

Clarence Thomas in His Own Words

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ligentsia. A cartoon of Thomas as a lawn jockey on the cover of the very edgy black newsmagazine *Emerge* is just one of the examples of biting political satire that has followed his career.

In the footage, Thomas firmly believes that attacks on him are because he is a free thinker. Not because of his deeds. After his very public and stormy confirmation as a Supreme Court judge in which he out-maneuvered Democrats like Joe Biden by using the term “high tech lynching,” and swayed public opinion in his favor, he equated white liberals as oppressors:

“I felt as though in my life, I had been looking at the wrong people, as the people who would be problematic toward me,” he said. “Ultimately the biggest impediment was the modern day liberal.”

There’s scant mention of his first wife, Kathy Ambush or son Jamal, both African Americans. His white wife Virginia gets plenty of airtime, and is the only other interviewee in this 1 hour 56 minute promo reel. The two live in a protective bubble, able to see what goes on in society, but completely sheltered. If they didn’t, and he let the outside world in, he might hear and absorb constructive criticism that could lead to deep self-examination. The kind of introspection that challenges people to



Lawyer and academic Anita Hill in 1991 when she accused U.S. Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, her supervisor at the Department of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, of sexual harassment.

grow. The film’s basic, insular format just fortifies his cocoon. No rivals. No other judges. No historians. No other family members. Nothing.

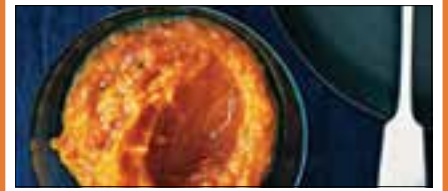
How out of touch is Clarence Thomas, especially concerning the African American community? A voiceover states that Thomas doesn’t recruit interns from Ivy League schools, and prefers students from less prestigious institutions. Like he’s trying to get down with the real folk. The camera shoots a scene of him in his judge’s chambers with a flock of new interns. The

gut check is that they are all white. All blond! And this is his norm. What happened to his blackness? Sense of community?

A two-hour unperceptive documentary leaves the quietest man on the Supreme Court no less an enigma than before the opening credits rolled. Thomas: “I’m different than what people paint me to be.” How would anybody know?

Dwight Brown is the film critic for the National Newspapers Publishers Association, the Black Press.

FOOD



Kabocha Squash Puree

Ingredients

- 1 (3-pound) kabocha squash
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450°.
2. Cut squash in half, and discard seeds. Place the squash halves, cut sides down, in a 13 x 9-inch glass or ceramic baking dish, and add 1/2 cup water to dish. Cover and bake at 450° for 40 minutes or until squash is tender. Remove the squash from pan, and let stand for 10 minutes. Remove pulp from skin, and discard skin. Combine squash pulp, 1/2 cup brown sugar, and the remaining ingredients in a food processor, and process until smooth.

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