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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Dolls expose child biases

By Hazel Trice Edney
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The reassuring female voice asks the child a question: "Can you show me the doll that looks bad?"

The child, a preschool-aged Black girl, quickly picks up and shows the Black doll over a White one that is identical in every respect except complexion.

"And why does that look bad?"

"Because she's Black," the little girl answers emphatically.

"And why is this the nice doll?" the voice continues.

"Because she's White."

"And can you give me the doll that looks like you?"

The little girl hesitates for a split second before handing over the Black doll that she has just designated as the uglier one.

This was not the 1954 doll test used by pioneering psychologist Kenneth B. Clark to help make the case for desegregation in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision outlawing segregated public schools. Rather, it was a doll test duplicated in Harlem, N.Y., last year, more than a half-century after *Brown*. To the chagrin of parents and psychologists across the nation, the results were unchanged.

The test is again in the news because of an 8-minute documentary produced by 17-year-old film student Kiri Davis who participates in the Reel Works Teen Film-making program at Manhattan's Urban Academy, a free after school program supported by HBO.

The videotaped doll test resulted from a collection of writings Davis had compiled on issues of importance to Black girls in her high school. In that writing, she noticed that complexion was a recurring theme.

"I knew what my friends were going through. These standards of beauty just kept coming up," Davis said in an interview with the NNPA News Service. "I thought it was an issue that needed to be exposed more, although at times it seemed too taboo to talk about. But I thought a film would just put it all out there and cause discussion."

In realizing that so many dark-skinned girls have been told that lighter or whiter skin is more beautiful, Davis decided to drive home her point by conducting the doll study.

"You could tell these people about the standards of beauty that are forced on young girls all you want to. But they won't get it until you show them," she said.

And that, she did.

The children are from a Harlem Day Care Center. Fifteen of the 21 children surveyed preferred the White doll to the Black one, a results that has astounded many.

In 1950, Clark and his wife Mamie Phipps Clark, also a psychologist, conducted the doll study that showed how racial segregation destroyed the self-esteem of Black children. The Clarendon County, S.C., experiment involved 16 Black children, ages 6 to 9. They asked the children their perception of a White doll and a Black doll. Eleven of the students said the Black doll looked "bad" and nine said the White doll looked "nice."

The test results influenced the U. S. Supreme Court (See Doll, Page 7)

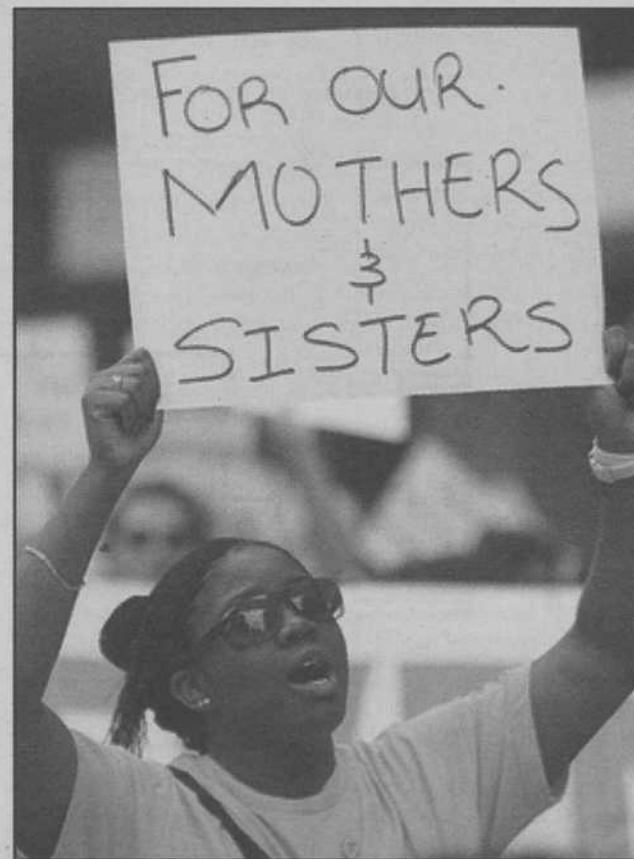
AIDS put in crosshairs

By Lorinda M. Bullock
Special to Sentinel-Voice

TORONTO (NNPA) - Just as the framers of the Declaration of Independence did when they gathered in 1776 to declare Americans free from the tyranny of England's King George III, another group of powerful American leaders gathered here on Monday, this time on foreign soil, to reclaim Black America's freedom from the grips of a deadlier and stronger foe — AIDS.

Representatives from business, politics, civil rights, the Black church and other groups came together at the 16th International AIDS Conference and signed the "National Call to Action and Declaration of Commitment to End the AIDS Epidemic in Black America."

Leaders from organizations such as the NAACP, National Urban League, National Council of Negro Women and others pledged their support and resources to make Black America reverse



A demonstrator waves a sign during a protest in Toronto demanding equality for women in the international fight against AIDS. A senior world AIDS expert urged community doctors to crank up testing for the killer virus, bemoaning the "appalling" fact that nine in ten HIV carriers don't know they are infected. Black groups are targeting AIDS.

the devastating statistics by promoting more testing and education about prevention as well as protecting the rights of the infected.

"AIDS in America today is a Black disease no matter how you look at it. By gender, by sexual orientation, by age, by socio-economic class or education or region in the country in which you live, Black people bear the brunt of this epidemic," said Phill Wilson, founder and executive director of the Los Angeles-based Black AIDS Institute.

The Black AIDS Institute is a non-profit policy group leading the way in HIV education and advocacy of Black people fighting the disease in the U.S. The group was also responsible for Monday's gathering of delegates that also included NAACP Board Chairman Julian Bond, actress/AIDS activist Sheryl Lee Ralph, filmmaker Bill Duke, Pernessa Seele, president of the Balm in Gilead (See AIDS, Page 10)

Maskaev chops down Rahman

LAS VEGAS (AP) - Oleg Maskaev sent Hasim Rahman staggering to the mat, and the Eastern block of title belts was complete.

For the first time, all four heavyweight titles belong to fighters from the former Soviet Union.

But Maskaev wants his adopted land to look past his accent and his European technical style. This U.S. immigrant feels he's the only American heavyweight champion left.

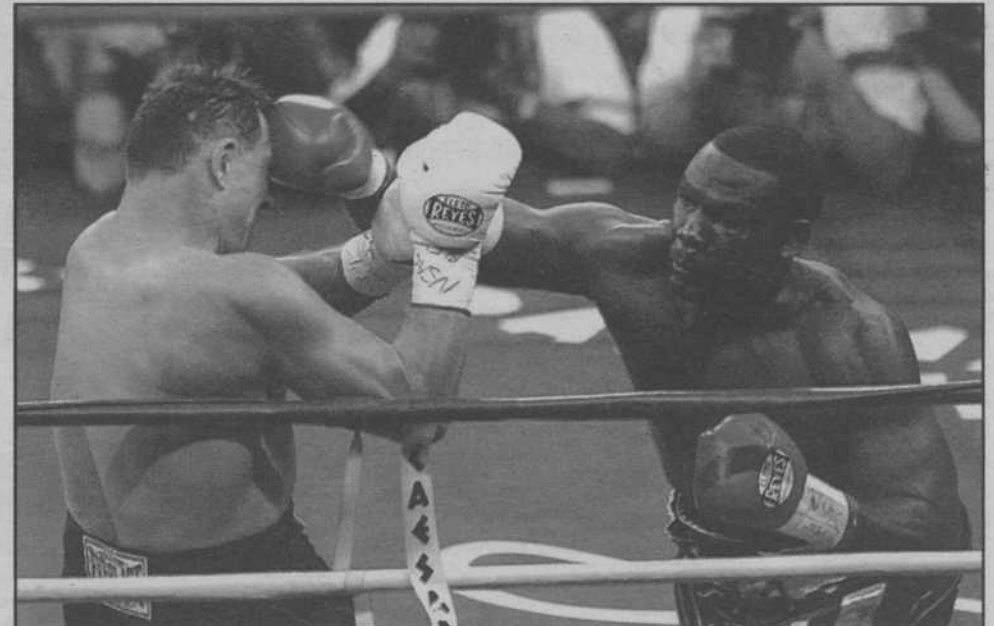
Maskaev stopped Rahman in the 12th round Saturday night with a dramatic last-minute rally to win the WBC heavyweight title.

As Maskaev grabbed his new belt and Rahman collected himself, the crowd of Maskaev's countrymen — both new and old — wildly cheered one of the more exciting heavyweight title fights in years for a down-trodden division.

"I believed up to the last minute I could win this fight," Maskaev said. "I got used to him as the fight wore on. ...I knew with three rounds left, I had to win them all to win the fight."

Maskaev, a former Russian Army officer who moved to the U.S. in 1995, entered this fight on a 10-bout winning streak, albeit mostly against unimpressive competition. But the 37-year-

old father of four earned a mandatory title shot with a persistence that prompted his promoters to compare him to James J. Braddock, the famed "Cinderella Man." (See Rahman, Page 3)



Hasim Rahman clubs Oleg Maskaev during their WBC heavyweight title fight Saturday at the Thomas & Mack Center. Maskaev stopped Rahman in the 12th round of the rematch.

Sentinel-Voice photo by C.J. Cansler