

Editorial

Donald Trump believes that African countries are “shithole” countries because he watches a lot of television. And so, during the last two weeks, stories from Africa favored by the media were about unsanitary behavior in Kenya, a poacher killed by an elephant and eaten by a lion. Another story was about the kidnapping of Americans by Ugandans. Stories in the media about Africa are meant to flatter White Americans at the expense of a continent which holds more than 55 countries. The catastrophe that occurred in Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe during which whole towns were buried under water, didn't receive as much coverage as Jussie Smollett (the subject of an essay by C. Leigh McInnis in this issue). Smollett is part of the 200 year old media enterprise of using a Black individual to cast collective blame upon all Blacks, especially the men, which is the same point that Representative Omar was making when she commented about casting collective blame upon all Muslims after the actions of those from Saudi Arabia who destroyed the Twin Towers buildings. This prompted Rupert Murdoch, the most dangerous immigrant, as well as a threat to democracy, to raise a lynch mob against her. Murdoch is the guy whose cartoonist depicted President Obama as a chimp. C. Leigh McInnis reminds that calling out Black Bogeymen has been trending this spring, with Michael Jackson, who wasn't invited by Oprah to defend himself on her show, R. Kelly, an alleged pedophile and others were rolled out for the same kind of audience who used to pay to see a Black man dunked at the Carnival. We heard little about the Jeffrey Epstein scandal. He peddled under-aged girls to some of the most powerful men in the country. These men are yet to be identified.

Africans get lumped together just as Blacks, Browns, Yellows and Reds get lumped together in this country, which is why we're lucky to have Barbara Lowenstein who continues to send her excellent and important photographs from “shithole” countries. This time from Bangladesh. These photos do what the media won't do. Show the beauty of their people as they go about their daily tasks and celebrations. The brilliant cartoonist, Evany Zirul's portrayal of Donald Trump is all we have to say about this presidential aberrant. The media both pro and can continue to make so much money from Trump's antics, which is like watching someone standing on the window ledge of a building threatening to jump. One has to go to the BBC or Al-Jazeera to find out what's going on in the world.

We have a powerful work of fiction from one of our contributors, Linda Rodriguez-Guglielmoni, in which a cannibal, Nino, who has an appetite for children, is confronted by La Loba De Mexico, The She-Wolf of Mexico. We first met Linda at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in New Smyrna Beach, Florida and published her in “From Totems to Hip Hop.” She is a regular contributor to Konch. Another contributor is Kathryn Takara whose book “New and Collected Poems” we published in 2003. Part 2 of our interview with Kathryn Takara, the unofficial Poet Laureate of Hawaii, is printed in this issue. We also published Boadiba's poetry collection “Under The Burning White Sky” in 2003. Boadiba is one who insists that the religious traditions of Haiti are preserved in their purest form. She writes about her visit to Cancun in her typically lush, gorgeous prose style. The piece covers her maneuvering through customs, and practicing her Spanish. She gives a shout out to the travel agency, Gorgeous Goddess Productions. She reports that human-made Global Warming is destroying the beaches all over the Caribbean.

Our veteran writers Corie Rosen and Theo Konrad Auer are back. Auer is presiding over a reading of local poets on June 12 from 7:00-9:00 pm at Pro Arts Gallery in Oakland. I also include poems by my U.C., Berkeley students Arriane Amparo, Cindy Lim, Julia Matthews, Resham Mirpuri, Gabriel Sage, and Cassy Vogel. As you will discover they're writing as well as anybody being published.

Finally, I include some of the fury and hysteria that greeted the reading on my play "The Haunting of Lin-Manuel Miranda." Just a reading. They're from The New York Times and Broadway Central. Most of the comments are ignorant because these writers, some of whom attended elite schools, were educated to be Europeans. They know more about the War of the Roses than about the American Revolution and The Civil War.

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