of us to leave the house tonight. Dazia, you're making this up, your mom is not supposed to be like that. But I have three sisters. Paris, and your sister towards my personal beliefs, but a more balanced view of the future of our nation. Our generation has a handicap, we are severely spooked. Okaaay, no big deal I got homework to do. I have fun, don't even try to back out on me! Zia. Whatever, later Zia. Bye Twink.

Who gave this Idiot a Gun? (Continued from page 3)

Of course, my suggested topics are biased towards my personal beliefs, but a more balanced view of the future of our nation. Our generation has a handicap, we are severely spooked. Okaaay, no big deal I got homework to do. I have fun, don't even try to back out on me! Zia. Whatever, later Zia. Bye Twink.

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Who gave this Idiot a Gun? (Continued from page 3)

Page 6

Wallace Camp

(Continued from a previous Issue, this is on-going story)

By Coco Lephey

Bruce Campbell (Continued from page 5)

out for roles, only to be rejected because he isn't considered to be "bankable." He's been up for such roles as the title characters in Sam Raimi's Ash vs. Evil Dead and the upcoming Army of Darkness. He wrote the story for Josh Becker's Thou Shall Not Kill...Except. He served as producer for Michael Kallos' Hatred of a Minute. He directed episodes for the TV series of Hercules and Xena.

"I like to go back and forth," Campbell says. "A creative 'job rotation' if you will.

Campbell's voice has a sense of sarcasm equal to that of Bill Murray. His voice work talents range from video game fare like Evil Dead: Fistful of Boomstick, Pitfall 3-D: Beyond the Jungle, and Broken Helix. However, his most appealing role is that of Bruce Campbell in his own video game adaptation of the Spider-Man movie.

Campbell's autobiography, If Chins Could Kill: Bruce Campbell's Unofficial Guide to the History of Film, is fairly brawny. It was mounted a cult reception. It exposed the inner fakeness that is under the glitz of Hollywood. Bruce Campbell wouldn't have any film rights attached to it. His next novel is Make Love the Bruce Campbell Way. No, it's not Campbell's answer to the Kama Sutra. When compared to other books, written by Ph.D.'ed authors, of its advice-giving nature, it is fairly brawny. Brawny is a cute little brother to one fine looking man and he is fairly brawny. Bruce Campbell gives advice that all could live by: "Stay Groovy."

(Shawn) The new songs are incredible and the one can relate to. The one is about the perfect three-part harmony that has become part of their signature sound. A sound that is so beautiful that on songs like Misery it gives you chills. Another song I really enjoy is When You're Gone. Its lyrics are very sad and depressed and yet hopeful at the end. Plus, Taylor's voice takes on a very angry tone and I think it sounds so awesome. I dare anyone to listen to Underneath Acoustic and not like at least one song from it. Underneath Acoustic is a musical force to be reckoned with.

Not only do the boys have a new album, they also have started their own record label called 3G0 (Three Car Garage), die-hard Hanson fans know where the name comes from. They say the label "gives us freedom...to make records". They also take the credit for discovering Michelle Branch and they have been promoting bands like Maroon 5, Rooney and Phantom Planet. The boys early influences are 5os and 60s Rock 'N' Roll and Soul. Hanson is a band who knows music; Taylor claims "we're also music historians and music is what they were born to do. They love the Beatles, Chuck Berry, Travis, Radiohead and they can hear all these different elements in their music. Take a chance on Hanson, they might surprise you.

So now you know about the music, all you need to know is where to get it, it's available only at Hanson's official web site www.hanson.net.
Calendar Boys of Daemen
By Michelle Murphy

The New Year has begun and with the beginning of every new year comes a new calendar. This year, be sure to look for the "Guys of Daemen College" calendar. Yes girls, there are boys here at Daemen, and these 12 in particular are even cuter!

The Psychology Club has been working hard on making a "Guys of Daemen" calendar possible. The idea for the calendar came about at the Academic Festival last spring 2003. Psychology students were chatting with their professors about the attractive guys here at Daemen. A joke was made that there should be a "Guys of Daemen" calendar.

Well, the joke became a reality.

The Psychology Club thought the calendar would be a great way to get the entire campus involved; an exciting, fun and exciting way of raising money. "We thought it would be a great way for students to get to know people they normally would not," said Laura Pasker, a senior psychology student.

The calendar did not become a reality without a lot of dedication. Even those who may not have taken part in the process of the calendar realize the degree of dedication it took for the final outcome.

Lauren Metzer, a third year psychology student said, "It took a lot of work, that's for sure. The people who were persistent, and stood behind the cause deserve a lot of credit.

The Daemen College community also participated in the beginning phases of the calendar. They were able to vote on the guys they thought belonged in the calendar. Students were asked to vote for professors as well as their fellow classmates. When it came time to decide who would be in the calendar, the Psychology Club wanted to make sure the representation was fair.

The six guys with the most nominations were automatically included. The other six guys were decided on the reason people nominated them. The club wanted to make sure the guys were represented for qualities besides their good looks.

"I'm very impressed," said Caleb Richter, a senior physician assistant student. "The calendar was done in a classy way to represent each of us."

The final product of the calendar will include a picture of each of the guys, their bio, hobbies and anything else they wanted to add. There will also be a complete list of the guys who were nominated by those who participated.

Bethany Sick wasn't worried about her boyfriend, James Feltitta, being in the calendar for girls to see. "As far as having my boyfriend in the Calendar, I will admit that I am very proud," she said. "He definitely deserved it. It doesn't bother me that other females think he's attractive, it's actually a compliment, because his choice is to be with me, and I know he's all mine!"

Feelings from the guys in the calendar were those of honor and pride.

Six of the students Mike Patane and Richter were honored and excited to be included in the calendar. They are both anxious waiting for girls to see it. Both guys agree that their family and friends are excited to see the calendar as well.

So when will the calendars be available?

They will be on sale in the Wick Center during lunch and dinner hours, hopefully very soon. The price is still not decided. However, half of the profits will go to an organization related to mental health.

Enthusiasm is spreading around the campus for the calendar's release. Other students, like PJ Tudosco, junior psychology student and Dave Kirby, junior physician assistant student, are wondering what will come after the "Guys of Daemen" calendar.

"When will there be a 'Girls of Daemen' calendar around?" they said.

Audience Members Embrace the Music of Any December
By Antonette DelBel

Seventy screaming fans, many of them Daemen students, came out on Saturday, Jan. 24, and showed their support for Any December during a live performance at the Tudor Lounge, located on Franklin St.

The acoustic-rock quartet - composed of AJ DiCembre (singing/acoustic guitar), Travis Groszka (drums), Matt Sousa (bass/vocals) and Alex Heinrich (electronics) - put on a spectacle in the intimate, cozy, bar setting.

DiCembre's dulcet voice made it easy for die-hard fans to keep their heads in accordance to the music and sing along to the band's original lyrics. Through his lyrics, DiCembre tries to "capture the feeling of when the song was written."


DiCembre, an international business student, writes most of his lyrics spontaneously. When he gets an idea for a melody, he has to write it down, even it means waking up from his sleep.

"Sometimes I just can't sleep until I get it down on paper," he said.

"It's like a blessing and a curse at the same time."

With a book filled with at least 200 pages full of original lyrics, DiCembre says he scrapes at least 95 percent of them.

Black History (Continued from page 1)

much more. Egypt was once noted as the professor of the world where many famous leaders, taught by Egyptian scholars, learned of literature, art, apprenticeship, and arithmetic. The outside world admired the valuable and scarce resources of prosperity Africa offered. However, it wasn't too long before the Europeans at that time calculated the value of these goods, enchanted by gains of profit thus creating the human slave trade.

During the Middle Passage (the slave trade route from Africa to the islands then to North America) in the 1700's, thousands of Africans were kidnapped from their families and stripped naked of their dignity and their pride. When they were brought to America the Africans were enslaved for hundreds of years. They received no respect and treated harshly because of the color of their skin.

Hundreds of years later after slavery began, founder Harriet Tubman and others followed the Underground Railroad to finally find the road to freedom. Frederick Douglass, an abolitionist worked with many others both black and white in discovering ways to justifiably end the harsh realities of slavery.

Years later, about the early 1900's, time moves into the era of the Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance was such a significant time in Black history, because it is the era where black culture and life was expressed through poems, literature, and song. Music became such a strong part of black culture. Rhythm and song was a scapegoat in helping blacks free their minds and spirits of the hatred that surrounded them while showing the world a glimpse of their many talents.

Writers such as Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston wrote a lot about black life in those days, while singers like Billie Holiday and Holiday Armstrong passionately sang jazz, the blues, rock n' roll - songs of the life they lived and saw.

Entertainers such as Dorothy Dandridge and Lena Horne were one of the first and few black actresses that succeeded in Hollywood despite the racism. The world of hip-hop and soul is the new culture of our youth, just like the jazz and the blues in the 50's, that both musically express deep emotion, life, and love. Many inventions that were created paved the way for technological advances of many of the tools we need and use today that comfortably gets us through everyday life. Let's embrace our history, Black history and American history.
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