It's that time again, when most people make those New Years resolutions. As a YMCA fitness director/personal trainer I have noticed that most resolutions are to lose weight, I have also noticed that resolutions for 2006 are the same as 2005 and 2004. We have great resolutions, but the key is to find the solution. Ask yourself, "why am I not the size I want to be?" Maybe your idea of exercise is changing channels with the remote control or walking to the car before driving to your favorite restaurant. Seriously, why are we in the shape we're in?

Weight loss doesn't always mean starving yourself or strict diets that we don't stick with. Let's just try eating healthier. I know those fast food commercials are so convincing that we have to stop by, but do we always have to super size it? Or buy the fried foods? Let's try making more healthy choices. Look for the grilled item or the salad choices. Check the nutrition labels.

If we would just change simple things we would probably lose a few pounds. Sure the elevator is a luxury but try taking the stairs every other day. How about instead of family television time you take family walks. Stop sending the children out to play and join them in a basketball game or a game of tag (ever tried walking tag where everyone walks). I'm sure they would get a kick out of that and you would burn a few more calories.

Everyone should make a New Year's resolution but most importantly find a solution you can live with and stick to it!

Charles Kearns Health Enhancement Director Winston Lake Family YMCA



Social Crisis And Social Demoralization

The Dynamics Of Status In American Race Relations Book Review

By: Kam Williams

"But American political democracy is a sham when viewed through the lens of race relations. Liberty is bogus when scrutinized through the African-American experience and opportunity is a delusion when professed under conditions of racial prejudice, discrimination and oppression." —excerpt from Conclusion



Eleven years ago, when he wrote "The Rage of a Privileged Class," Ellis Cose uncovered a little known social phenomenon, namely the widespread anger and psychic pain experienced by many of the best-educated Blacks, despite their being well-respected and relatively prosperous, at least in comparison to the rest of the Black community. His seminal bestseller exposed the diminished dreams of a seemingly successful set of overachievers who he found to be bitterly disappointed about the racial discrimination they had encountered, especially in terms of careers at the corporate level.

I refer to Mr. Cose's thought-provoking opus by way of introduction because it appears that it is precisely this same alienated group of individuals now being courted by Ronald Kuykendall in "Social Crisis and Social Demoralization: The Dynamics of Status in American Race Relations." Mr. Kuykendall, a professor of Political Science at Greenville Technical College in South Carolina, argues that the United States' body politic, as currently constructed, is perfectly comfortable with Black people being ostensibly relegated to a permanent, second-class status.

The author blames deep-rooted bigotry for the malingering complacency about the plight of Blacks in this country, contending that they emanate from a trio of unfortunate beliefs about Blacks; biological inferiority, cultural dysfunction and an inability to figure out how to overcome the stigma of slavery.

Building a brilliant case with copious quotes from dizzying number of esteemed Black thinkers, the book arrives at the idea that the great masses of poor Blacks are simply so utterly oppressed that it's impossible for them to ascertain the extent to which they have been bamboozled to believe in an unattainable "American Dream."

Prof. Kuykendall, aka W.E.B. Dubois' Talented Tenth, calls upon the exceptional among the Black intelligentsia to forge a new political mindset, upon agreeing that they have been denied meaningful participation in this society. While this book is undoubtedly one of the better-informed examinations of this subject in recent years, time will only tell whether the comfy class of Blacks will heed the author's incendiary call to challenge the status quo. (Originally published on AALBC.com.)

