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strict meanings of "African" and "American," here are two more words to look up--"denotation" and "connotation." Denotation: What things mean. In the most literal sense. Connotation: What things really mean. In context. Taking history into account and everything else. Here's a denotative account of what happened at Westside: A week ago Monday, two Westside students papered the school with posters--they didn't just hand out a little little leaflet; they papered the school walls with these posters--promoting a white student from South Africa, Trevor Richards, for the school's "Distinguished African American Student Award." You would have to be black...you shouldn't have to be, but you're so insensitive, you'd have to be black in a sea of white people to understand what it is that I'm talking about. Fortunately, here's one young white woman who does understand. Continuing the article: The students, twin brothers Scott and Paul Rambo, later said they were protesting the fact that Westside has an award solely for African-American students. Scott said the poster was a "satire on the term African-American." Let him satirize the term Catholic, let him satirize the term Episcopalian. But anything that relates to black people is of no consequence. This is why some young white people, when I was going to school, got hit in the mouth, and it's why some, when they get out of school and get older and come around grown people and want to do the Rambo, will have something else happen to them. Here's a connotative account: On Martin Luther King Day, a holiday that black Americans had to fight for and a day when Westside, unlike most other local high schools, still holds classes, white kids at one of the city's whitest and most privileged high schools decided to have fun with semantics and complain about black students getting special privileges. To make it worse, connotatively speaking, the student they used as an example of the African-American is from South Africa, a white South African, a country that has its own issues with black people and special privileges. The students say they did not mean to be racists. They never do. Paul and Scott Rambo even quote Martin Luther King to make their case against the African-American award, saying people should "not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." Then why did they put a white South African up for the award, if it's character and not color of the skin? But they knew what they were doing, and their parents and the other