

be, when double-digit unemployment in certain sectors of Rochester has remained constant for each of the last four years that he has been in office, and when illegal drugs and weapons (the latter of which youth at younger and younger ages are using to annihilate each other, often on a daily basis) flow through Rochester like the water from High Falls? Also, while it doesn't take a genius to understand that "graduation rates correlate directly to crime in the city"—or anywhere else for that matter—thinking people are aware of the fact that deep-seated, rampant, violent, crime cannot be solely explained by or ascribed totally to low graduation rates.

There are much larger and deeper factors at play, which also represent underlying reasons for the low graduation rate. Even if this was not the case, the idea that Duffy "envision[s] a school district with more after-school programs and schools that are open on weekends for community use" is far from a solution regarding low graduation and high crime rates. In fact, it would be interesting to see what types of enticements or incentives would be utilized to get huge numbers of students, who routinely do not attend school during the regular school day, to attend *after-school* programs; and if they do, it would be even more interesting and enlightening to see how after-school programs would be structured differently than the regular school day—to the extent that it would result in significant, sustainable, academic, socioeconomic, and cultural improvement for sizeable numbers of students—particularly those who are classified as hard-core.

Don't get me wrong; I believe that expanded access to public school facilities is a step in the right direction, but to view it or present it as a panacea is terribly misguided, and a surefire prescription for continued, entrenched, massive failure.

Additionally, if the mayor "wants to work with businesses to get more jobs for teenagers," what is he waiting for? Many of us have heard this song and dance for so long that we thought such efforts were well under way long ago. Keep in mind that we haven't even asked the most critical question yet: Where will Duffy's educational expertise come from? Managing a budget is one thing (although admittedly a very important task), but budgetary management alone does not automatically translate into quality and/or improved educational outcomes.

Lastly, whether in New York City, Rochester, or any other city, the idea of mayoral control of city schools is as undemocratic as it can possibly be, and would clearly move us in a direction of fascism (as opposed to so-called democracy). Who is Robert Duffy—or any Albany lawmaker for that matter—to dictate to the people of Rochester that he (Duffy) and/or the bumbling-fumbling, largely dysfunctional State Legislature are qualified to choose the people's representatives at any level of government? If people in the suburbs and rural areas have a right to choose their representatives on Boards of Education—and they do—then there is no logical, acceptable explanation as to why tax-paying, Constitution-protected city residents shouldn't enjoy the same rights and privileges—period.

In the final analysis, with regard to the idea of mayoral control of the Rochester City School District, it is my hope that "Duffy [does get] a chance to have his ideas debated"—so that we can put his and the all-wise, all-knowing *D&C* educational czars' foolishness to rest (once and for all)!



## A Feminist Critique: Part I, A Historical Perspective

—NANCY CUMINALE

Since race is and always has been a dividing factor in almost all aspects of U.S. society and culture (institutionally and individually), it is not surprising that black and white women (generally) have not forged authentic relationships around issues of sexism. Students in U.S. history classes who examine the Women's Rights Movement of the 1800's, usually study only, or at best, the activities of white women during that time period (unless they have exceptional teachers who have studied and have the ability to present the history fully and accurately). A thorough study of feminist activities during the 1800's clearly demonstrates the many ways in which even those black women who did attempt to work within the white Women's Rights Movement, were not welcomed (for a fairly complete history of this reality see bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism*).

There is a tendency in present day Euro-American culture to dismiss/disregard and downright attempt to erase the brutal history of slavery in the United States. It is not surprising, then, that most white women in contemporary feminist circles don't attempt to understand or include the present day struggles of black women—as they relate to a history rooted in chattel slavery and the unique position/responsibility that black women were burdened with in attempting to create lives for themselves, their families, and communities—and did so literally from nothing—especially not the patriarchal support that white women had from their men. That many black women continue to bear this responsibility present-day is no coincidence; is not due to some natural flaw on the part of black men. It is due rather to the fact that almost 200 years after the ending of institutional slavery, black men continue to be the most oppressed individuals in U.S. society, in terms of opportunities for socioeconomic advancement. Hence, as it was in the 1800's, white women and

black women continue to experience drastically different struggles in terms of womanhood.

Other than the issue of suffrage, the goals of the early Women's Rights Movement had little to do with addressing the oppression and needs of black women in the U.S. or even those of poor white women. The Movement was started by and focused on the needs and desires of middle and upper-middle class white women—those who felt stifled and bored by the paternal, coddling, and protective hold their financially secure husbands and other male family members had on them. They wanted to work outside of the home for pay, to pursue educational opportunities, to vote. Other than the miniscule number of lower-middle class black women (those whose histories were not rooted in slavery), the needs of the overwhelming majority of black women at the time were drastically different. Some, freshly out of bondage, found themselves alone (having been separated from husbands and children, or never allowed to marry in the first place). Others, who did have husbands and children, were also in survival mode. After a lifetime of enslavement (or being the child of an enslaved parent or parents—some being fathered by enslaved black women and white enslavers), the goal was *basic survival*.

Often survival meant sharecropping on the same farms and plantations where women had been enslaved, or working in the homes of white people—doing laundry, cooking, housecleaning and child care—for wages that barely allowed a woman to feed herself or her family. And while the husbands of white women were providing for their wives who were organizing within the Women's Rights Movement, the husbands of black women were destitute (sharecropping being one of very few means of survival—freedom from enslavement did not create employment opportunities), often depending on the income that their wives might be able to bring home. White women had the luxury to organize as they did—to

relation to the patriarchal oppression they questioned and attempted to resist. It was the financial security of their husbands and/or other family members that allowed them to do so.

Black women experienced the most utterly dehumanizing treatment imaginable during slavery, which included rape by enslavers and being bought and sold as 'breeders'—i.e., producers of children slated for slavery (in the same manner as today people breed dogs and cats and sell them for profit). Children born to enslaved women would be either used as free labor, or sold at the auction block. When children became old enough and strong enough for labor, they were often taken from their mothers and sold. Or, a mother had to endure the unthinkable pain of helplessly watching her child worked to death, beaten, raped, etc. Often, as black women were forced to endure the pain of losing or watching a child being abused, they were simultaneously forced to care for (and in some cases literally raise) the young offspring of the enslaver and his wife. A woman, with breasts full of milk for her own child, was often forced to feed suckling white children at the expense or in the absence of her own.

Black women shared with their husbands/mates, fathers, brothers, uncles, male cousins, and friends, the horrific nightmare of attempted survival as 'free' people in the United States of America. The white male patriarchy that white women found oppressive, was the same white male patriarchy that had perpetuated the brutalization of black people during slavery; the same patriarchy that defined and controlled the socioeconomic struggle of black people after slavery ended. Black women understood that while they had collectively survived enslavement, they (women) were the ones in the strongest position to ensure survival of their families and communities—this due to the fact that black men, even as reduced to the status of chattel/labor-

ers/breeders by the enslaver, were who white men feared (and therefore loathed) the most; and who continued to be the most brutalized and oppressed after slavery ended.

That so many black women survived the atrocities committed against them during enslavement is in and of itself astounding and extraordinary. That after emancipation so many women were able to carry on and become the literal backbone of many families and communities—always in the face of hunger, lack of shelter and healthcare, and a generally insecure, life-threatening existence—is nothing short of miraculous. White women of that time period who were active in the Women's Rights Movement were far removed from such horrors—this they demonstrated by their unwillingness to work in solidarity with black women. Ironically, it was the socioeconomics created by the existence of the institution of slavery that allowed white women to be in privileged positions.

White male patriarchy during the 1800's may have felt oppressive to white women, but certainly none of them would have changed places with black women of that time period. Almost 200 years after the ending of institutional slavery, many black women continue to be the backbone of their families and communities. Many are women who have never had the luxury of coming home to a house where a husband provides and protects, or shares the burden of creating financial stability that will ensure a safe and comfortable existence.

It should not be surprising that present-day, many black women don't share mainstream white feminist attitudes about male patriarchy. Often white women (and some middle-class black women) are quick to criticize forms of black male patriarchy—to attempt to equate it with white male patriarchy, point to the physical and emotional abuse that some black women

## Duffy Wants Control of the Rochester City School District: Surprise-Surprise!

-HOWARD J. EAGLE

So, it has finally been stated publicly (in accordance with a 12/21/09 *D&C Editorial*) that Robert Duffy wants mayoral control of the Rochester City School District.

I for one (and I'm sure many others) have some very serious issues and problems regarding the specifics of the above referenced article, in which the "great revelation" was made public. The article, which is filled with half-baked ideas and pure nonsense, can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.democratandchronicle.com/article/20091221/OPINION04/9122103171041/OPINION/Rochester-mayor-should-form-plan-for-overseeing-school-district>

The very first point that people need to understand is that (regardless of how rich he may be, and regardless of what the *D&C* editors may think) the erroneous, and in fact libelous assertion that under Michael Bloomberg there has been widespread, sustainable, fundamental change and improvement in New York City's public schools, is just that: an erroneous and libelous assertion. In fact, as you are reading this, there are thousands of disgruntled and dissatisfied parents, students, educators, and others organizing and literally protesting in the streets of New York City because of Bloomberg's decisions regarding schools, including decisions to close a number of schools.

The *D&C* does a great disservice by presenting simplistic, less than accurate, uninformed, so-called analyses, apparently based on what they have heard from the well-oiled and well-financed Bloomberg propaganda machine, or what they have read in the New York Times and/or other such publications.

The facts are that thousands upon thousands of New York City students are continuing to experience deprivation regarding the lack of adequate and appropriate educational opportunities—just as they

were prior to the so-called Bloomberg takeover. I repeat, for thousands upon thousands of New York City students, no fundamental changes have come under Bloomberg. Therefore, we can safely assume that if Michael Bloomberg's efforts in New York City represent the model upon which Duffy will base his so-called educational reform ideas, then failure is probably imminent.

Furthermore, contrary to popular belief, we don't necessarily need to be studying/borrowing ideas from other broken-down public education systems and models. Overall, there aren't any really outstanding, full-fledged models of successful urban education systems in the entire nation. Common sense alone dictates that if such systems did exist, we (at least educators) would all be aware of them, and would be working night and day to understand their functioning. Even if such models did exist (mainly because of specific differences regarding political, demographic, and other local elements and factors), it is always very, very problematic and difficult to successfully transplant educational ideas and strategies—no matter how good they may be—from one system to another. I believe that the current Superintendent of Rochester Schools, as well as many before him, will attest to this fact. We have known for many years that one ingredient of successful educational reform is authenticity (based on local circumstances, conditions, and proper/efficient utilization of local resources). With regard to the latter point, this represents an area in which the Rochester City School District has failed miserably—that is, not effectively and/or efficiently tapping and utilizing the huge reservoir of human knowledge and expertise that exists locally. Instead, the general preference has been to go looking elsewhere for high-priced, generally ineffective "experts", consultants, and advisors of every hue and stripe.

Secondly, there is in some cases a subtle, and in other cases very pronounced, but also fundamentally flawed, erroneous, and baffling, widespread belief that Robert Duffy is doing a great job of running the city. How could this possibly

**R-IMC:** *What do you see the coalition doing? Why be here and participate?*

**Howard Eagle:** *As you know, the coalition is pretty new; it's still forming. But my thinking is, hopefully we can wage some concrete campaigns around some of the issues that are impacting people's lives in real ways. And wage those campaigns as examples of the fact that we really mean it when we say that we're not going to tolerate police misbehavior, police brutality, and so forth—so that we make examples out of some of those on the police force (I should say "forces" because another thing is the way that the Rochester Police Department, the Monroe County Sheriff, and the New York State Troopers all operate together. Sometimes they look like some kind of military operation in Rochester.). So, to make examples of those that are clearly misbehaving—that are clearly violating the law themselves—and to make it clear that if they are not going to serve our communities, then they are not going to work for us—that we are going to literally run them off the force, as an example.*

**Mary Adams:** *One of the probably most difficult things, but one of the most important things we talk about is to build community and to get to know our neighbors to begin to trust each other, or at least know each other. In the course of doing that you can avoid some of the need for police and you can also start to build trust so that people can start to confront some of these powerful institutions. That's one of the projects that I would like to see move forward: building community and getting to know what peoples' experiences are so eventually we can work together to try to confront some of the worst abuses as a group.*

**Andy Dillon:** *I am somebody that's been involved in Rochester Indymedia for a long time, and one of the things that we've talked about doing is Copwatch. The idea there is that citizens use video technology to simply be witnesses to police activities. Other cities around the country have used Copwatch very effectively to hold the police accountable for their behavior. If [the police] know they're being filmed and they know that citizens are watching them, they tend to act a lot more legally and justly. Another goal is the idea of an innovative style of review board—review boards that are truly autonomous structures, but can hold police accountable and still communicate with those structures. In general, a mechanism of people's empowerment...*

**R-IMC:** *A lot of times when the issue of police accountability comes up, people say police can't have their hands tied—in order to control the crime in the area. How would you respond to that?*

**Mary Adams:** *I think that's one example of how all of the terms of the debate — to the extent that there's a debate — that the whole language of talking about "police" and "violence" and "safety" and "security" has been controlled by people who are interested in the existing models, that are not equitable and that are racist. I think that is one of our big challenges: to make our voices heard. So that "security," for example, could mean being free in your community—not only free from violence but also free from repressive or coercive police tactics, disrespectful behavior, and so forth.*

**Andy Dillon:** *Of course you have to hold the police accountable. There's no way to give the police carte-blanc freedom to fight crime. Our liberties and rights are far more important than the idea of crime, which, quite honestly, is more than 90% about property rights. So we have to prioritize what kind of society we want: not one where property rights are held above liberties of people to move, come and go, pursue happiness basically... There are other models that we need to discuss when it comes to solving social problems, but I don't think [police are] key to solving social problems. That goes in a much more broad and radical direction that maybe we should discuss—whether the police force should exist or not. If there has to be a police force, part of the social contract is they need to be held accountable.*



experience at the hands of some black men. This reality cannot be dismissed or ignored; they are issues that black men and women must be willing to work through amongst themselves. In terms of forging solidarity within feminist struggle in general, it is white women who must be willing to reach out, to recognize and respect that true sisterhood means forging authentic relationships in which women are willing to recognize that sexist oppression is often manifested in very different ways for black and white women respectively; and that eradicating that oppression must mean arriving at mutually respectful acknowledgement of the differences before appropriate action can be taken.

Sisterhood can only be achieved when (1) white women are willing to recognize their own privileged position in U.S. society, (2) they become conscious of the fact that such privilege is due to their whiteness, and (3) that white male patriarchy has created their position of privilege. Hence, white women must be truly willing to confront the reality that while they experience oppressive, sexist treatment by white men on many levels, they often perpetuate such treatment by not questioning their own position as women within the historically rooted manifestations of white male patriarchy as it relates to present-day conditions for all men and women in U.S. society.

## End of Part I



## Reflections on Kwanzaa

-DANA BRATCHER

As another Kwanzaa season comes to a close, I am very saddened (to say the least), because, although there are many important symbols associated with Kwanzaa, the originator (Dr. Mulana Karenga) never intended for the seven-day Kwanzaa celebration to be purely symbolic. No!

Instead, the essence of Kwanzaa is represented by an annual year-end celebration of the most recent year's accomplishments and achievements within the African/African American Community. The accomplishments and achievements are (or should be) the primary focus of the year-end celebration. Again, the symbols are indeed important, but are in fact secondary.

The annual celebration includes the vital task and duty of paying homage and reverence to those who came before us, and prepared (in fact, paved) the way for progress and change—our beloved ancestors. In essence, Kwanzaa (like its originator and our ancestors) is concerned with the making of substantial and permanent progress within the ongoing liberation struggle of Africans and other oppressed peoples worldwide.

I believe that today, the bones and dust of many of our ancestors (who sacrificed so much for us), including the ultimate gift of life itself, are tossing and turning in their graves with dissatisfaction. I believe that many of their spirits are so very troubled by the glaring lack of unity, commitment, will, and desire to struggle, which far too many of us are displaying on all fronts, and at all levels (locally, nationally, and internationally). I believe that there are very few among us today who cause our ancestors to smile!

Happy Kwanzaa?



## A Brief Excerpt from the Preface of *Black Power*

-CARMICHAEL & HAMILTON

...Therefore our aim is to offer a framework. We are calling here for broad experimentation in accordance with the concept of Black Power, and we will suggest certain guidelines, certain specific examples of such experiments. We start with the assumption that in order to get the right answers, one must pose the right questions. In order to find effective solutions, one must formulate the problem correctly. One must start from premises rooted in truth and reality rather than myth.

In addition, we aim to define and encourage a new consciousness among black people which will make it possible for us to proceed toward those answers and those solutions. This consciousness... might be called a sense of peoplehood: pride, rather than shame, in blackness, and an attitude of brotherly, communal responsibility among all black people for one another.

To ask the right questions, to encourage a new consciousness and to suggest new forms which express it: these are the basic purposes of our book.

It follows that there are statements in this book which most whites and some black people would prefer not to hear. The whole question of race is one that America would much rather not face honestly and squarely. To some, it is embarrassing; to others, it is inconvenient; to still others, it is confusing. But for black Americans, to know it and tell it like it is and then to act on that knowledge should be neither embarrassing nor inconvenient nor confusing. Those responses are luxuries for people with time to spare, who feel no particular sense of urgency about the need to solve certain serious social problems. Black people in America have no time to play nice polite parlor games—especially when the lives of *their* child-

ren are at stake. Some white Americans can afford to speak softly, tread lightly, employ the soft-sell and put-off (or is it put-down?). They own the society. For black people to adopt their methods of relieving our oppression is ludicrous. We blacks must respond in our own way, on our own terms, in a manner, which fits our temperaments. The definitions of ourselves, the roles we pursue, the goals we seek are *our* responsibility.

It is crystal clear that the society is capable of and willing to reward those individuals who do not forcefully condemn it—to reward them with prestige, status and material benefits. But these crumbs of cooptation should be rejected. The overriding, all-important fact is that as a people, we have absolutely nothing to lose by refusing to play such games.

Camus and Sartre have asked: Can a man condemn himself? Can whites, particularly liberal whites, condemn themselves? Can they stop blaming blacks and start blaming their own system? Are they capable of the shame which might become a revolutionary emotion? We—black people—have found that they usually cannot condemn themselves; therefore black Americans must do it.

Anything less than clarity, honesty, and forcefulness perpetuates the centuries of sliding over, dressing up, and soothing down the true feelings, hopes, and demands of an oppressed black people. Mild demands and hypocritical smiles mislead white America into thinking that all is fine and peaceful. They mislead white America into thinking that the path and pace chosen to deal with racial problems are acceptable to masses of black Americans. It is far better to speak forcefully and truthfully. Only when one's true self—white or black—is exposed, can this society proceed to deal with the problems from a position of clarity and not one from misunderstanding. Thus we have

## Rochester's New Police Accountability Coalition

*The following is an update to a December 10<sup>th</sup> article featured on Rochester Indymedia. For more information, please visit [rochester.indymedia.org](http://rochester.indymedia.org).*

A new coalition is forming between many activist groups in Rochester to push for greater police accountability in the city. Initially started by Rochester Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the coalition quickly grew to include members of Activists Against Racism Movement (AARM), International Socialist Organization (ISO), Rochester Against War (RAW), Rochester Declaration of Peace, and more.

The name of the coalition is "RPAC", Rochester Police Accountability Coalition. In the coalition's own words, their mission is "to hold police forces that operate in Rochester, NY accountable to the larger community. This means ending current widespread practices of excessive force, disrespecting citizens, racial profiling, and similar unprofessional behavior and practices that endanger our community." As a new coalition, a great deal of its efforts so far has focused on reaching out to the community to broaden their base and find out what the needs of the people are. This has taken the form of knocking on doors, talking to people, and distributing flyers and literature. An upcoming event scheduled to begin at 7pm on Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup> is a screening and discussion of the film *Cop Watch: These Streets Are Watching*. This event will take place at the Flying Squirrel Community Space, 285 Clarissa St.

The group meets every second and fourth Saturday of the month, and the next meeting, open to the public, will be January 9<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at the Flying Squirrel Community Space, 285 Clarissa St.

Some members of the coalition were available for interviews. Here is some of what they had to say:

**Indymedia (R-IMC): What brought you to the RPAC meetings?**

**Crescenzo Scipione:** *I was unlawfully arrested on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> and brutalized by the police. I'm also a member and organizer for SDS, which is the organization that's received a lot of targeting and persecution by the RPD. And because I have a general interest in justice, this is about getting rid of the forces that occupy our neighborhoods.*

**Mary Adams:** *If I could pick out one main goal for this project, it would be to influence the police department to make it so that individual officers would not feel that they could act with violence, that they could use excessive force, that they could disrespect people, that they could profile people, without some consequence from their immediate supervision and on up the chain. It wouldn't just be normal behavior to use unrestrained violence and disrespectful behaviors like it's clear that it is now.*

**R-IMC: What do you think is the current state of policing in our neighborhoods?**

**Crescenzo Scipione:** *It's essentially the coercive force of the state that is able to—by the power by the truncheon and the gun—occupy and suppress communities. Particularly poor communities, communities of color, but all communities are affected by this oppression.*

**Howard Eagle:** *They're operating under what I consider foolishness in terms of zero tolerance. Many people in the police department see it as a license—a license to pretty much clamp down on the community, to clearly violate people's rights in the process. That's always been the case in Rochester; Rochester has a long, long history of really vicious police brutality, and I think it's on the rise. [...They're] coming with that mentality that most urban people, particularly people who fit a certain profile... are automatically criminals. If they're youth, if they've got a certain style of clothing, or their pants are too low, or their hair is cut the wrong way, or they walk a certain way, they're automatically criminals. That's the mentality that many so-called peace officers bring to the job.*

## From The Editors:

Greetings! Thank you for checking out the latest issue of the Activists Against Racism Movement (AARM) Newsletter. We are committed to keeping the Rochester community informed of anti-racist activity in the city and surrounding areas on a regular basis. Look for this newsletter at the beginning of each month.

THIS ISSUE of the AARM Newsletter includes reporting on some ongoing grassroots organizing in the Rochester community, as well as articles on some theories/philosophies that can inspire/guide our communities to further action. We begin with a report from a new, city-based anti-police brutality coalition, RPAC (Rochester Police Accountability Coalition). Thanks to Rochester Indymedia for allowing us to reprint this story and interview, in order to further get the word out that people are actively organizing against police brutality and increased state repression.

In further police state news, our ex-police-chief-turned-mayor is now calling for control of the Rochester City School District. Howard Eagle responds to this announcement, pointing out the many fallacious details that our local mainstream print media seem to have overlooked, and calls for much-needed public debate around this issue. This is without a doubt one of the most important issues facing the city of Rochester. We will do our best to keep the community informed of opportunities to speak out against this further descent into police-led fascism.

Next, in the first of a two-part article, Nancy Cuminale reflects on historical and contemporary feminism in the United States as it relates to race and class struggle. Placing feminism in proper historical context is the focus of Part I. Part II will focus on the need for authentic solidarity/action among women of all races and socioeconomic statuses.

Our final two feature articles speak to some of the frustration often felt within the African American community about symbols taking the place of struggle. Dana Bratcher reflects on the recently passed Kwanzaa celebrations and calls for a return to the true essence of Kwanzaa—the celebration of continued struggle in the footsteps of our ancestors. Lastly, we include a passage from the preface of the classic text, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton. As the prelude states, “This book presents a political framework and ideology which represents the last reasonable opportunity for this society to work out its racial problems short of prolonged destructive guerrilla warfare.” We highly encourage our readers to read this book!

Finally, we are proud to announce two additions to the AARM Leadership Team: Nancy Cuminale and Jake Spezio. Nancy is a veteran history teacher in the Rochester City School District who has been actively organizing against institutional racism for many years. Jake is a recent graduate of Rochester's School Without Walls, and a member of Rochester Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and Earth First! (EF!). We would like to warmly welcome them to the AARM family.

As an action-oriented anti-racist organization, we are consistently spreading ourselves thin; however, we believe that one of the most important aspects of our work is keeping the Rochester community informed, for history has demonstrated time and again the “power of the pen” in liberation struggle. So please look for new editions of this newsletter in the same place you found this one—we will have them available and distributed during the first week of every month. If you can't find a copy, just let us know, and we will get one to you. And of course, if you experience racism and want support, or if you want to get involved in any way, please don't hesitate to contact us.

The struggle continues...

Leadership Team  
Activists Against Racism Movement

no intention of engaging in the rather meaningless language so common to discussions of race in America: “Granted, things were and are bad, but we are making progress”; “Granted, your demands are legitimate, but we cannot move hastily. Stable societies are best built slowly”; “Be careful that you do not anger or alienate your white allies; remember, after all, you are only ten percent of the population.” We reject this language and these views, whether expressed by black or white; we leave them to others to mouth, because we do not feel that this rhetoric is either relevant or useful.

Rather, we would suggest a more meaningful language, that of Frederick Douglass, a black American who understood the nature of protest in this society:

*Those who profess to favor freedom yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters... Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blow, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.*



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### \*UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS:

#### 2/19: AARM Fundraiser

Help us raise funds so that we can continue to pay our rent and produce publications like the one you're hold-ing! Come discuss “Black History” with local historians and veterans of the struggle, meet AARM members, and mingle with the community. Cost is a sliding scale of \$5-20, but nobody will be turned away for lack of funds.

**When:** Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 6-10pm  
**Where:** Flying Squirrel Community Space, 285 Clarissa St, Rochester, NY

#### 3/6: Activist Summit – “Solidarity in Struggle”

Rochester is home to many dedicated activists and organizations, but sometimes it feels like we're fighting our struggles alone. Why isn't there more concrete, operational unity, solidarity, and support between Rochester activist groups? What links the work we are doing? How can we work towards unity and collective action?

The goal of the Rochester Activist Summit is to begin an ongoing process of building understanding, concrete, principled, operational unity, solidarity, and systems of support between local activists/organizations that are working to create change in the Rochester area. If we are serious about liberation, then we need to be serious about coming together, discussing the barriers that exist between us, and working towards unity and collective struggle.

**When:** Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 10am-6pm  
**Where:** To Be Announced.

For more information on the summit, or to get involved in the planning, visit <http://activistsummit.rocus.org/> or email: [rochesteractivistsummit@rocus.org](mailto:rochesteractivistsummit@rocus.org)

## AARM's Mission:

To expose, confront, and actively oppose racism within ourselves and within our local, regional, and national communities; facilitate education, responsibility, and accountability regarding individual and institutional racism—in order to increase awareness, knowledge, and participation in anti-racist struggle.

## We Want Your Writing!

Do you want to talk about racism as you see and experience it? Do you have something that needs to be said? Do you write stories? Poetry? If so, AARM wants to work with you. Talk to us about publishing your work in our next newsletter. Come to a meeting or e-mail us at [aarm@roculus.org](mailto:aarm@roculus.org)

## AARM Meetings:

Join us in our struggle against racist oppression. Come share your issues, views, and suggestions as we build a movement to produce concrete, effective solutions.

**WHEN:** Every Tuesday evening, 6:00 – 8:00pm

**WHERE:** Flying Squirrel Community Space,  
285 Clarissa St. Rochester, NY



# AARM



## Activists Against Racism Movement

*Informed and committed community members working consistently and effectively to eradicate racism.*

**VOLUME II: ISSUE 1, JANUARY 2010**



## IN THIS ISSUE:

- From The Editors: A Monthly Report to the Community - p. 2
- Rochester's New Police Accountability Coalition – p. 3
- Duffy Wants Control of the Rochester City School District – p. 5
- A Feminist Critique: Part I, A Historical Perspective – p. 7
- Reflections on Kwanzaa – p. 9
- Carmichael and Hamilton: Black Power – p. 10
- Upcoming Local Events – p. 11
- AARM Info – How To Get Involved – p. 12

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