

## Marcus Mabry

After completing his BA in English and French literature at Stanford, Marcus Mabry (b. 1967) also earned a BA in international relations and an MA in English, all within the four years of his scholarship agreement. He has served as a correspondent for *Newsweek* at the State Department and in Paris and Johannesburg. In addition to freelance writing for *Emerge* and *Black Collegiate*, Mabry also conceived, wrote, produced, and narrated a documentary on African American families for French television. His 1995 memoir, *White Bucks and Black-Eyed Peas: Coming of Age Black in White America*, examines Mabry's decision to live in the white world where he decides he is "more comfortable" because "it demanded less role-playing" of him. In "No Father, and No Answers," an essay appearing in *Newsweek* in 1992, Mabry addresses the concerns he has had in trying both to understand and to establish a relationship with the father he only recently met (who twenty years earlier left Mabry's unwed mother to raise her son without emotional or economic support). Mabry is currently the international business editor of the *New York Times* and the author of *Twice as Good: Condoleezza Rice and Her Path to Power* (2008). The selection included here also appeared in *Newsweek on Campus*.

1 A round, green cardboard sign hangs from a string proclaiming, "We built a proud new feeling," the slogan of a local supermarket. It is a souvenir from one of my brother's last jobs. In addition to being a bagger, he's worked at a fast-food restaurant, a gas station, a garage and a textile factory. Now, in the icy clutches of the Northeastern winter, he is unemployed. He will soon be a father. He is 19 years old.

2 In mid-December I was at Stanford, among the palm trees and weighty chores of academe. And all I wanted to do was get out. I joined the rest of