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[White Paper #1]

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MARTHA COLLINS

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Because my father said *Yes*
but not in our lifetimes Because
my mother said *I know my daughter*
would never want to marry...

But mostly because they rarely spoke
of or noticed or even whispered
about and did not of course...

Because magazines rarely TV
rarely textbooks rarely or not
at all except for figures like
George Washington Carver
who'd lived in our state

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Because among the crayons
there was one called *Flesh*

Because paintings rarely or never
until because books from the library
never *until* because college literature
not at all the American lit anthology
had only Gwendolyn Brooks
who was not assigned

Because a few years after *Brown*
v. Board of Education I wrote a paper
that took the position *Yes but not yet*

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