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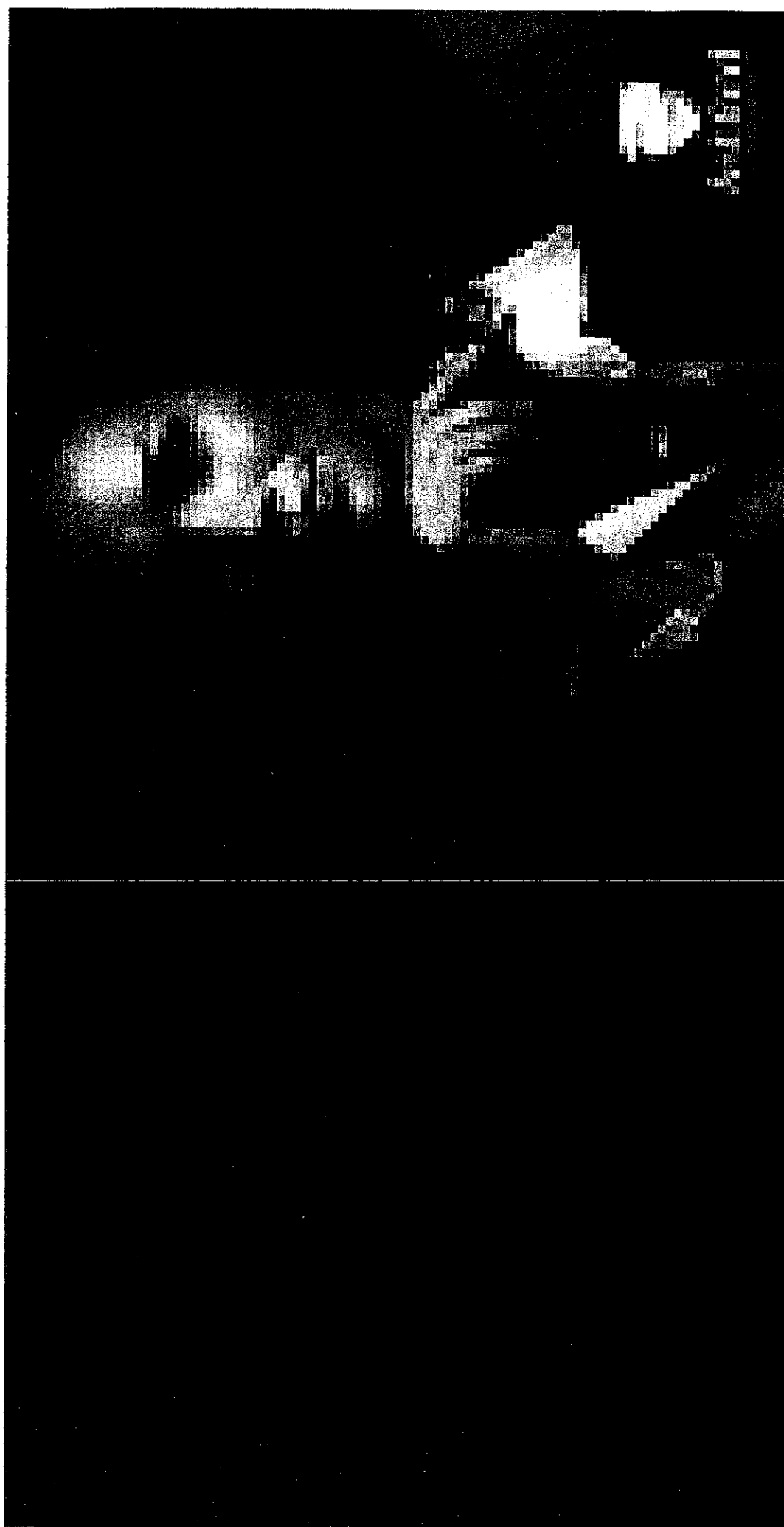
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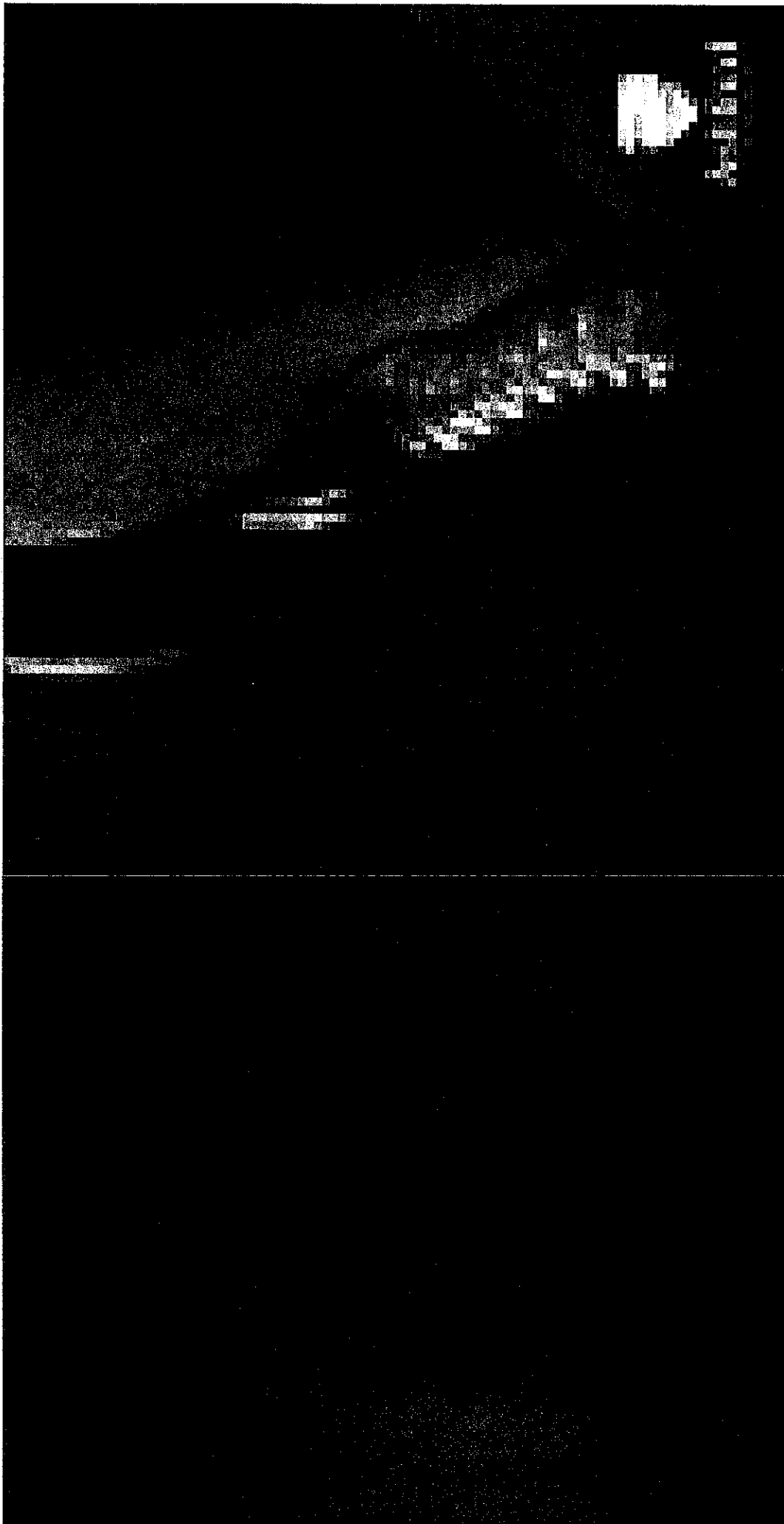
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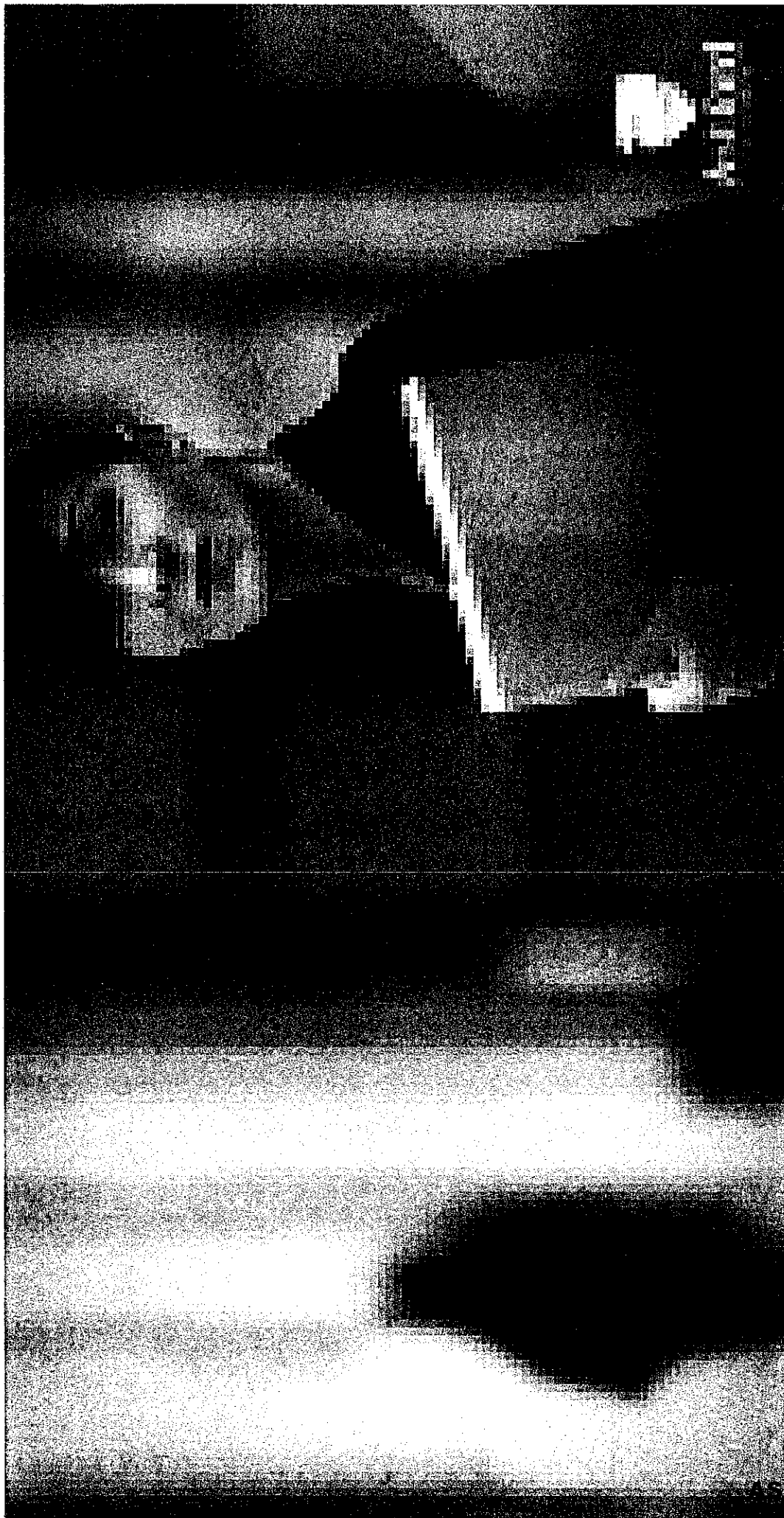
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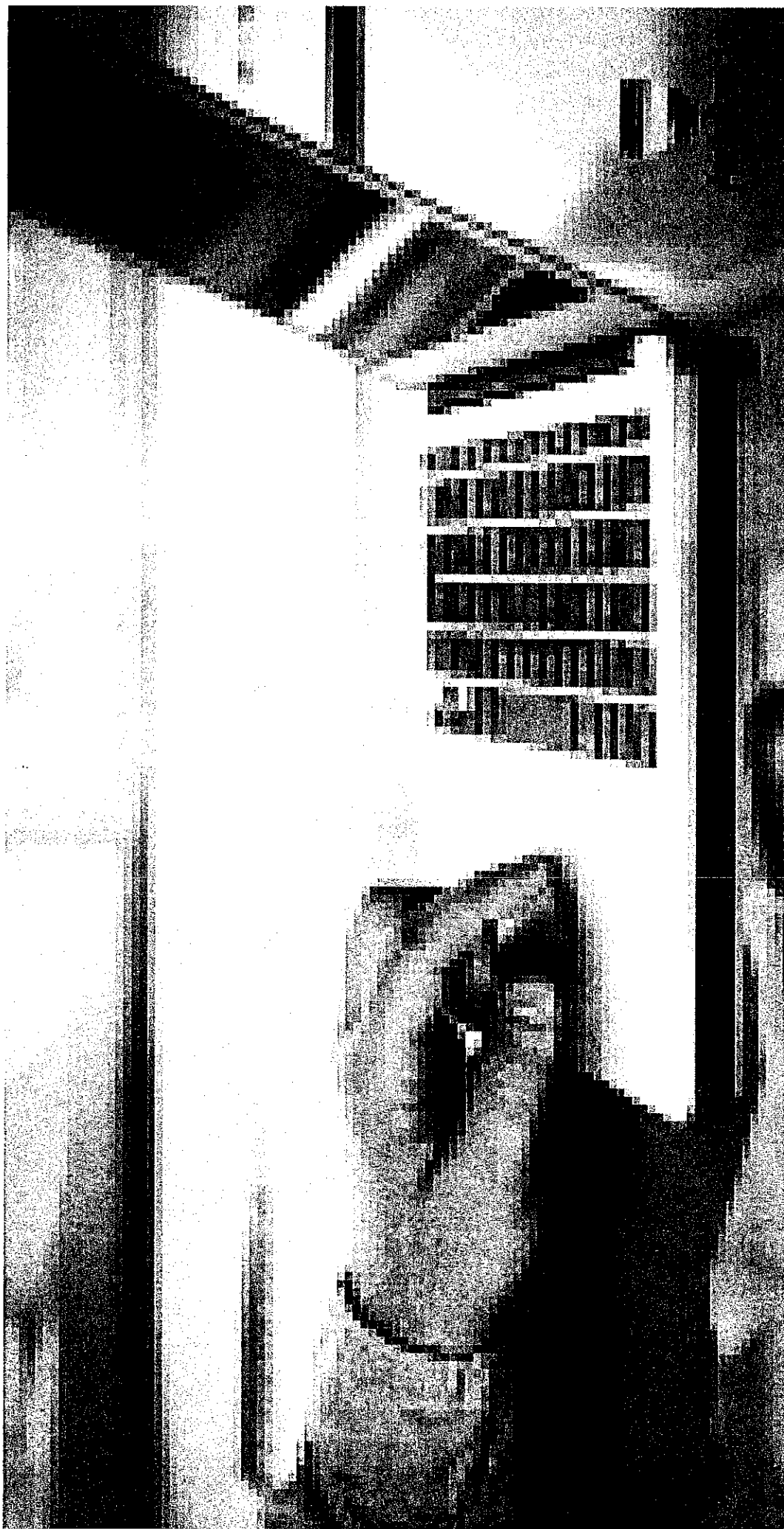
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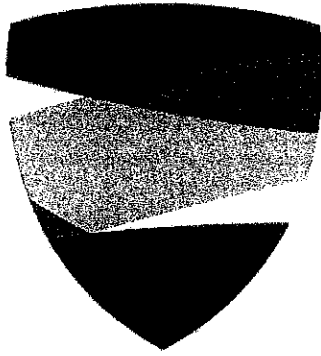
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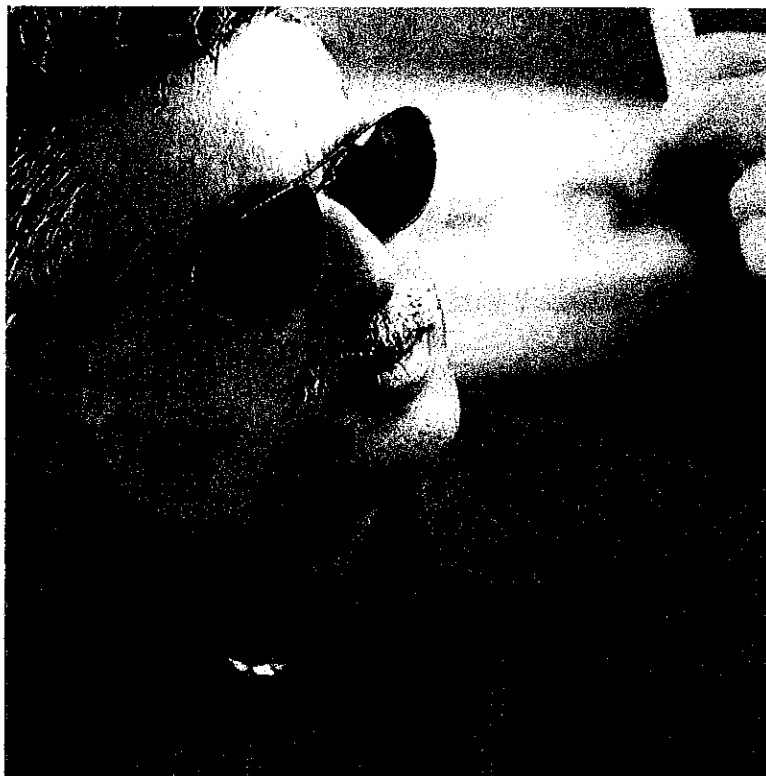




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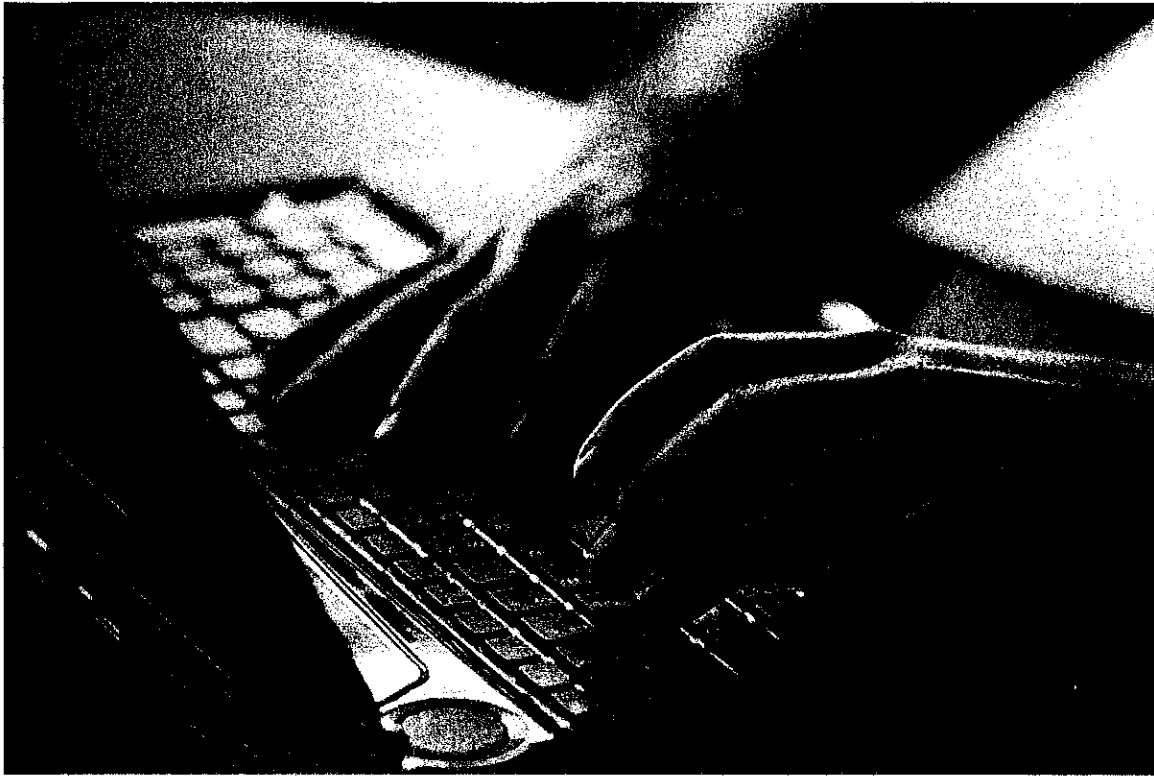
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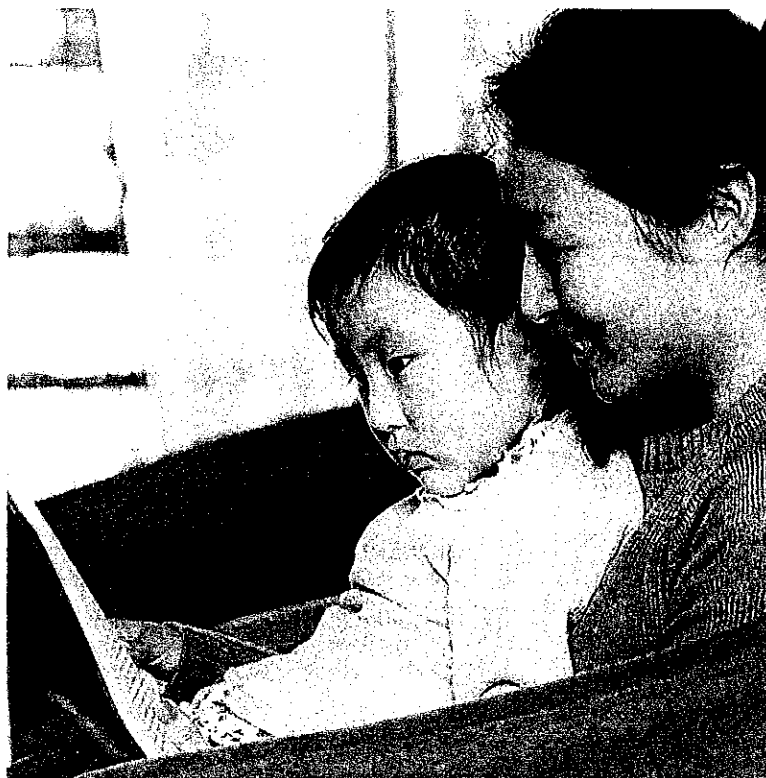
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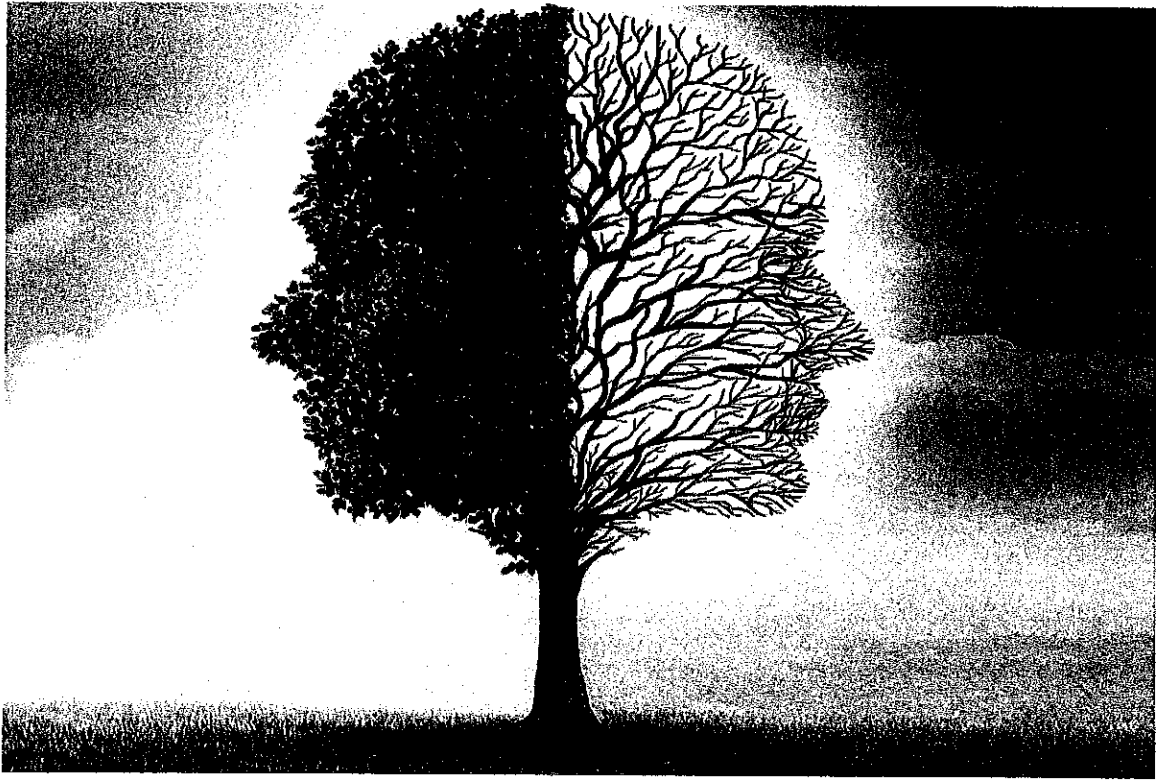
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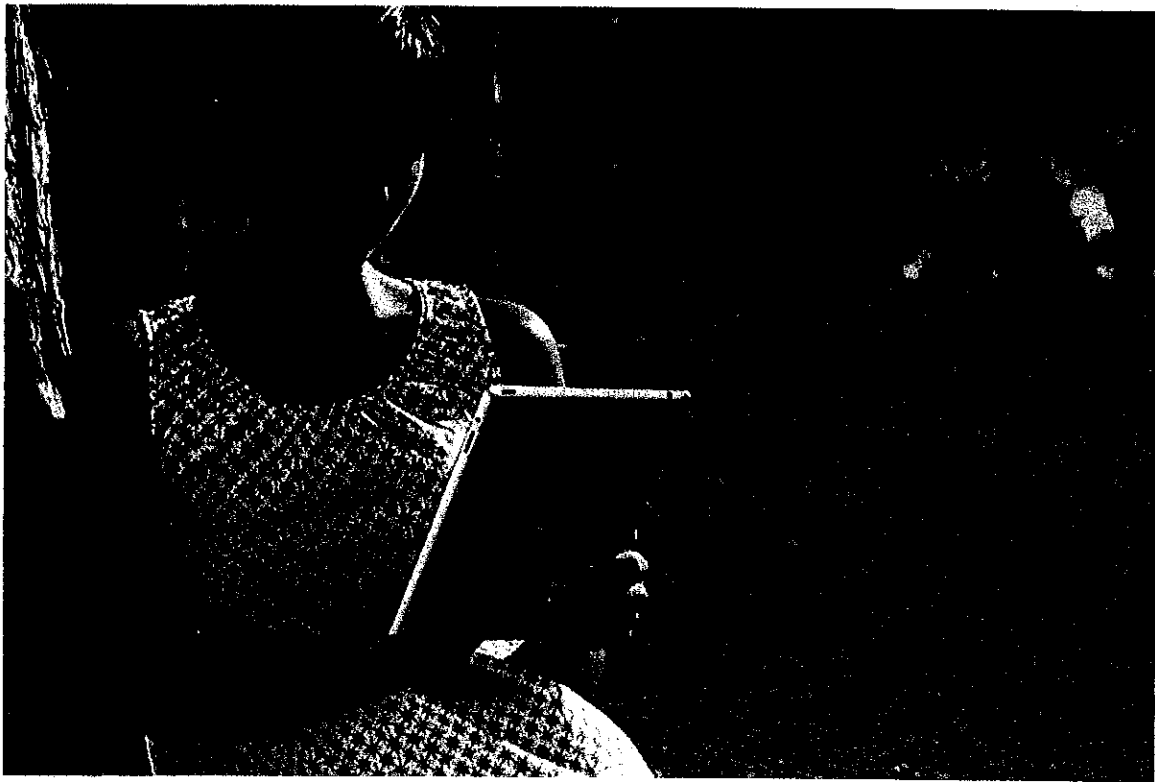
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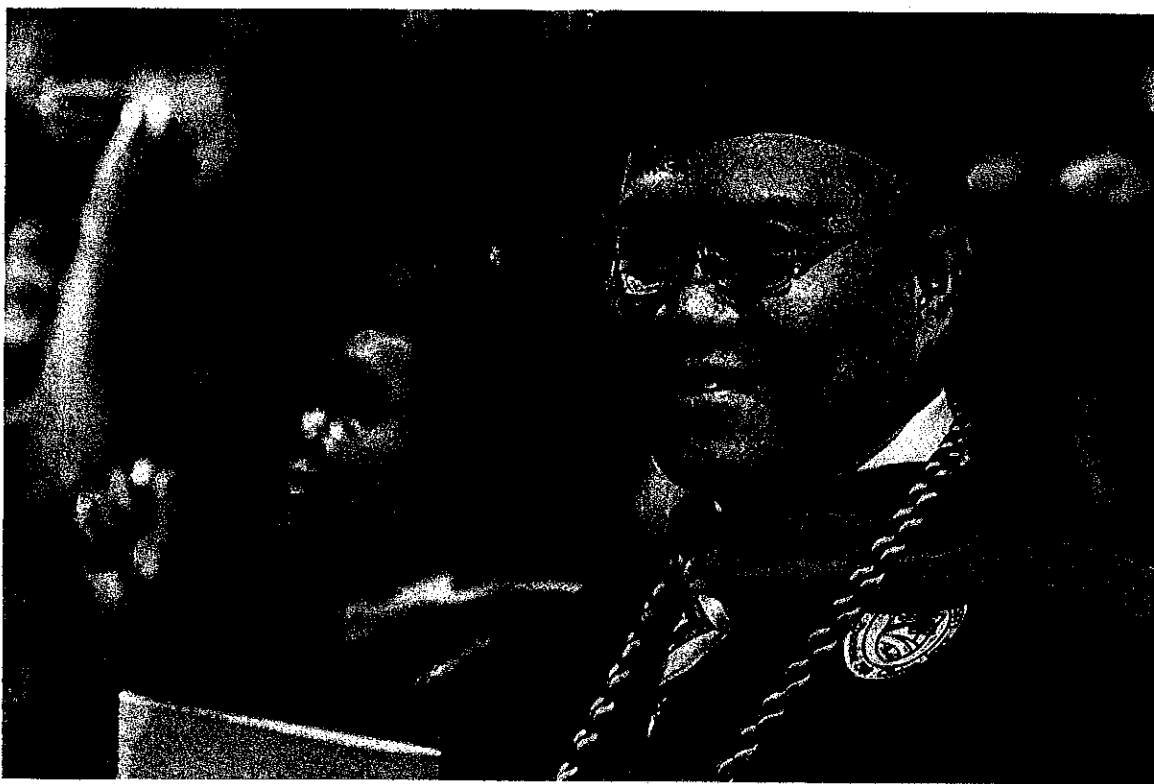
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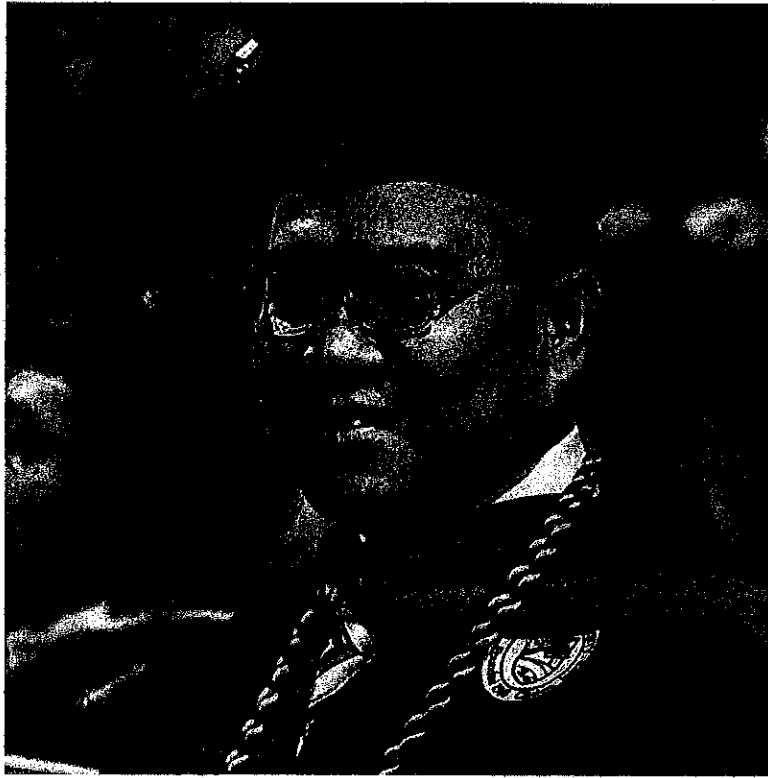
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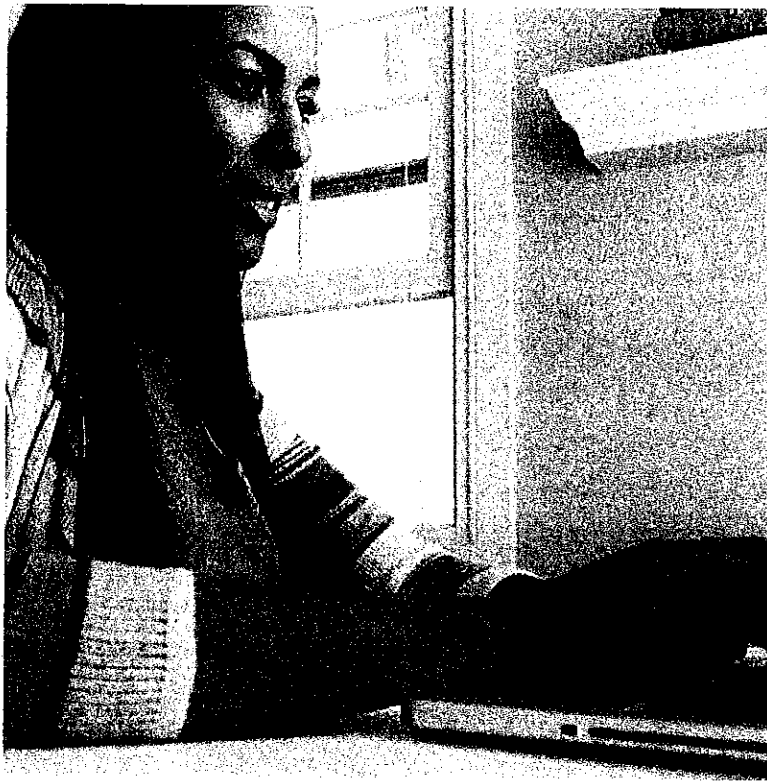
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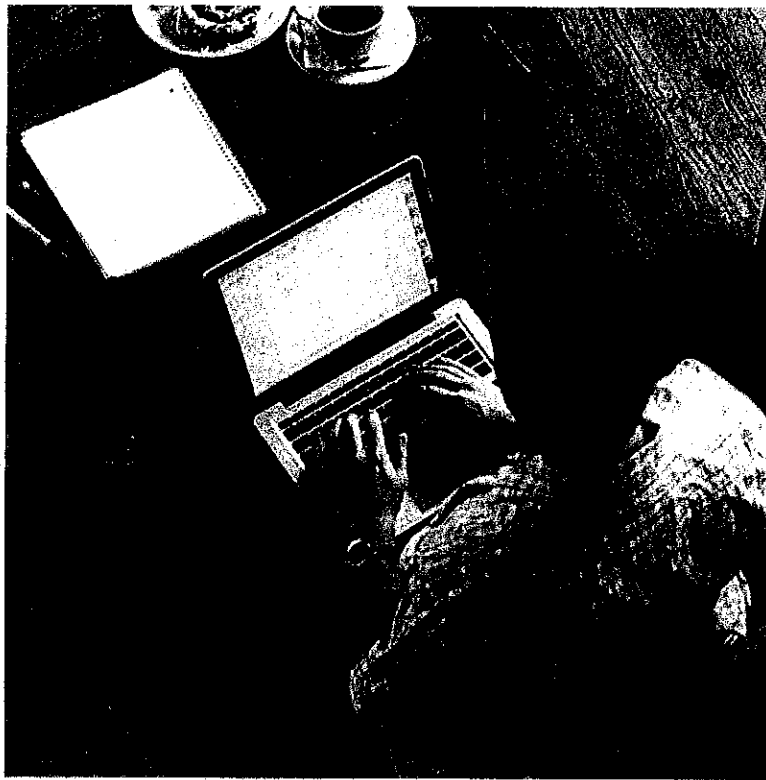
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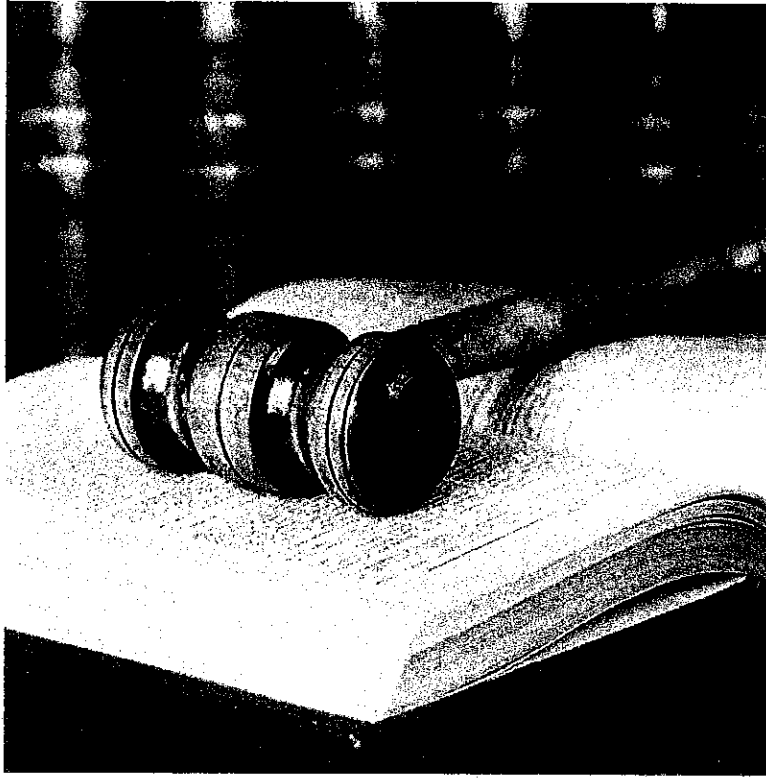




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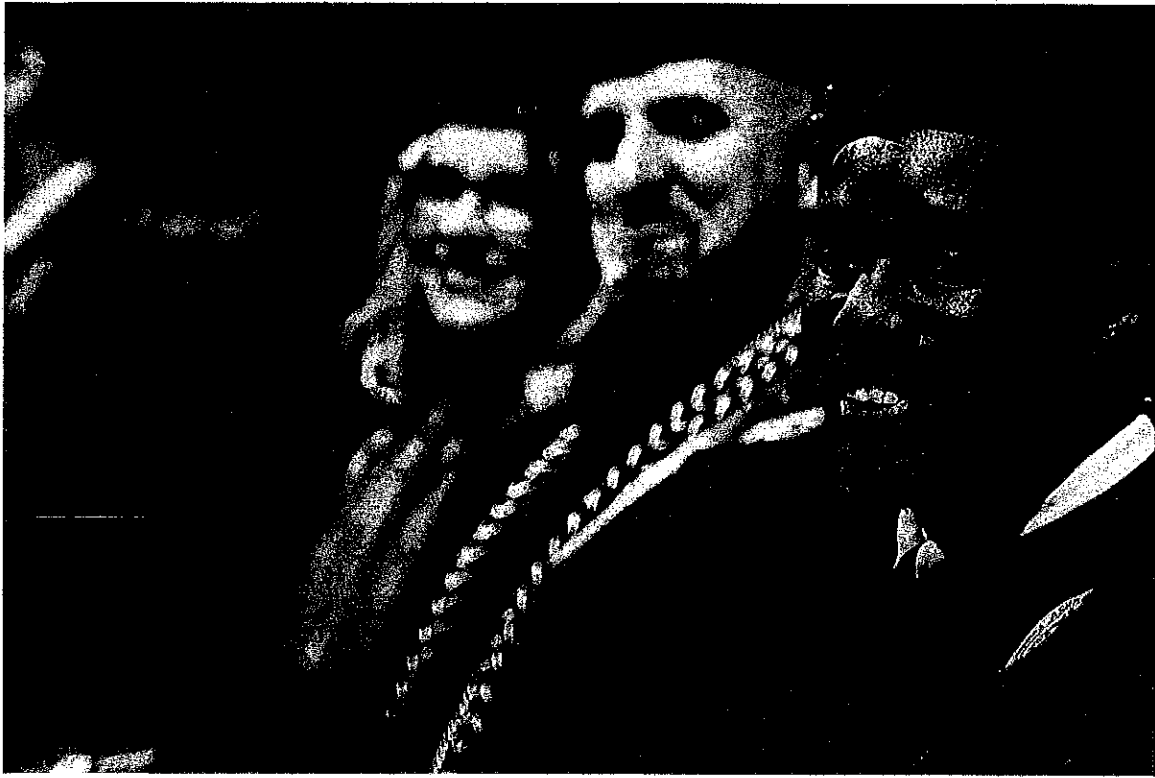
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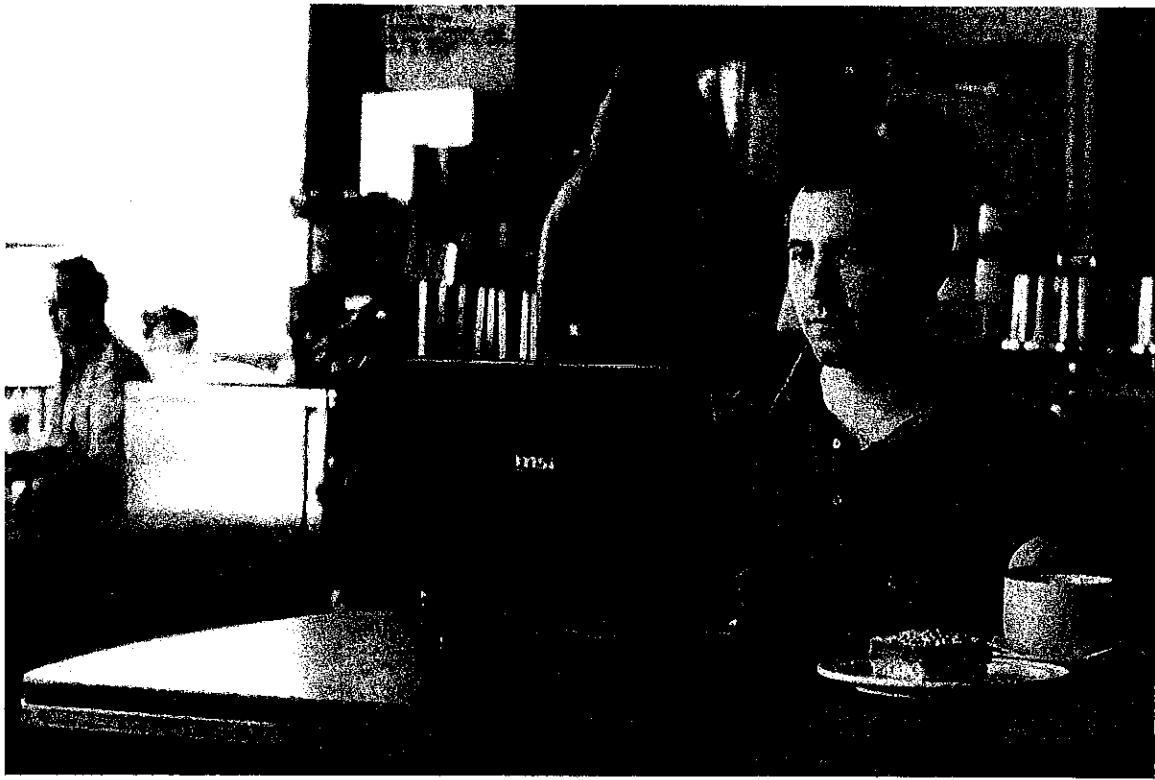
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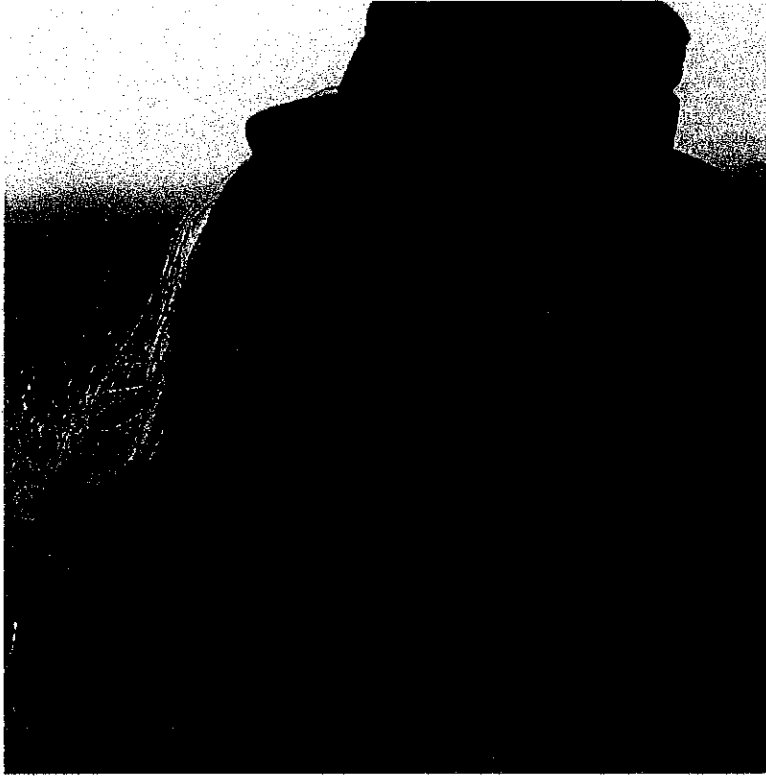
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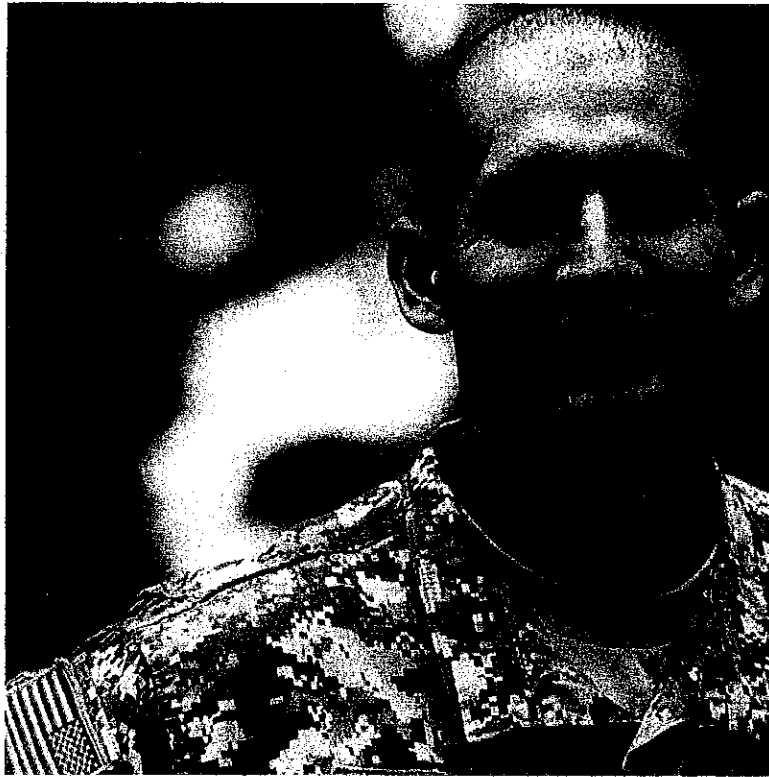
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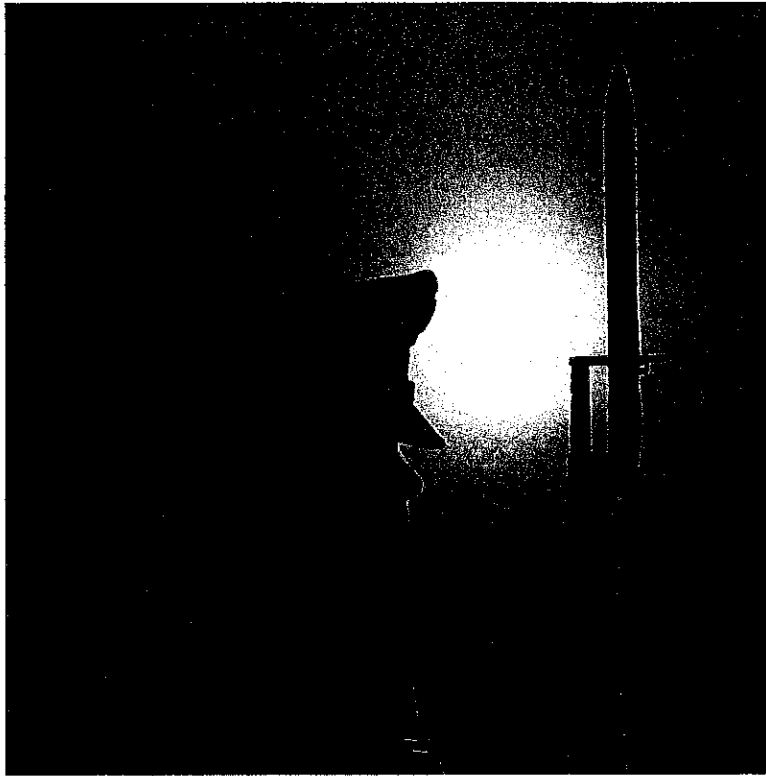
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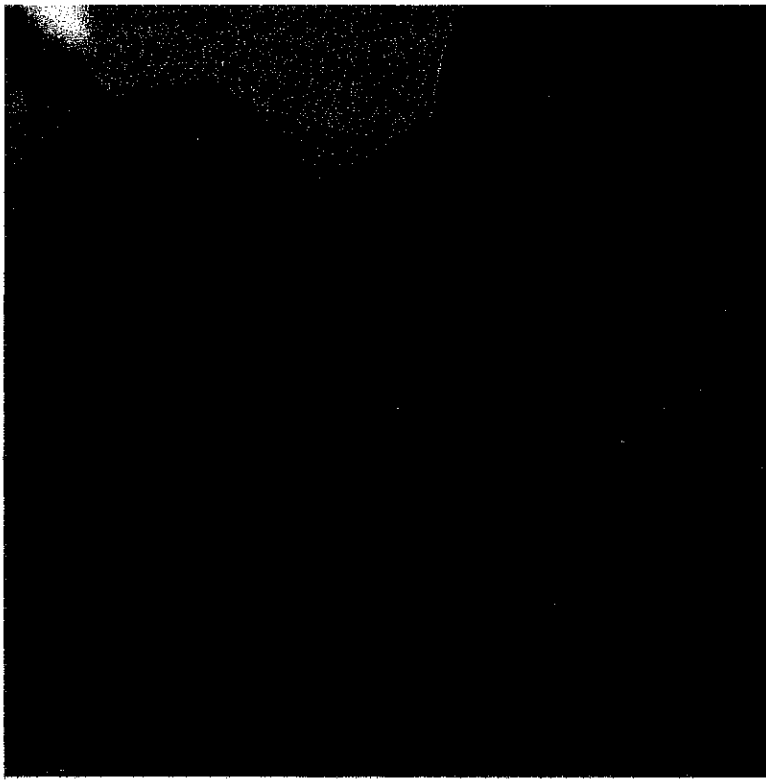
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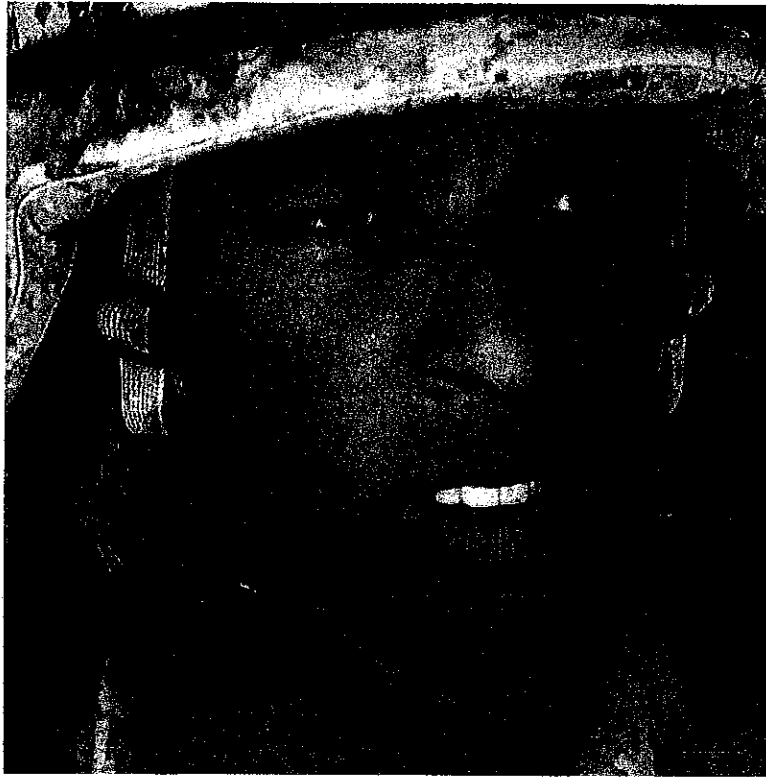
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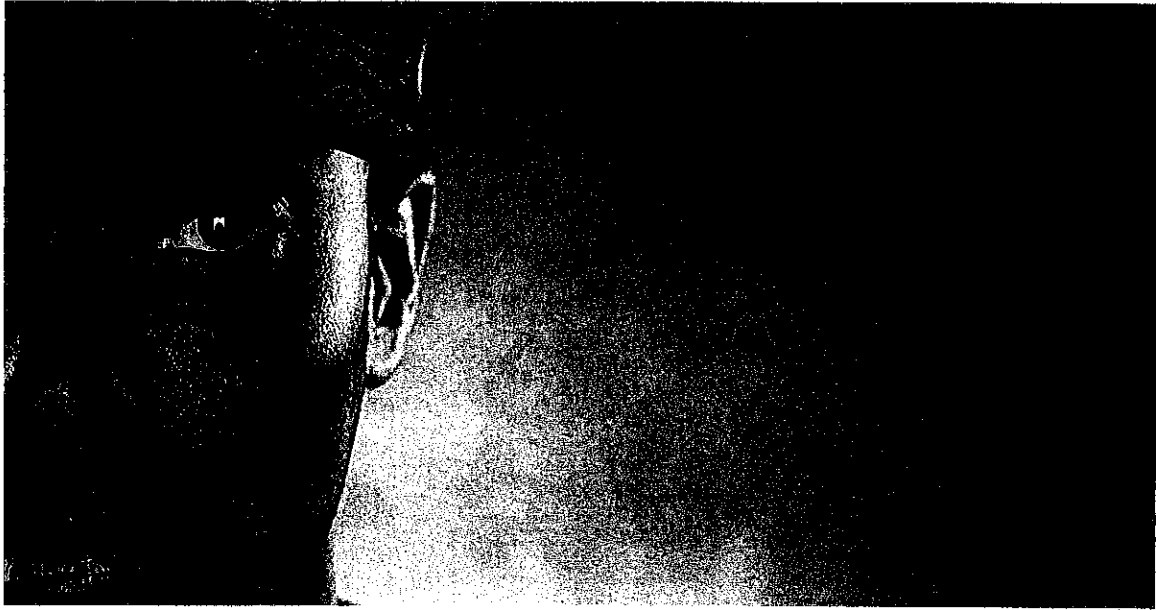
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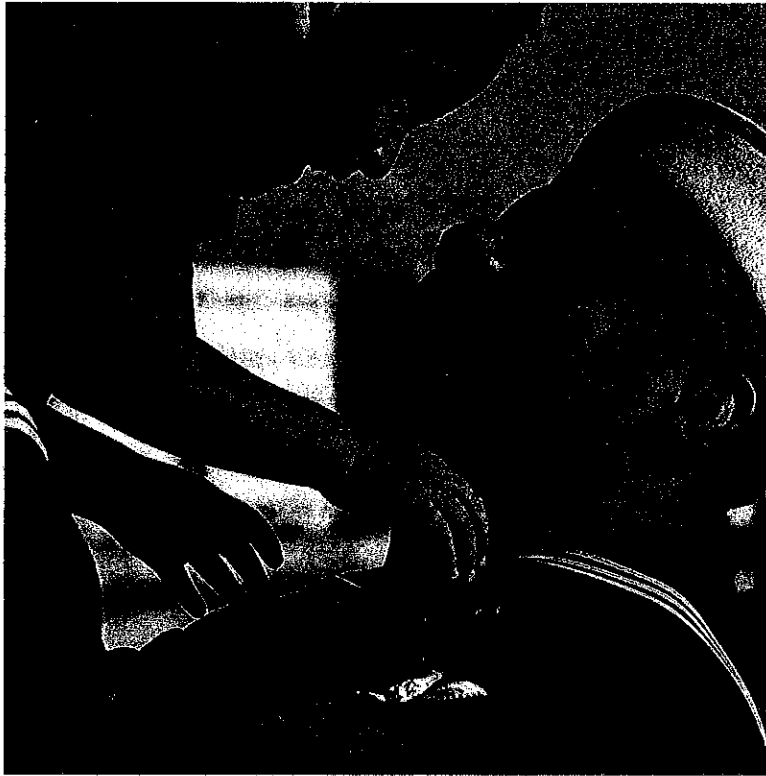
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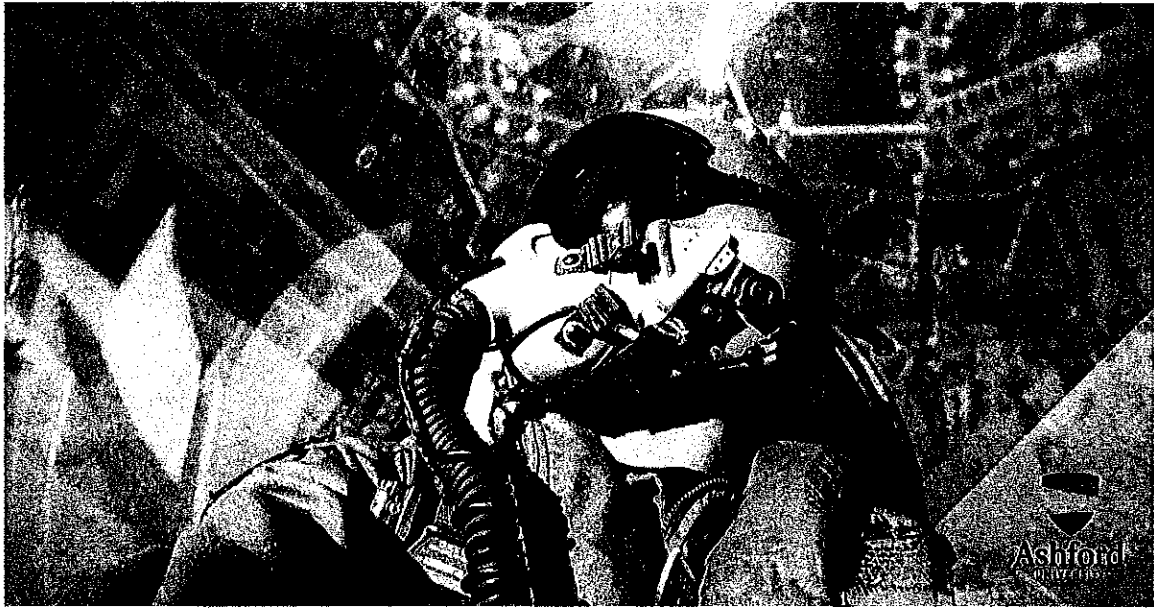
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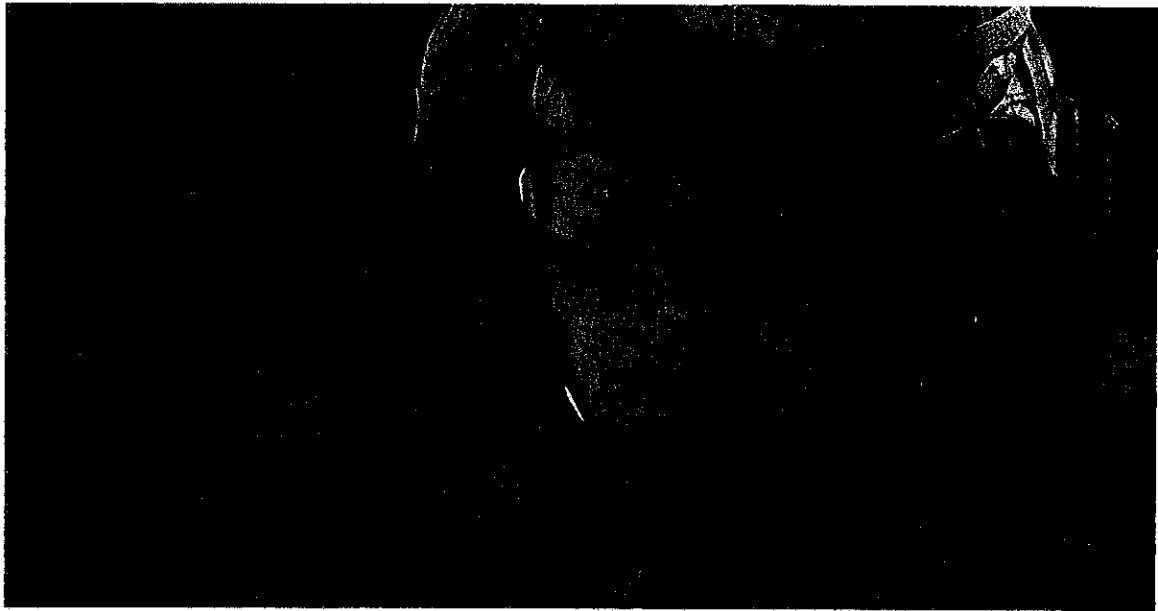




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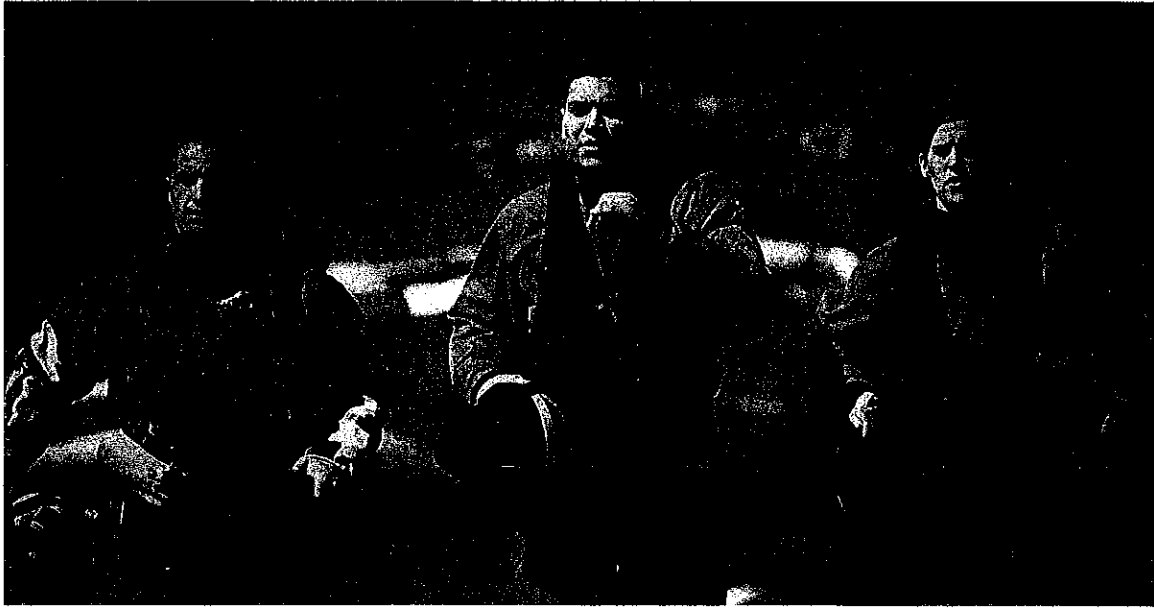




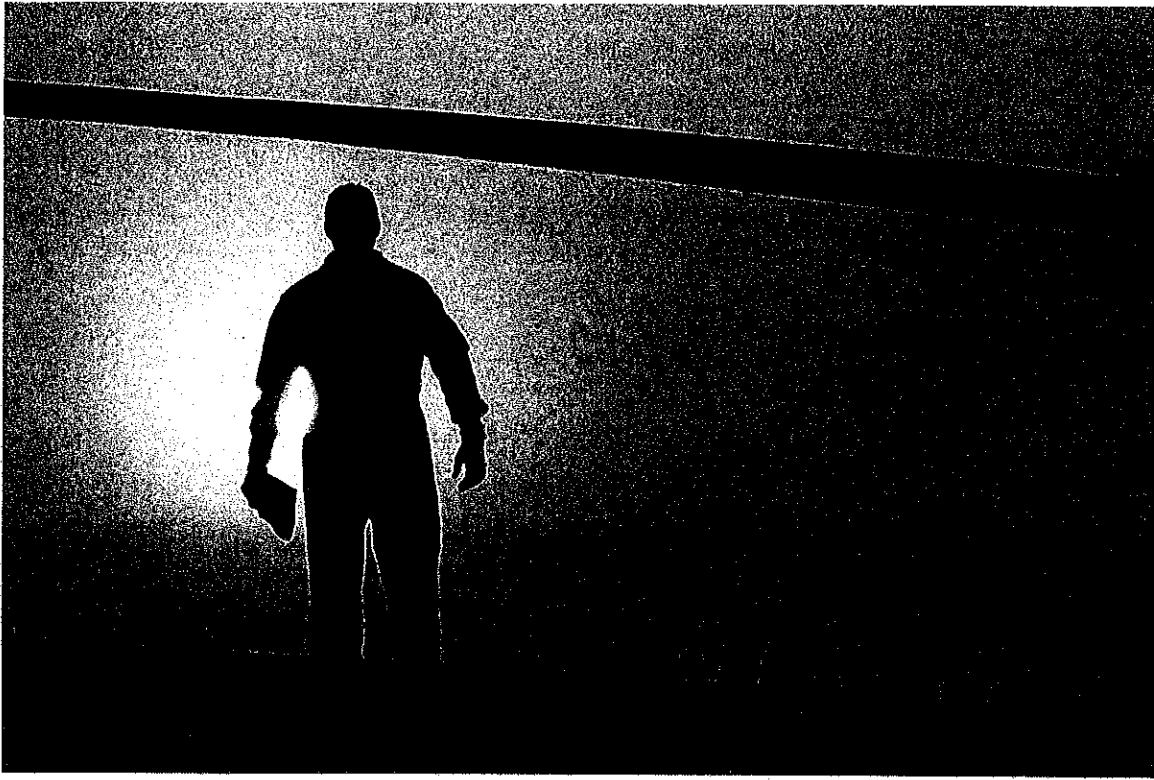
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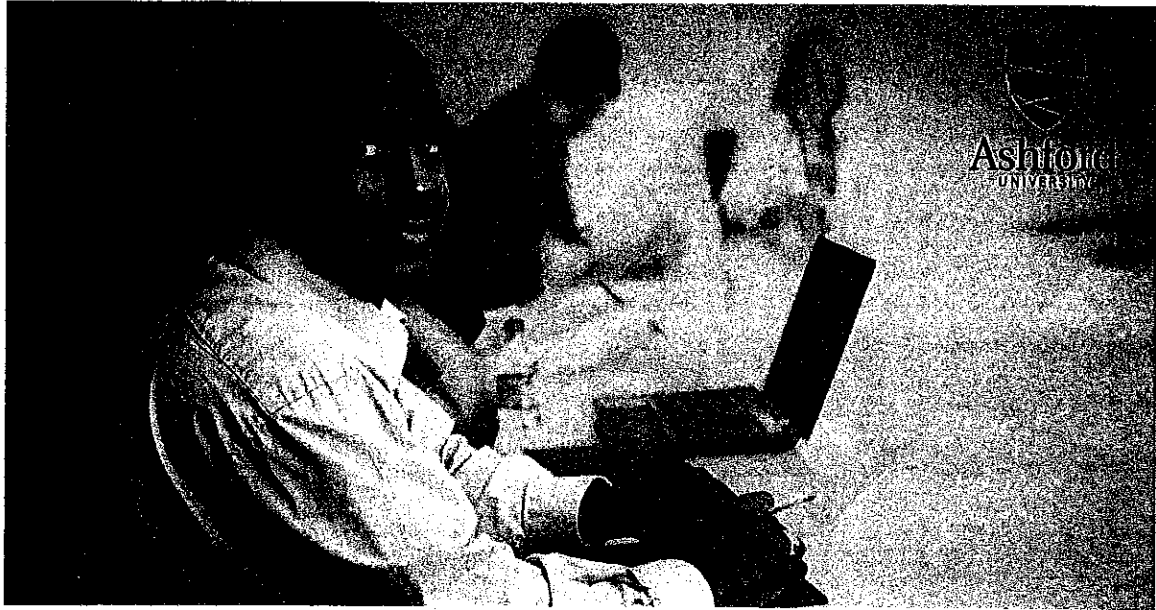
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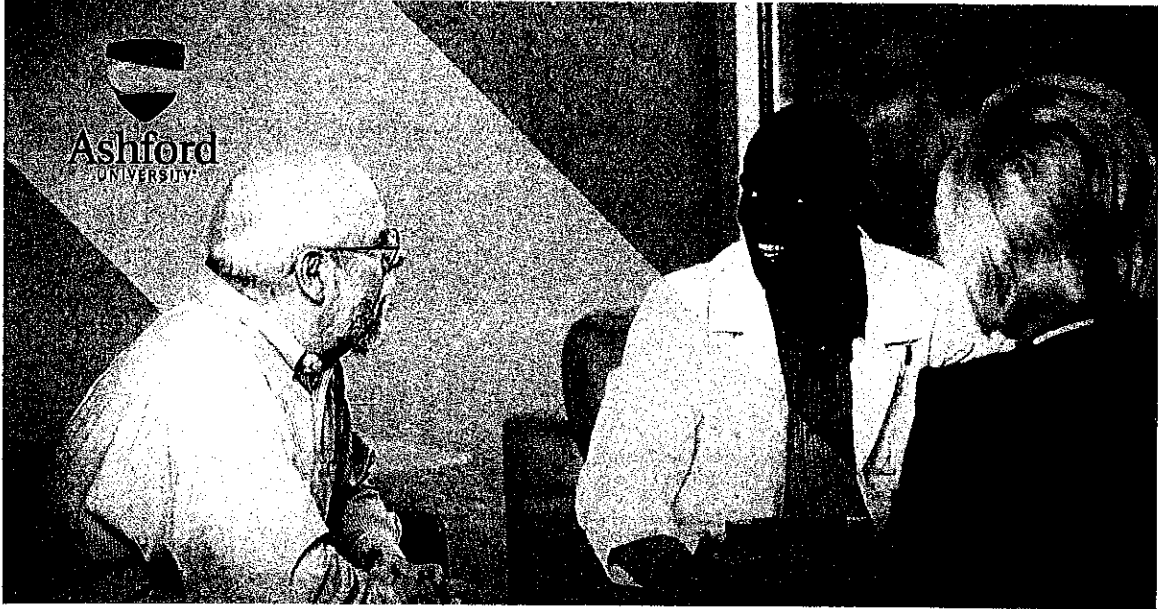




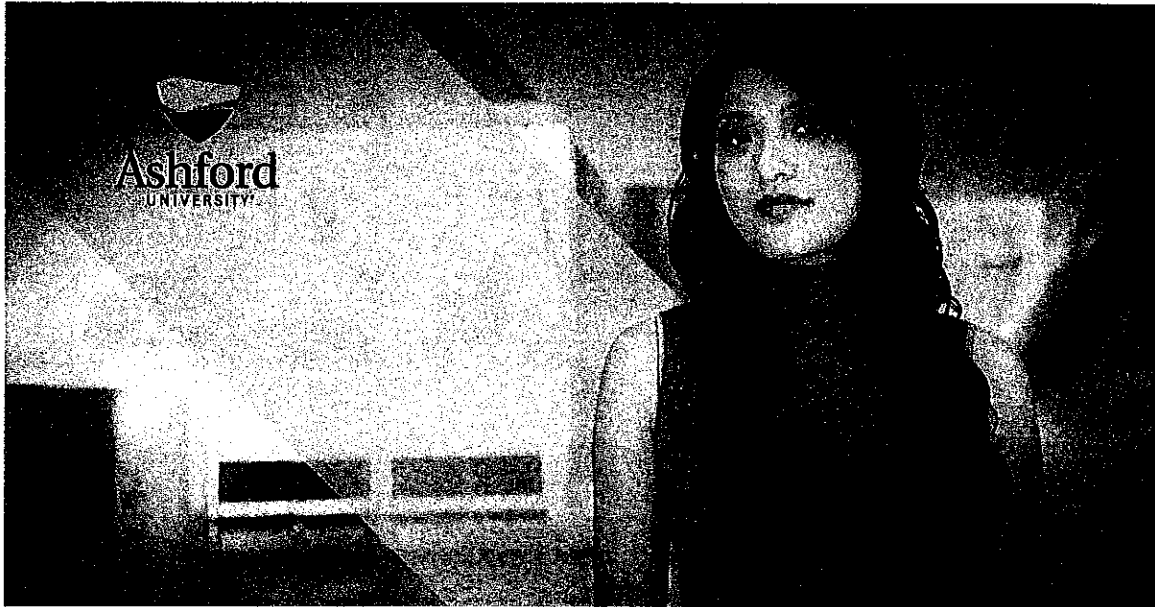
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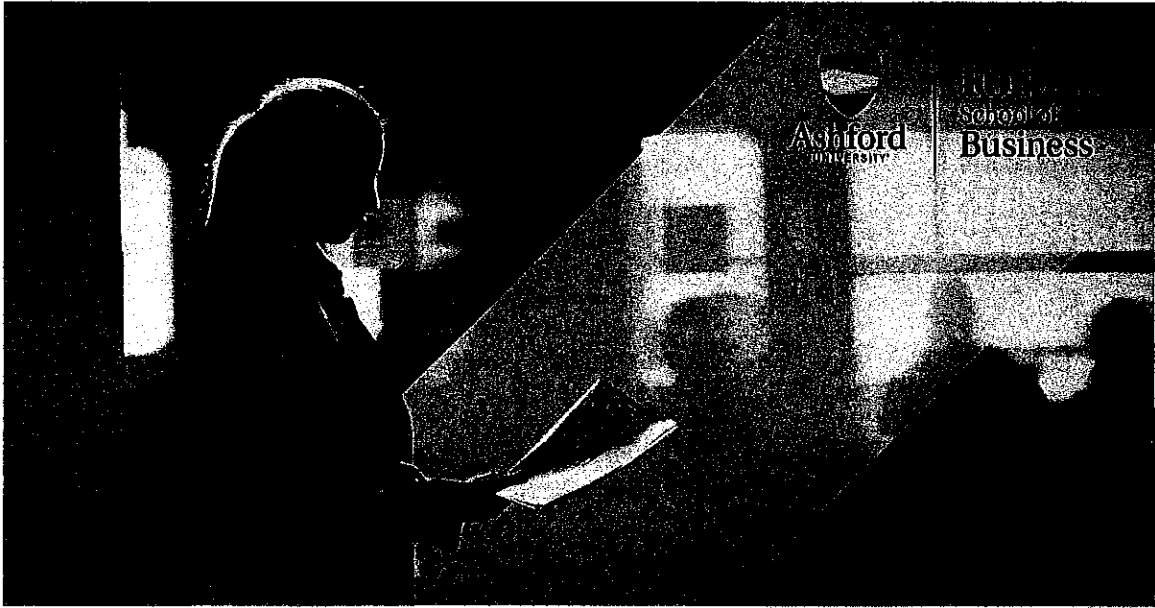
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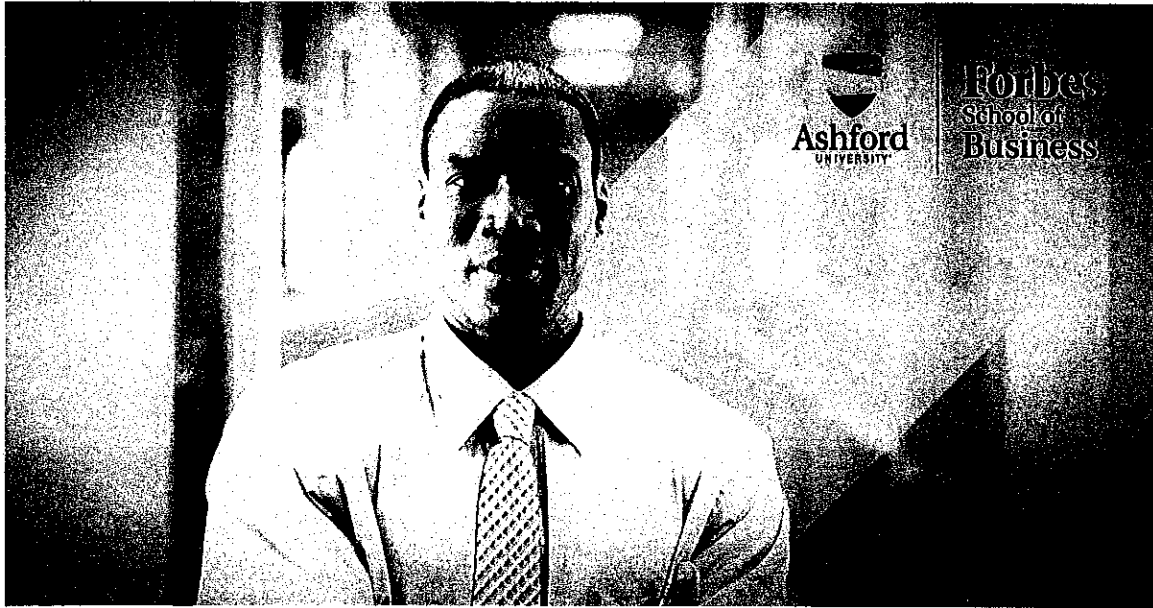










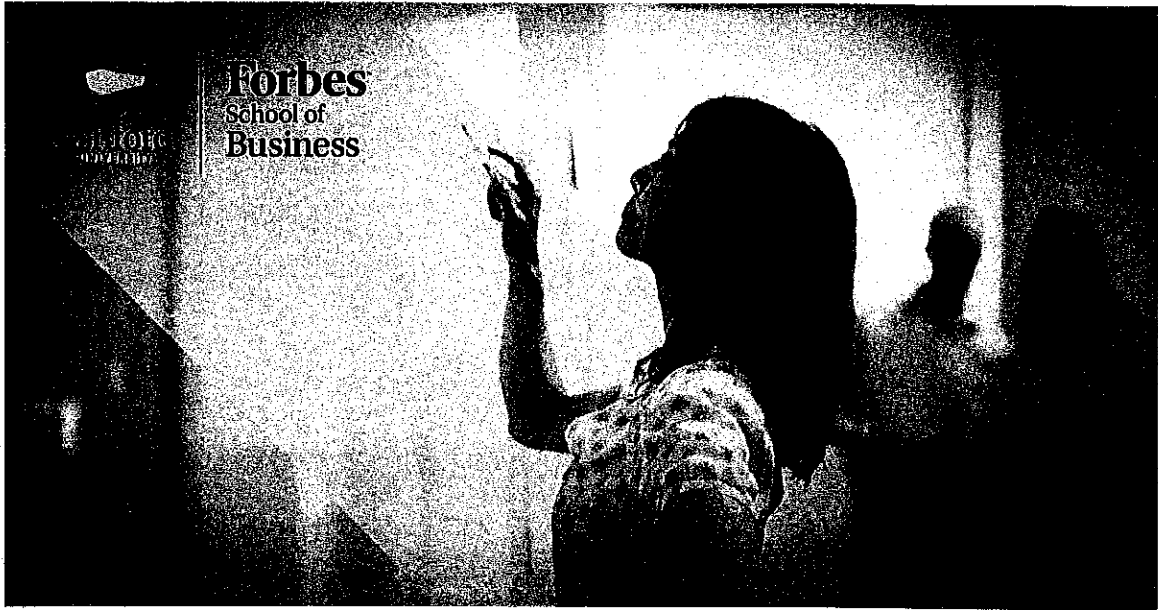






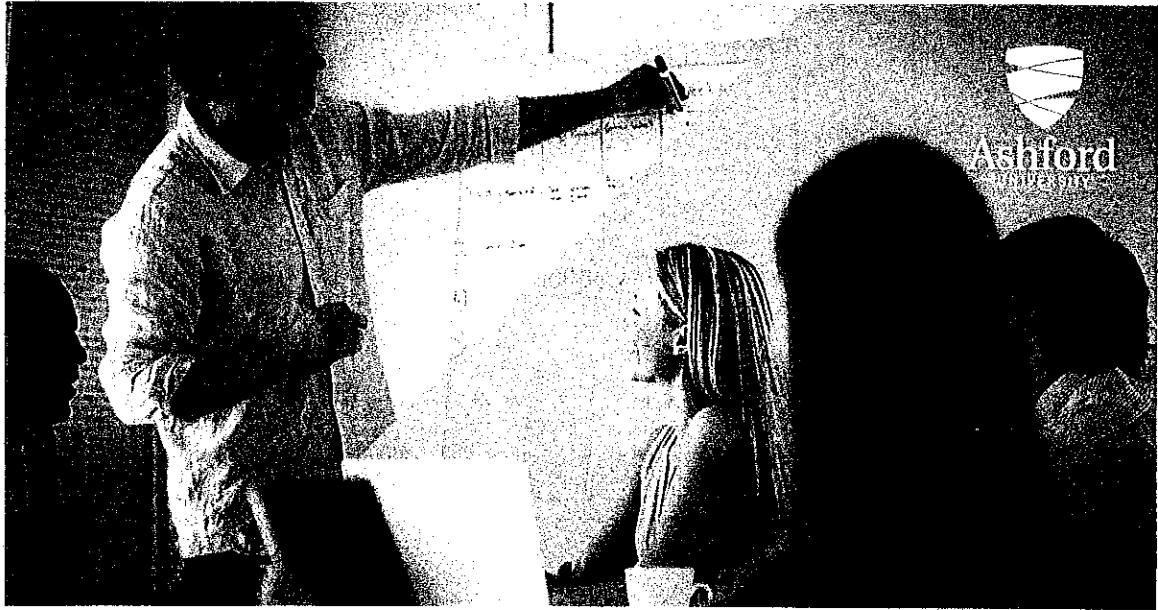


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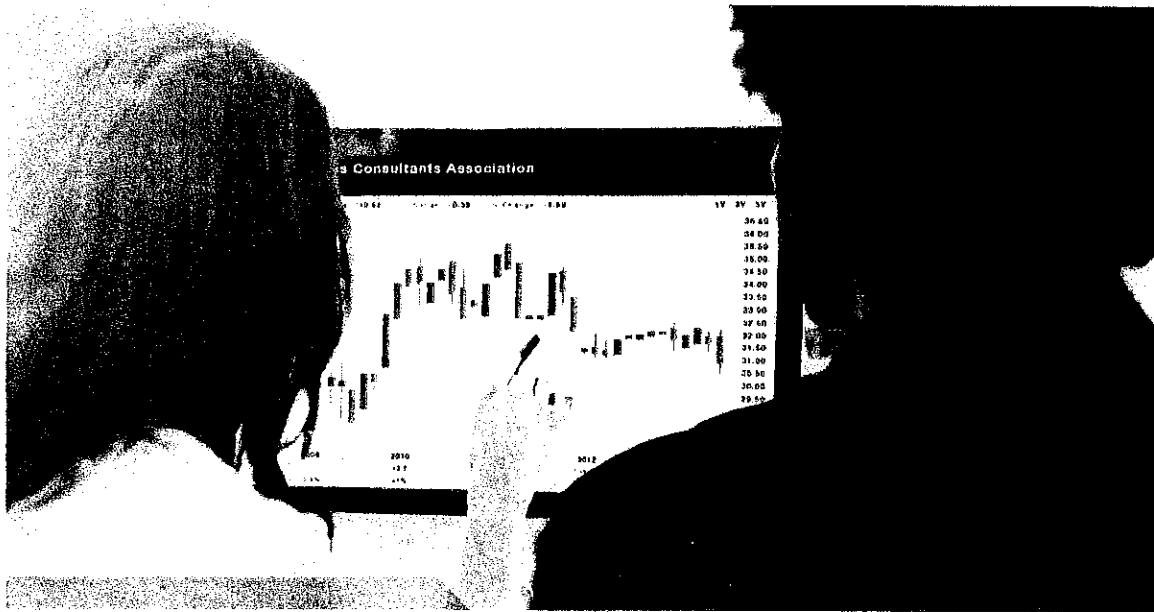




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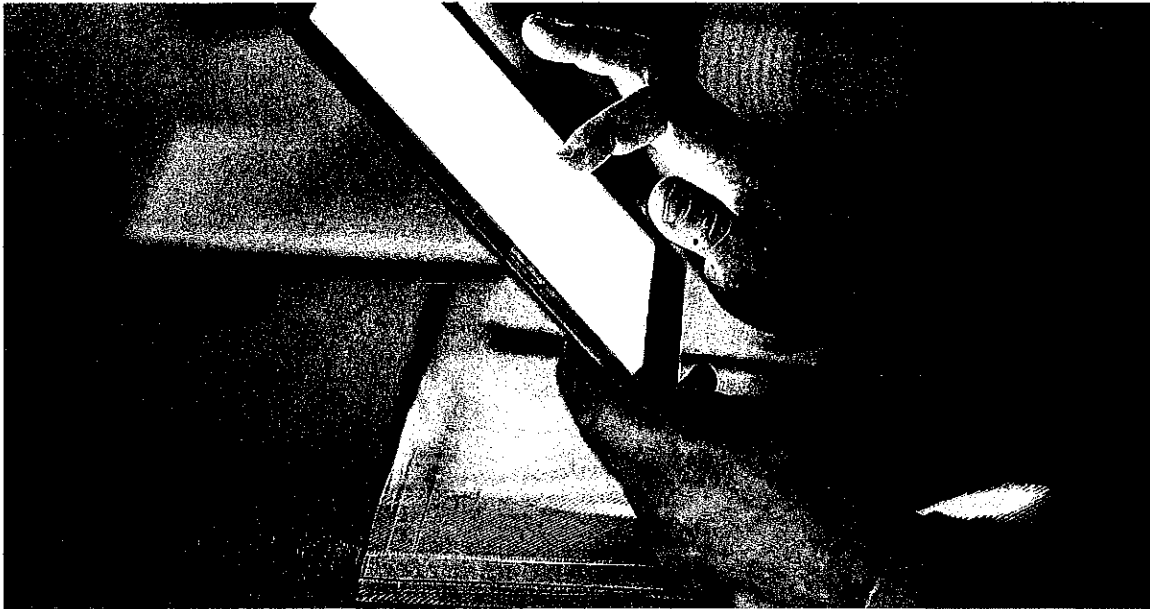




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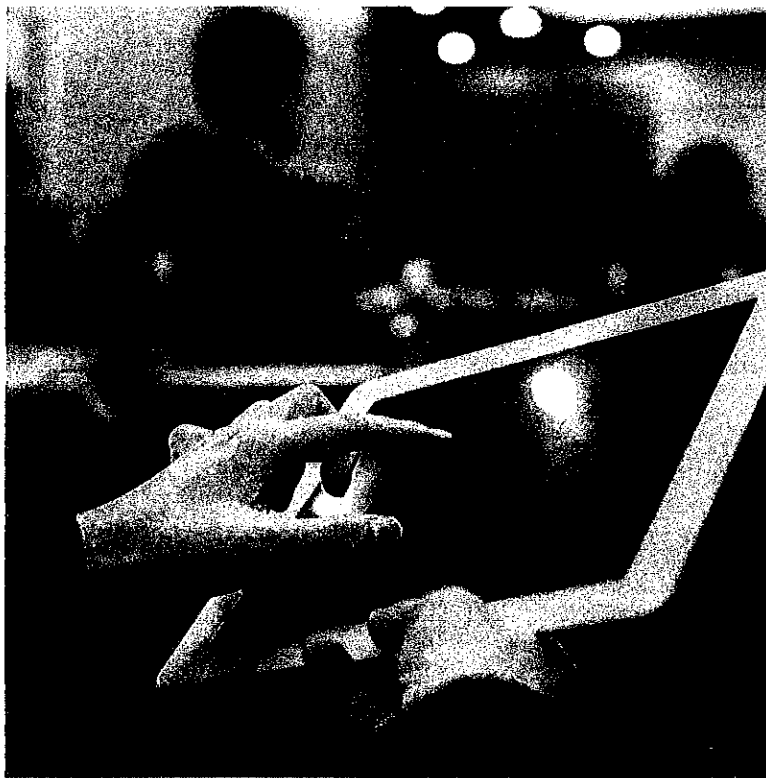
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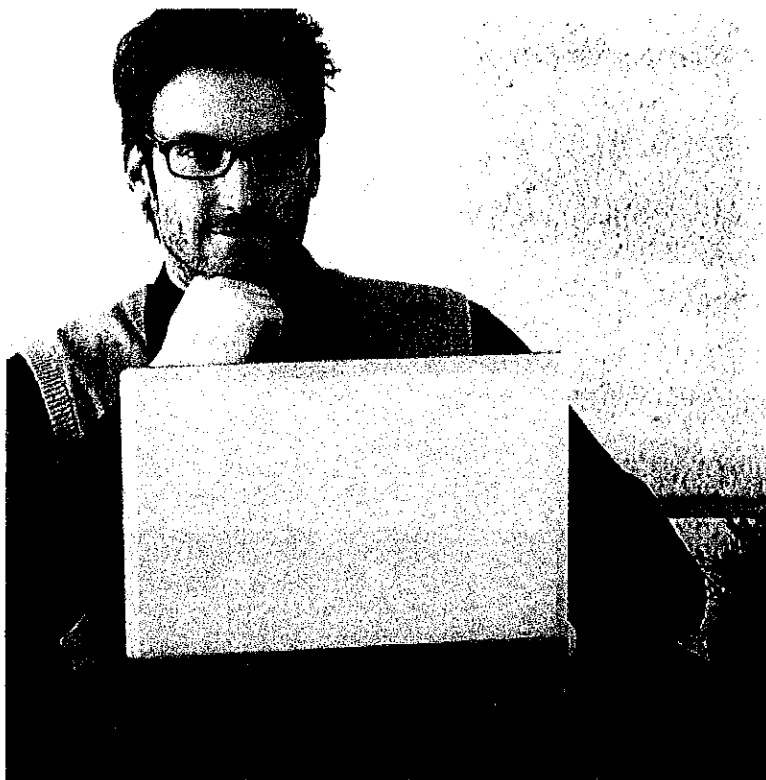
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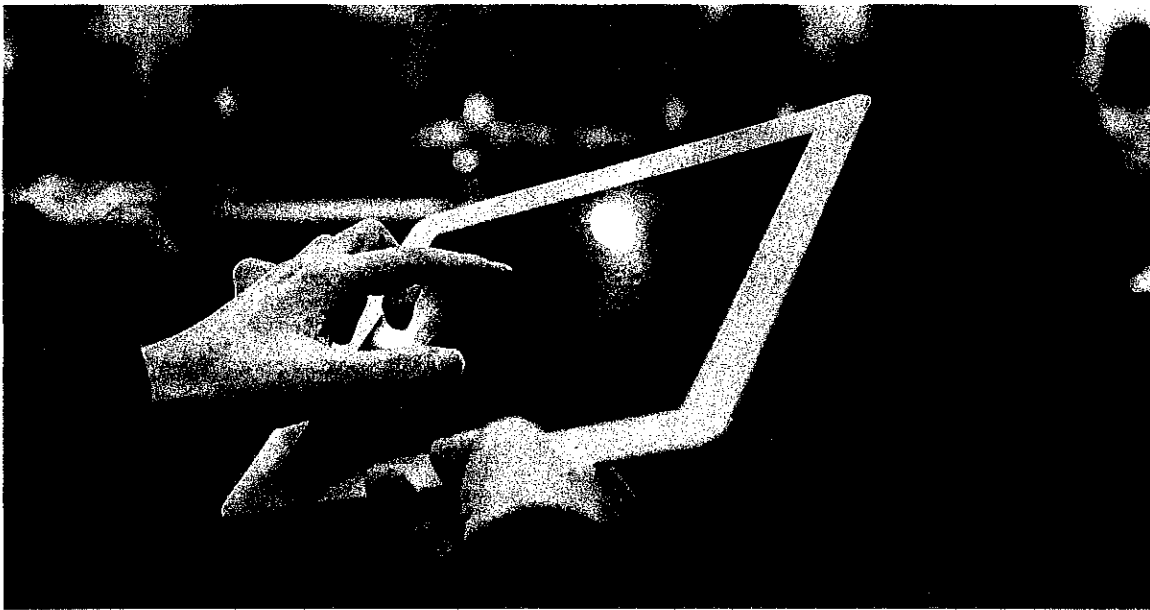


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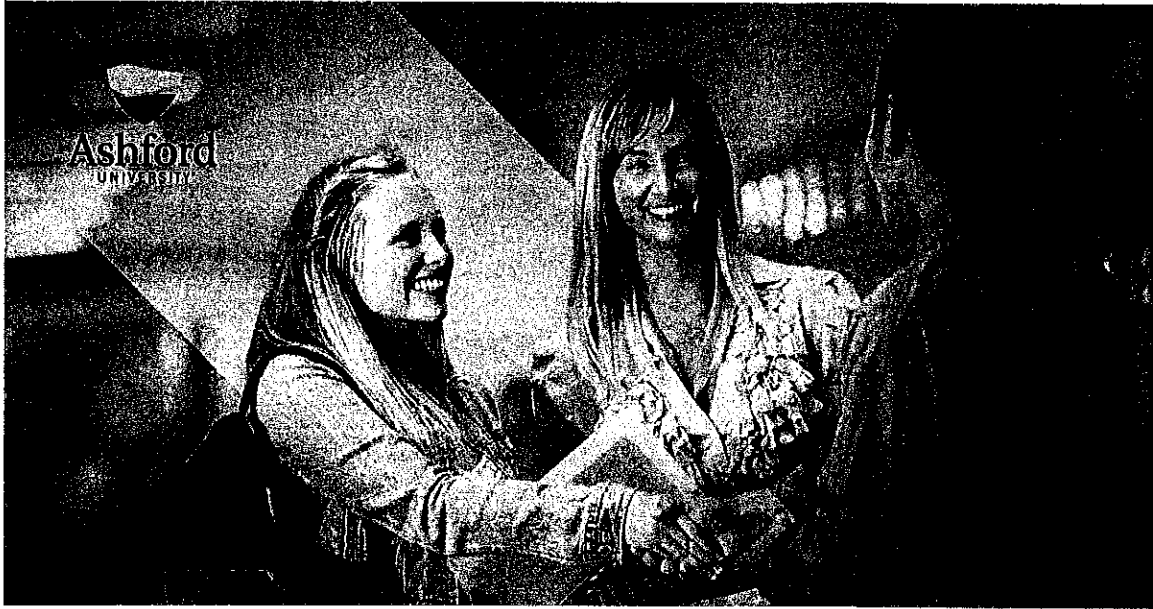
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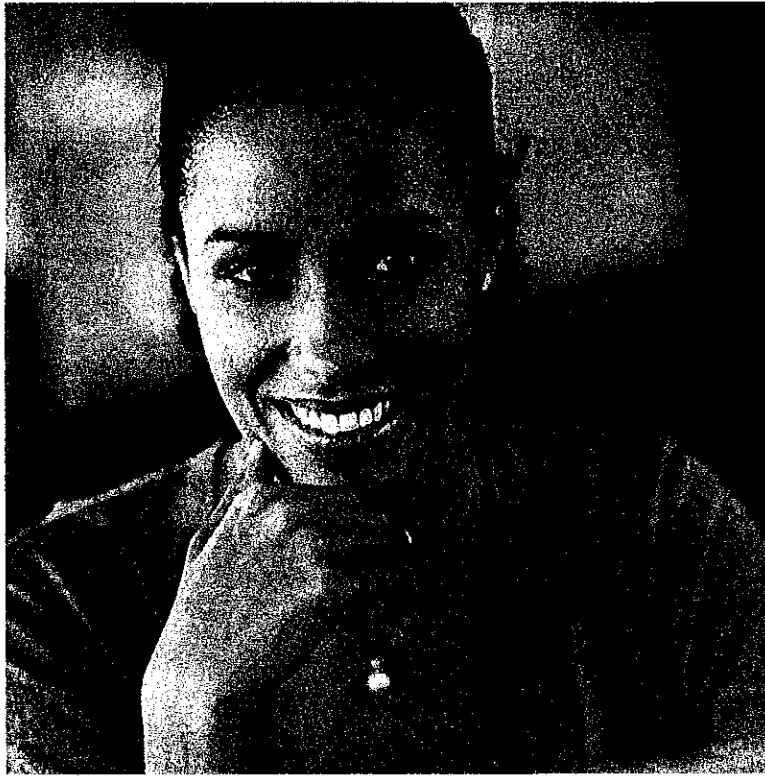


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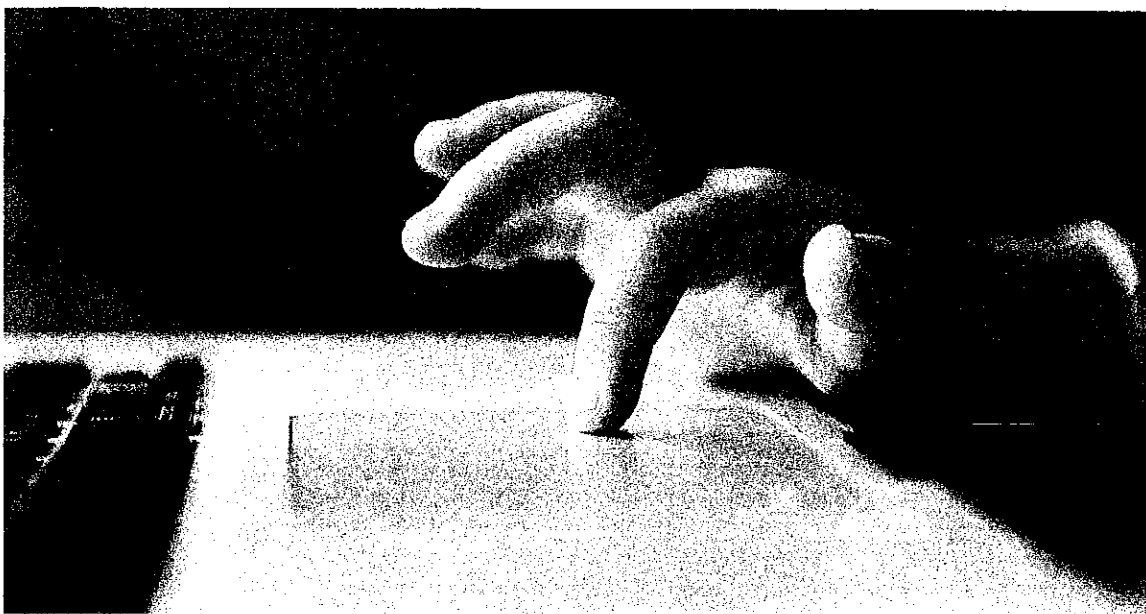








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AC: *Even though we still have the same 24 hours in a day we've always had, it seems like today we have fewer hours in a day because we've crammed them full. How can people achieve greatness when they're working with less time?*

SG: Well, that's probably more of an illusion than anything else. We just do a lot of things we're not supposed to be doing. We're not clear on the things that we should be doing, and we waste a lot of time. Going after the dream, going after the big things as opposed to working on the small things. How do you get to the top of the mountain? You take one step at a time. So it's a step-by-step process of organizing your life. I created a 9-step success process, which teaches people how to organize a life around themselves, and makes it clear what your time should be used for.

AC: *You talk about how as children, we go to school, memorize information, repeat it, and then forget it. How would you advise online adult learners to avoid that pattern and get more out of their education?*

SG: Again, it starts with having an identity and being clear on what you're going to be working on and what makes you happy and what motivates you. There's three ways to learn. Number one; you need information, you need content. And we have lots of content in the marketplace. The question is, is it relevant? Number two; you need cognitive ability. So you need to be able to think about what's important to you and you need to be able to understand how to process and take information and make it relevant to your life and make it actionable. And the third way is: you need to be motivated.

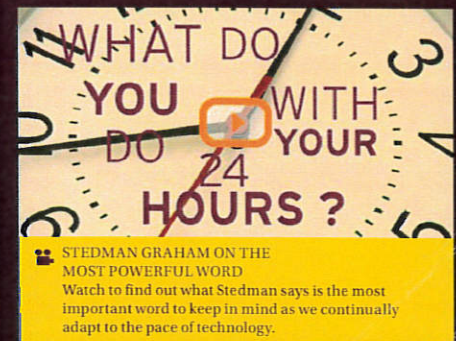
So you want to do things that you're passionate about, that you care about, and that you love, because life is about working on yourself every single day to improve – and it's called practice. So you need to practice, practice, practice all your life working on the right things to make you happy – and then it's really not work!

"We have to keep reinventing ourselves all the time and again, stay on the cutting edge, and get the best information that will make us relevant – the buzz word of the 21st century is relevance."

AC: *Now that Ashford graduates here today have achieved this milestone, is it enough for them to just show up to work with a degree or are there next steps you advise them to take?*

SG: I think that you have to be careful that you don't move further and further behind today, because the global marketplace is expanding and you have to be prepared. There's a saying that "success is when preparation meets opportunity." And today with all the technology moving so fast and... having to compete with people all over the world, you have to be prepared and you have to stay prepared. And so the ability to rest and relax is not a part of the program any more. You have to be on it, be conscious of the opportunity to create and develop, have ongoing innovation and creativity, work hard, be passionate about your work, show up, and be self-engaged in the world that you live in. You've got family, yourself, your community, work, and all these other things you have to balance, so it takes a very special person – and that's called strong leadership. It takes a strong leader. And that's who you have to become. You have to move from a follower to a leader – and stay there. //

Watch these videos featuring sections of this interview as well as the full commencement speech.





ASHFORD ALUM COACHES US SKELETON TEAMS IN SOCHI

by Lorelei Plotczyk

“

*Follow your dreams,
never give up, and
when it gets tough,
push through it.*

”

In 1990, Tuffield “Tuffy” Latour answered a solicitation in an Air Force newspaper for active duty airmen to try out for the U.S. Bobsled team. “I started sliding that year driving bobsleds and raced for the next eight years,” Tuffy explains. In 1998, he started coaching bobsled and has never looked back.

Now an Air Force Sergeant, Tuffy has coached in the last four games and has led six U.S. and Canadian athletes to medals. In Salt Lake City in 2002, he was the driving coach for the U.S. Women’s Bobsled Team; in 2006 in Torino, he was the U.S. Men’s Bobsled Team head coach; and in 2010 in Vancouver, he was the head coach for the Canadian men and women’s bobsled teams. Later that year, he took the job as the head coach for the U.S. Skeleton Team.

Earlier this year in Sochi on the world stage, he led the U.S. men’s and women’s skeleton teams to two medals (a silver for Noelle Pikus-Pace in the women’s skeleton event and a bronze for Matt Antoine in the men’s event). Several of his other athletes placed respectably as well. He found the Sochi sliding facilities to be world-class and the entire experience extremely positive.

Serving our country not only at the world’s most prestigious athletic event but also in the military means that Tuffy is involved in the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program (WCAP). WCAP provides outstanding soldier-athletes the support and training to compete and succeed in national and international competitions leading to the games, while maintaining a professional military career and promoting the U.S. Army to the world. “I got involved in WCAP in 1995 shortly after I joined the Vermont Army National Guard. As a soldier, it’s always an honor to be able to serve and represent your country at the . . . games.”

Tuffy enrolled at Ashford in 2007 right after taking the Head Coach position with the Canadian bobsled team. “Ashford offered me the ability to take classes while on the road. As a bobsled and skeleton coach, we travel quite a lot in the winter months, which leaves flexibility as a must for any working adult. I really enjoyed my time at Ashford. I feel that I learned a lot, as I was able to relate quite a bit to the **Organizational Management** degree I was pursuing.”

Tuffy has continued to juggle many roles successfully, although he points out, “As a husband, father, soldier, student, and coach, I’ve always had my hands full. It’s amazing how time flies by when you’re trying to juggle so many areas of life.”

His advice to Ashford students and alumni is as follows: “Follow your dreams, never give up, and when it gets tough, push through it. I always tell my athletes to focus on the process. Part of that belief system is to take it one curve at a time, which in turn allows the athletes to stay process-oriented.” //

ALUMNI STORIES BROUGHT TO LIFE

by Lorelei Plotczyk and Jay Conner

The following videos were all filmed at the Fall 2013 commencement weekend on the Ashford campus in Clinton, IA as well as at the iWireless Center in nearby Moline, IL, where the ceremony was held. From an international marketing wunderkind to a teacher bringing technology into her classroom, we hope these stories inspire and move you.

COMMUNICATIONS GRAD HELPING KIDS

BRITTANY HARRIS

Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies, 2013

Having graduated from Ashford University at the age of 27, Brittany Harris is not wasting time getting started with her professional goals.

"I want to reach out in schools and do public speaking and mentoring," she enthused on her commencement day, "so this **Communication Studies** degree encompasses all of it: the material that I'll have to come up with, the memos that I'll have to write, the public speaking I'll have to do. I'm already in the works of starting my own business where I'm going into local schools in my area and talking about the next steps, talking about going to college and figuring out what to do."

"I want to reach out in schools and do public speaking and mentoring."

Upon hearing this, one might assume this resident of Blacklick, OH must have the luxury of time – but nothing could be further from the truth. "Being a single mom," she shared, "I've had a full-time job and a lot of other extracurricular activities. It was nice to be able to answer the discussion posts from pretty much wherever I was, or to download [interactive learning platform] **Constellation** and be able to read my textbooks while I'm waiting on my daughter in dance class, or waiting on her swimming lessons. So I was able to take school with me."

Brittany's road to earning her degree was not a short one. She went to two other universities prior to Ashford, and was able to **transfer** in 46 of the 49 credits she submitted from those institutions. "And then that way I didn't have to go back and start over; I was able to just keep going."

When she finally pulled up to Ashford's Clinton, IA campus with her daughter and mother Tanya (who is also an Ashford graduate!), she explained that her surreal feelings transformed into a more tangible experience. "It's actually tomorrow I'll be crossing the stage! It's been a 7-year journey to get my Bachelor's degree, so now that it's finally at the end, it's just amazing."

Tanya, who graduated in 2009 with her Bachelor of Arts in Social Science, Education concentration*, was equally emotional, especially since she didn't get to attend her own Ashford commencement but was now able to cheer on her daughter. She reflected on her own professional success due in part to earning her Ashford degree, after which she went on to earn a



View the above video to see our interview with Brittany.

graduate degree and a teaching licensure. "I started as a teacher's aide and was able to get a full-time teaching position, and I love it. It's just my passion. It made a big difference having that degree."

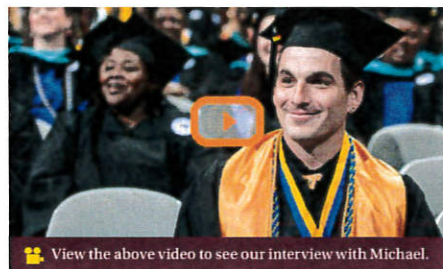
With this family legacy coupled with such enthusiasm and passion, it's likely that there will be no limit to what Brittany can accomplish.

**This program was replaced with the Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies.*

ASPIRING JOURNALIST ACING INTERVIEWS

MICHAEL LEACH

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication, 2013



View the above video to see our interview with Michael.

"One of my biggest concerns coming in was: I had tried college before and wasn't all that good at it," admits 2013 graduate Michael Leach. "Ashford was the only school willing to let me transfer in the credits that worked with me instead of transferring in the ones that held me back."

Transferring in 24 credits toward his **Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication** helped Michael make the most of going back to school. He also found the online set-up much more accessible

"Knowing it's over and yet just beginning is a strange and fantastic feeling."

than learning in a brick and mortar classroom. "Most of my teachers would email me back within three hours of sending an email out. They were very up on keeping in touch with the students," he says. "And learning online was beneficial as far as not having to ever leave the house to go anywhere. It just really worked out quite nicely."

Right before attending his graduation, Michael went on his first interview at a local newspaper in the Winchester, CA area, where he lives. Before even scheduling the second interview, the company told him they'd like to bring him on to do some

freelance work. "They were very impressed with what I had written for Ashford," he says. "Having the journalism degree takes a talent I have and allows me to do something with it."

Michael encourages anyone who is thinking about going back to school to look closely at Ashford as a way to make it happen in an affordable and efficient way. "You deserve to feel proud of yourself," he says. "For me, knowing that it's over and yet just beginning, is a strange and fantastic feeling." Michael is currently working on a memoir detailing his life with a disability.

MARKETING WUNDERKIND GOES INTERNATIONAL

JANICE DY

Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations and Marketing, International Management specialization, 2013

Ashford University graduate Janice Dy and a friend started a fitness magazine called Asian Bodi to share fitness tips while giving exposure to Asian athletes and bodybuilders. After Asian Bodi caught the attention of one of the world's most popular bodybuilding magazines, Flex, Janice and her friend were invited to help Flex expand their Asian market.

"My final paper at Ashford was about the globalization of Asian Bodi," Janice explains. "Because of the research I did at school, I was able to give that information to someone else, and they were so impressed about some of my marketing findings, I was given a great career opportunity! I'm really excited."

This Orlando, FL resident, who graduated from Ashford at the age of 30, was recently put in charge of marketing for Flex Southeast Asia. She's also planning on growing her own magazine's market to a dozen more countries. The biggest challenge she feels she and most other international managers have to deal with is learning how to integrate different kinds



View the above video to see our interview with Janice.

of personnel and employee personalities on top of different types of cultural backgrounds. "Through some of the courses I took at Ashford, I feel up to that challenge," she says. "You have to be adventurous; you have to be open to different opportunities and driven to deal with those challenges."

Before coming to Ashford, Janice took classes at Penn State and University of Central Florida. Even though her courses at Penn State were also through an online program, she felt Ashford better accommodated her schedule. "Ashford's program is more conducive to a full-time working adult," she says, "because you're able to focus on one course at a time. It also helped me complete my assignments with quality as well."

Janice always had hopes of using her **Public Relations and Marketing degree** in the fitness industry, specifically on an international scale. She's enjoying seeing her dreams become reality.

"This is just the beginning," she says. "It's really great to be able to take my coursework from Ashford University and use it professionally."

TEACHER USING TECHNOLOGY IN HER CLASSROOM

JULIE ANN MCCOY PERCEVECZ

Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning with Technology, 2013

With 26 years of teaching experience in an elementary school classroom under her belt, Julie Ann McCoy Percevecz was under zero pressure to add to her professional credentials. A second grade teacher and a gifted and talented program coordinator at her school, she already held a Bachelor's degree in elementary education and a Master's in counseling. Yet, at the age of 50, this Schertz, TX resident has expanded her academic arsenal even further by graduating from Ashford University with a **Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning with Technology (MATLT)** - with a 4.0 GPA!

Along with the eventual goal of transitioning to becoming an online instructor, Julie cites her desire to improve and enhance her teaching ability in the classroom as a major driving force in pursuing this unique degree. "Technology is the future in education. My classroom kiddos benefit from this degree every day. The tools and knowledge I have gained from the program are priceless, and I share them with my coworkers on a day-to-day basis as well."

The degree's positive impact on her ability to shine professionally is clear. Recently, while developing a program for her gifted students, Julie drew from her Ashford coursework to develop a training presentation that her whole district then used. Additionally, many projects that have to do with technology now often



View the above video to see our interview with Julie and her husband Joe, who also graduated.

fall to her, a position she relishes being in. "I have led the way with my team several times on developing lessons that have been used throughout the school."

The impact has been no less profound on her students. "There were several activities I pulled directly from my MATLT course activities, including the ability to convert a typical lecture lesson into an online activity that was 100% completed at home with parents and presented in class. Everyone was excited about the whole process."

Her advice to others in a similar stage in their career? "Your education is something that's never too late to receive and will never be regretted."

STUDENT EARNS 4.0 DESPITE DEPLOYMENT

BRIAN HABEL

Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management, 2013



View the above video to see our interview with Brian.

Brian Habel, who is in charge of recruiting and retention for the Illinois Army National Guard, earned a perfect 4.0 GPA at Ashford University despite his **military commitment** - which included an overseas deployment!

The professional benefits of having earned a **Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management** degree, which he did at the age of 46, have been tangible as well. "My team does a lot of projects within the community, so it gives me new ideas, fresh information, and more knowledge to pass on to them about how to make successful projects happen." //



While deployed, it was very easy to communicate and attend the classes.



Brian credits the staff and **technology** behind Ashford's online platform for making it possible. "While deployed, it was very easy to communicate and attend the classes. Being online, you can feel like you're a million miles away with a lot of different schools, but the customer service at Ashford has been outstanding."

This Rock Island, IL resident has been active duty National Guard since 1986 and has five children and stepchildren ranging from elementary school age to adult. "It keeps you busy!"

How does Brian explain the incredible achievement of having earned a perfect 4.0 GPA despite his professional, family, and travel commitments? "That was kind of a personal goal for my kids; showing them that when you're going to do something, jump in with both feet rather than halfway. Having a 4.0 meant I was making the most out of that opportunity that Ashford was presenting to me. I wanted to take everything out of the college experience that I could."

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

In this issue, we get to know two professors from Ashford's College of Liberal Arts. True to their College's namesake, they bring interesting backgrounds in unexpected and diverse fields into their classrooms.

by Lorelei Plotczyk

DR. DAN TINIANOW

Dr. Dan Tinianow, an Assistant Professor in Ashford's College of Liberal Arts, currently teaches COM 200 Interpersonal Communication. "I like teaching a course that almost everyone takes and that everyone can relate to their everyday life. Ultimately, I want to teach as many of the Communication Studies courses as I can."

This current resident of Denver, CO brings a hands-on background in communications into his virtual classrooms, having worked in the Los Angeles entertainment industry during the 2000s. He pitched television shows to people like Warren Littlefield (who put *Seinfeld* on the air and had a character on the show based on him) and companies like International Creative Management (ICM). He had a series in development with the Johnson Group, which oversees media aspects of the Democratic and Republican national conventions every four years, and was the senior researcher for a History Channel program called "Secret Passages." He also did script coverage for product placement and celebrity endorsement firm The Reel Ross Group, where he read scripts for movies and looked for product placement opportunities.

And Dr. Tinianow's Hollywood experience wasn't only behind the scenes - in 2002, he appeared as a contestant on the show "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" and won \$16,000! "The game show did a special event called 'radio week,' and I represented KFI, a major radio station in Los Angeles. I got this honor by being the high scorer on a qualifying quiz, and then had to compete against the other LA finalists in New York for the final spot." He found it interesting to be on the other side of the camera, and his industry experience meant he wasn't fazed by aspects of production viewers don't see at home, like having to repeat a part of the show four times due to a cell phone interfering with the lighting system!

So how does working in academia compare to an exciting Hollywood career? "To be honest, work in the entertainment business is a lot of fun, but there is also a lot of pressure and, more significantly, a lot of walking over other people to move your own career forward, which is the part that keeps me in academia! I continue to have ideas for and contacts in the industry, though, so maybe I'll do some work there again someday, but it's not a priority - and living in Denver, it's not that likely right now."



Dr. Dan Tinianow relaxes at home in Denver with his wife Wanzhu Zhao, also an Ashford employee, and their sons Matthew and Nathaniel.

"I like teaching a course that almost everyone...can relate to their everyday life."

In addition to Colorado, teaching jobs have also taken Dr. Tinianow to China and Japan, and he speaks both languages to a degree. Fascinatingly, he is also a certified hypnotherapist, though currently out of practice. His wife works on the opposite side of the same floor in Ashford's Denver office as a Student Advisor, and they have lunch together almost every day. They have two young sons and a senior Bichon Frise.

DR. KATIE BOJAKOWSKI

Dr. Katie Bojakowski is an Assistant Professor in the College of Liberal Arts at Ashford University, where she teaches in the Social Science/Justice Studies department. She holds a doctorate and a Master of Arts in Nautical Archaeology from Texas A&M, where she graduated *magnum cum laude* on both occasions. She also graduated *magnum cum laude* from Eastern Washington University, where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Anthropology.

Dr. Bojakowski's graduate degrees focus on the study of ancient and historical shipwrecks. "My scholarly interests range widely from nautical archaeology with an emphasis on 15th-19th century Atlantic seafaring, to English, Bermudian, and American colonial seafaring, to Caribbean seafaring. I am also interested in the study of ships as societal symbols, ship iconography, gender in archaeology, and the anthropology of seafaring."

She's participated on several shipwreck excavations throughout her career and is currently the co-director of The Warwick Project, a collaborative effort between several groups to excavate the race-built galleon Warwick, which wrecked while at anchorage in Bermuda during a hurricane in 1619. As director of the Warwick Project, Dr. Bojakowski has funded the excavation of this prime example of a late 16th-century naval warship, and early



Dr. Katie Bojakowski hard at work as a nautical archaeologist.



Dr. Kate Bojakowski's passion for nautical archaeology has taken her all over the world.

17th-century ships that played a fundamental role in supplying the English settlements in North America, through grants from the National Geographic Society, the Perot Foundation, the Global Exploration and Overlanding Society, and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, among others. The project has generated peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and public interest around the world.

When asked what fascinates her so much about the topic, Dr. Bojakowski says, "Nautical archaeology is more than a study of seafaring technology; it is an examination of the ambitions and motivations of individuals and nations for purposes of trade, exploration, and colonization. It is also a story of symbolism, national pride, and the human drive to look beyond the known world and discover the unknown. It is this aspect of my research that I find fascinating. I was initially drawn to the field of nautical archaeology because it combined my love of the sea with my interest in archaeology. I also have the ability to study shipwrecks from many different time periods and nationalities, which

"I find teaching at Ashford both extremely rewarding and continually challenging."

keeps my research exciting and fresh."

In addition to Bermuda, shipwreck excavations have taken Dr. Bojakowski to the Azores Islands, the Dominican Republic, Portugal, and Oklahoma. In the Azores Islands, she was part of an archaeological team that excavated a 16th century Spanish galleon called the Angra D wreck. She also recorded timbers from a landlocked shipwreck; the Cais do Sodre wreck, in Lisbon. In the Dominican Republic, she was the co-director of an archaeological survey of the southern shore of the island and joined the Monti Cristi Project excavating a 17th century shipwreck off of La Isla Cabrita. In addition, she spent two summers working on the Red River Project in Oklahoma excavating and recording the hull of the Heroine, which was an early 19th century steamship.

Dr. Bojakowski encourages her students to be curious. She says, "I find teaching at Ashford both extremely rewarding and continually challenging. The college experience is often defined by introducing students to critical thinking and self-reflection. As an instructor I take pleasure in being part of the process of teaching students that the world is a much bigger place than they ever imagined." Dr. Bojakowski lives in Washington State and is most happy on a sailboat or scuba diving underneath it. She spends most of her free time hiking, camping, and going on backpacking expeditions with her family. //

For more biographies of Ashford faculty members and to follow their most recent accomplishments, visit ashford.edu/faculty.

IN YOUR WORDS: ARTICLES PENNED BY ALUMNI

Ashford University is proud to feature articles written by our alumni in Ashford Connections. If you have an article to submit or an idea that you would like to write about, please contact Alumni Relations at alumni@ashford.edu.

DEVELOPING THE PEARL WITHIN YOU

BY ELIHU CLAIBORNE

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication, 2013



You can say that strengths are like pearls. Each human being possesses a pearl within that is both unique and rare. Because our time on this earth is limited, and we all want to make the most of that time, it is incredibly important that we develop our pearls in every way possible during our lives.

An actual pearl is introduced to the world through a rather strange and intriguing process. Pearls are literally the product of constant irritation. For instance, an oyster feeds off the bottom of the ocean and occasionally it will suction a grain of sand that becomes lodged on the inside. That sand causes the oyster

discomfort, so it rubs and rubs in an effort to get rid of it. The constant friction caused by the rubbing eventually forms the sand into a beautiful pearl, for which people will pay thousands of dollars. But the fact of the matter is that the beautiful pearl is birthed out of a fairly uncomfortable situation that the oyster would have preferred to not deal with. But that irritation was divinely designed to become something beautiful; to blossom into a valuable treasure. In much the same way, every irritation in our life has the potential to become a pearl.

The Christian scripture talks about how our higher power is the potter and we are the clay. No matter our religious beliefs, one way we are formed and molded is by being in uncomfortable situations. We're not always getting our way or being treated right, or something is not happening as fast as we would like. This pressure brings to light impurities in our character such as pride, selfishness, cynicism, and being easily offended; things we need to get rid of to reach a higher place. Each time we are challenged, we need to remind ourselves that this is only a test and an opportunity to rise above. The irritation was never designed to frustrate you, it was designed to help you grow, to help you develop that pearl, and to motivate you.

Many faiths believe that ultimately our faith is tried in the fire of affliction, just as fire tests and purifies gold. Some of you may be in that refiner's fire right now, going through a tough time. You probably don't like it and believe it's not fair. But let me encourage you: if you'll keep the faith and keep pushing forward, you will emerge more refined, purified, stronger, and better off than you were before you faced the fire.

Higher powers are constantly working on us. We grow little by little and we continue to be a work in progress each and every day. During our journey there will almost definitely be suffering that we have to endure. There are going to be times when we say, "I can't take it anymore! I can't deal with this child! I can't handle this boss! I can't put up with this rude person in my life anymore! I can't balance my family and career one more day!" Do not give up! Just hang in there and remember, like the pearl, you are slowly maturing into something beautiful and unique.

Every person has value deep within. We are being formed into something more priceless than any amount of money can buy! Sometimes when we look at ourselves, we often tend to see our weaknesses but overlook our strengths. I am grateful that I've learned to focus on my strengths and permit my weaknesses to exist as a catalyst to help me mature as a young man. None of us are finished products. We are still growing and forming.

Recognize the pearl within you and don't fight against it, because the pearl within you will lead you to the beautiful person you were meant to be.

Ashford alumni may submit articles to be considered for "In Your Words" by emailing connections@ashford.edu.

EXPERIENCING AN EVOLVING SOUTH AFRICA

BY KEVIN BESSY

Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management, 2013

Master of Business Administration, Entrepreneurship specialization

Kevin Bessy, a senior estimator at a construction company group in Ontario, Canada who earned his BA in Organizational Management from Ashford in 2013 and is currently back earning his MBA, was selected to receive a \$2,000 travel grant to attend the Golden Key International Honour Society 2013 South Africa Summit. The summit, held on September 20 and 21 at the foot of Table Mountain in Cape Town, had a theme of "Lead - Inspire - Grow," which supported the Golden Key "Stand Out - Stand Up - Stand Together" slogan. It was an opportunity for Kevin to travel across the globe while networking with individuals with similar aspirations and dreams. Below is Kevin's account of the transformative experience.



Ashford alum Kevin Bessy poses at the foot of Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa.

"My visit to the South African Summit was exhilarating."

My visit to the South African Summit was exhilarating. Not only was it a chance to see and experience the geography of another continent, but also a diverse culture outside what I am accustomed to in North America. It was an opportunity to meet and interact with the emerging face of a country steeped in history, but also a nation and people healing and evolving from within. I saw how young South Africans are gearing up to contribute to society, constructing the roads and vehicles that will allow for the restructuring of the establishments and adding to the potential and value of future generations.

The workshops I attended at the South African Summit were filled with such high and intoxicating aspirations. From them, I was able to experience the energy behind how the next generations will be shaping their country. They are examining the ways

in which to engage others in their communities, take action, and become agents of change. They hope to be useful, contribute, and take ownership rather than waiting for someone (or government programs) to intervene. They are taking action and developing their national pride and identity, and they are creating sound means in which to expand upon, develop, and retain the intellectual resources of the country. Expanding on this type of thinking to engage the broader community is also a priority.

The young South Africans I met all exhibited leadership traits of empathy, autonomy, conscientiousness, and problem-solving abilities to set goals with confidence and accomplish action plans. This was truly a spectacular and exhilarating experience to see and be part of. I was completely moved and touched by these people's dedication to engage the services of the summit participants to take part in a community involvement program. We were all called together to help volunteer by packaging school supplies for a local school and sign a petition pledging to help stop the local violence against women.

It was an experience I will never forget, and I was delighted to have had such an opportunity. What I took away was how to engage my coworkers and employees in becoming active in our own communities, igniting drive and passion within them to recognize what is needed and how we could come together to empower and act from within to make a difference.

Thank you to Golden Key for this incredible experience!

Learn about future summits. //

THE ASHFORD MEN'S SOCCER TEAM'S RUN TO THE NAIA SEMIFINALS

by Ryan Thomas, Sports Information Director

Coming off a year in which they made their second appearance at the NAIA Men's Soccer National Championship, the Ashford University men's soccer team looked to not only match that success in 2013, but take another step toward becoming a national power. Instead, head Coach Richard Markham and the Saints grew their success by leaps and bounds, advancing to the semifinals of the 2013 NAIA Men's Soccer National Championships in Montgomery, AL.

The Saints finished the 2013 season with a 16-4-2 record, finished fourth in the final NAIA Top-25 Soccer Coaches' Poll, and advanced farther than any program in school history.

Those wins helped propel the Saints to the Association of Independent Institutions (A.I.I.) regular season championship and the number one seed in the A.I.I. Tournament in Lawrenceville, GA. The Saints would come up short in the A.I.I. title game, but qualified for the NAIA Tournament by earning an at-large bid.

Clinton would play host to the Opening Round of the NAIA Tournament for the second year in a row on November 23, 2013, as Ashford welcomed Cardinal Stritch University (WI) to South Campus. Trailing by a goal late in the game, sophomore Tim Krautheim tied the game at two with 43 seconds

to go, sending the Ashford faithful into a frenzy. The comeback was completed in double overtime when junior Javier Ramirez faked out the Stritch goalkeeper and fired the ball into the net, sending Ashford to the Round of 16.

Ashford's second round opponent, the Wildcats of Baker University (KS), notched a win over the Saints in the season opener and had AU on the ropes after tying the game at two late. The game headed to double-overtime and appeared destined for a shootout when Krautheim found the back of the net with 44 seconds to go, giving AU a berth in the quarterfinals.

After a 5-1 win over Rio Grande (OH) in the quarters, all that stood between the Saints and a spot in the championship game were the Red Hawks of Martin Methodist (TN). Ashford took a 1-0 lead early in the second half, but the Red Hawks tied things up shortly after. Two overtimes solved nothing and the game headed to penalty kicks, where the Red Hawks ended the Saints' season en route to their first ever national championship.

Following the tournament, the Saints collected a slew of postseason awards. Freshman Daniel Dreier and junior Mark Hiller were named to the NAIA's All-Tournament Team and the team



*The Saints...
advanced farther
than any program in
school history.*



was awarded with the Nels Dahlquist Memorial Team Sportsmanship Award. Lucas Almeida (second team), Dreier (third team), and Fernando Machado (honorable mention) all earned All-American nominations.

Sao Paulo, Brazil-native Almeida was named A.I.I. Player of the Year and earned an all-conference nomination along with Dreier, Machado, Caio Ruiz, Patrick Kinsella, and Ramirez.

Several Saints were also recognized for their work in the classroom at the end of the year. Ramirez was named First Team Academic All-America, First Team All-District Five Academic All-America and Daktronics NAIA Scholar Athlete. Simon Brown, Alejandro Erazo, Chris Higgins, Luiz Mota and Brock Smutney also earned NAIA Scholar Athlete awards. //



The powerhouse 2013 men's soccer team poses with Ashford's lovable St. Bernard mascot, Champ.

CAMPUS VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE DISASTER RELIEF

by Audra Adams, Manager of Service Learning

In Fall 2013, Ashford Service Learning student volunteers traveled to Moore, OK and Washington, IL to help clean up after tornadoes ripped through each community. Ashford's Manager of Service Learning shares the experience here.

OKLAHOMA TORNADO RELIEF

Moore, OK was selected as the site for our annual fall semester **service trip** – a very eye-opening experience for our students. On our first day in Moore, we visited elementary school sites that were demolished by the storm. As impactful as it was visually, it was really hard for the students to read about the young children who lost their lives on that fatal day. Branden Lambiase, a participating senior Criminal Justice major, said, “During this time I found myself becoming overwhelmingly upset that these students had died, because I associated their stories with my youngest brother and could not imagine losing him in something like this.”

After this emotional experience, the rest of the trip was based on helping the community move forward. The group cleaned debris from ditches, canvassed neighborhoods for residents in need, weeded a community pumpkin patch, cleaned up a resident's yard, and spackled drywall. It was a trip that we will never forget – not just due to the devastation we encountered, but for the bonds that were formed and the relationships that were strengthened through service to strangers. “I wish we could have done even more for the Moore community, but I do understand that the work we did was needed,” said Brian. “I’m glad that I was blessed with the opportunity to experience this trip. Service is a huge passion of mine, and this trip helped solidify that in my heart.”

TORNADO RELIEF CLOSER TO HOME

The second service trip of the semester was completely unexpected, but turned out to be one of the most amazing events the Ashford campus has experienced. On November 17, 2013, an EF-4 tornado once again hit a town in the Midwest, but this time it was much closer to home. Washington, IL is only about two hours south of our Clinton campus and we have numerous students from the area. Fortunately, none of our students were directly impacted, but stories of friends and family members who lost everything came streaming in. Within a few hours of hearing the news, students were already trying to figure out



From left to right: Renee Christiansen, Audra Adams, Ann Chezem, Haley Fischer, and Kim Rogis do their part to help with tornado relief.

what the Ashford community could do to help. The next morning, we held an impromptu meeting for all students interested in helping. Within two days the students had launched a community-wide donations drive and planned another Service Learning trip to help the people of Washington.

By the end of that week, students had collected two moving trucks full of donations and over \$600 to support the Washington community. A group of 12 students (who were at the sign-up starting at 4:30 am) accompanied by six faculty and staff members including Charlie Minnick, Vice President and Campus Director, headed down with the donations to Washington, IL. They dropped off the donations and then spent the rest of the day helping two families clean up what was left of their shattered homes.

This was the first time our students were face-to-face with a disaster that was so fresh. It was an overwhelming experience for the students to see the damage that can take place in merely two minutes. The one-day trip taught the group the value of relationships over material things, and how, if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything to help those in need.

The Ashford University **Office of Service and Leadership** is planning the next service trip to New Orleans, LA to partner with Youth Rebuilding New Orleans (YRNO), an organization that refurbishes foreclosed homes and gives them to teachers to improve the educational system in New Orleans, in May 2014. //

“I’m glad that I was blessed with the opportunity to experience this trip.”

CLASS NOTES



Ashford Alum Premieres Award-Winning Short Film

Navy Veteran and Ashford graduate **Jeff Heiser '10** hosted a workshop in Idaho to share his award-winning short film "Return but No Escape," about overcoming battles with PTSD, suicide, and substance

abuse following his military career. He will also be a guest speaker at the National Conference on Addiction Disorders in St. Louis, MO in August. This writer, blogger, speaker, photographer, and short filmmaker is president and owner of Media Fish Productions LLC, a video and photography services company located in Merritt Island, FL. Not only is he a Navy veteran, but his wife and son are as well. Jeff earned a **BA in Social Science** from Ashford in 2010.



Ashford Alum Appointed Executive Director

Jasmine C. Rogers '10, who earned her **Master of Public Administration (MPA)** from Ashford, is the new Executive Director at the Village of Hope in Salisbury, Maryland. Jasmine has been with the Village as both an intern and an employee since 2010. She would like to pursue a doctoral degree in human services or organizational leadership in the future, saying, "Ashford University has given me the confidence to pursue my dreams and to take on challenges.

Learn more about Jasmine.



Ashford Alum Runs for Mayor of Eldridge, IA

Adam Feldman '13, a 29-year-old with a **BA in Business Administration** from Ashford, ran for mayor of Eldridge, IA in an election late last year. A full-time welder, Adam was inspired

to run for the city's highest office when he began hearing of opposition to a new city hall and wanted to give residents a choice. Although he didn't win this time, he looks forward to continuing to apply his Ashford Bachelor's degree positively to various aspects of his personal and professional life.



Ashford Graduate Leading Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department

Julie Hannon '11, who earned her **Master of Public Administration (MPA)** from Ashford, has been named Director of the Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department in Vancouver, WA. Julie, who has 25 years of parks and recreation experience, now oversees 44 full-time employees and 108 parks.



Aftermarket News Features Ashford Alum

Ashford graduate **Cary Redman '09** is the National Sales Manager for Edelbrock LLC. He was recently featured in The Aftermarket News, where he said working for Edelbrock is like "getting to enjoy your favorite hobby every day." Cary earned his **MBA** from Ashford in 2009.



Vice President of Sales for AGN Media Holds Ashford Degree

The Amarillo-Globe News of Texas featured Ashford graduate **Linda Anders '12**, who was named Vice President of Sales for AGN Media. Experienced in media, advertising, marketing, and public relations, she has previously served as director of advertising and marketing for Southern Newspapers in Clute and advertising sales director at BayStar Group Advertising Agency. Linda received her Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations and Marketing from Ashford in 2012 and is currently back at Ashford working on her **MBA** with a specialization in Organizational Leadership.



Ashford Alum's Restaurant Featured in Providence Journal

As reported in the Providence Journal, Ashford graduate **Steve Mellekas '10** has been running beloved Mel's Cafenio in Newport, RI, with his brother Greg since 1982. It has been a family business since the 1940s, once owned by their father and now employing some of the brothers' children as well. Steve earned his **MBA** from Ashford University in 2010.



Ashford Alum Keynote Speaker at LGBT+ Mentorship Program

Linda Anderson '11, Operations Manager of a Kellogg Company plant in Battle Creek, MI, was the keynote speaker at Western Michigan University's LGBT+ Career Mentorship Program,

which matches LGBT+ students and professionals in the area to provide support and career-related resources to the students. Linda earned her **MBA**, Supply Chain Management specialization, from Ashford in 2011 and is now earning her PhD from Ashford's sister school, University of the Rockies. "My MBA opened the door for new professional opportunities with my employer," she said. **Learn more about Linda.**



Seasoned Military Professional Grad Now Teaching at Ashford

With 32 years in the Air Force, two decades in law enforcement, and a high-profile position in the Department of Homeland Security, **Erick Stone '11**, 50, was able to earn Ashford University college credit for his experience-based learning. He applied it toward a **BA in Social and Criminal Justice** (2009) and an **MA in Education** (2011) while working full-time as a lieutenant colonel for the Department of Homeland Security, volunteering as an assistant coach for his son's football team and as a lacrosse coach at his local recreational center, and serving as an advisor to several police departments. He now teaches online courses in the Homeland Security and Law Enforcement at his alma mater.

Learn more about Erick.



Ashford Alum Named to Campus President Post

Tina Gross '11 has been employed with Ivy Tech Community College since 1993 and has served as the Executive Director at the Franklin, IN campus since 2011. She has now been named to

one of the 11 Campus President positions at the College. In Tina's new role, her focus will be on outreach to the local community. In addition, she will manage the day-to-day operations while fostering a campus climate that is consistent with the College's core values. Tina earned her **MBA** with a specialization in Organizational Leadership from Ashford.



AU Student Hired at CPA Firm

Theresa Willie is the newest associate to join Lynne Bushore & Associates, CPAs in Palm Springs. She is currently enrolled at Ashford University's Forbes School of Business, where she is working toward her **BA in**

Accounting. Her goal is to become a CPA with a focus in forensic accounting.



Disaster Restoration Company Hires Ashford Graduate

Denise Mooney '09 was hired as an assistant to the vice president of sales and marketing for Swartz Contracting and Emergency Services in Kitsap County, WA. The company specializes in disaster

restoration from damages caused by fire, water, wind or storm. Denise brings more than 15 years of experience in business administration, training, management, and marketing services for both government agencies and private industry. She holds a BA in business administration from Franklin University and an **MA in Organizational Management** from Ashford.



Ashford Graduate Wins Red Apple Award

Marcus Allen '12, who earned his BA in Social Science with a concentration in Education*, was surprised live on the Houston morning news when he was presented with the Red Apple Award

from Capital One Bank. Marcus teaches structured learning for high school students with autism at Spring High School in Spring, TX; his first teaching job. A thankful parent nominated Marcus for the award. **View the video.** Additionally, Marcus has been awarded Rookie Teacher of the Year for Spring High School. **Learn more about Marcus.**



Novel Published by Ashford Grad

Donald C. Pitts '11, who earned his **BA in Early Childhood Education** from Ashford, has had his first book published. *The Lamb and the Dragon*, available through Tate Publishing, is a

novel about good versus evil, injected with religious and supernatural themes. Donald says the book was 18 years in the making due to his struggle with Meniere's disease, an inner ear condition that affects his hearing and balance. Donald credits his Ashford education with helping him to perfect his writing skills, and also his Ashford instructor Bruce Caruthers, who edited the book at no charge.



Gaia Herbs Hires Ashford Alum as Director of Sales

Gaia Herbs* welcomed **Guinevere C. Lynn '11** to the company's newly created position of Director of Sales in January 2014. Guinevere is a 17-year veteran of the natural products

industry, having served in key leadership roles in sales, operations, and customer management in top management positions at companies including Sun Chlorella and Vega. This high-energy natural living advocate runs marathons, practices yoga, and eats a vegan diet. She completed her **MBA** at Ashford in 2011 with a 4.0 GPA.



Jamie Muniz Promoted to Marketing Associate at Pravara

Jamie Muniz '12 graduated from Paul Mitchell the School in Costa Mesa, CA in 2002, which began her career of assisting and eventually working alongside some of the most well-known

talent in the industry. She was very privileged to hone her craft under the tutelage of Paul Mitchell's finest stylists. She quickly built her own clientele and settled into a small salon in La Jolla, CA where she worked behind the chair for several years. During this time, she decided that she would go back to school to get her **BA in Public Relations and Marketing**. She worked full-time in the salon and attended school at Ashford University, graduating in 2012. Jamie's years of experience behind the chair made her an asset to the PRAVANA team, and this promotion to Marketing Associate has put her in a position to help shape the future of the industry from a stylist's perspective.



Kenmore High School Names Ashford Alum Football Coach

Kemp Boyd '10 has been hired by the Akron School District as the Football Coach at Kenmore High School. This Ashford alum, who earned his **MA in Organizational Management** in

2010, has held previous football coaching positions in the Akron School District and is looking forward to coaching KHS.



Ashford Alum Presented with California Teacher's Award

Penny Shuey '10, Director of Tenaya Parent Preschool and a teacher at Don Pedro High School, was recognized with the high school-level California Teacher's Award by the Veterans

of Foreign Wars organization (her husband, father, and uncle were in the service). Penny teaches English, journalism, speech, and culinary classes. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science with Education Concentration from Ashford.* Prior to her career in education, Penny was a single mom working as a waitress and bartender when her then-teenage daughter **Brandee Prinze '11** convinced her to go back to school. Brandee has since graduated from Ashford as well with a **BA in Psychology** and is now working as a behavioral therapist while finishing a Master's degree in speech language pathology.



Ashford Alum Selected for Emerging Leaders Program

Technical Sergeant **Timothy J. Tichawa '12**, a **BA Homeland Security and Emergency Management** graduate, was selected for the Air Force Association's 2014 Emerging Leaders Program.

Timothy is currently a flight chief (space operations) in the 53rd Training Squadron at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

*This program was replaced with the Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies.

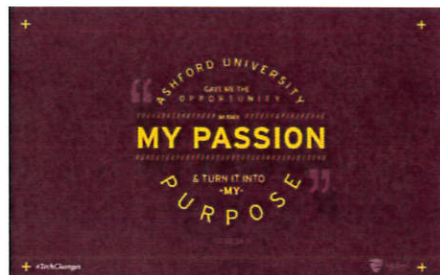
SHARE YOUR MILESTONES!

Email alumni@ashford.edu and let us know how your Ashford degree is helping you reach your personal or professional goals. Plus, leverage your experience as an Ashford alum by visiting ashford.edu/alumni.

JOIN ASHFORD'S ALUMNI COMMUNITY ON FACEBOOK!



Did you know you can download your very own Ashford University wallpapers for your computer, tablet, or smartphone – or even for use as your Facebook cover photo? Choose from the designs below to get started, and once you're on the webpage, scroll down to the bottom right of the page to download. And remember: **#GoSaints!**



CHECK OUT THESE RECENT FAVORITE QUOTES FROM ASHFORD'S SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNITY!

I was the first person in my immediate family to receive a BA – a very big deal for us. I am now going for my MBA!

-Joseph G.

Through Ashford University, I've discovered the strength that I have – and that I can do anything with determination.

-Mayelin Q.

Discover Ashford's social media communities at ashford.edu/social, and join the conversation.