

Saluting the Strength of the Black Man

By Jacqueline Brown

I am caught up in the image of perfection: his enticing eyes, his full luscious lips and his deep chocolate features--the Black Man. Raised by slaves but descended from kings, the Black Man has struggled to be free. He has struggled to be free from humiliation, free from degradation, free from the insults of not only other races, but also insults of Black Women.

Many times we turn on the television and see a Black man that has been pulled over by a cop for Driving While Black. So, who says that a Black man driving a Lexus or a Navigator is a drug dealer? He could just be a highly-educated Black man that not only has aspirations but is an inspiration to all he encounters. Statistics from the Federal Bureau of Investigation show that Black men have a 28% chance of entering state or federal prison within their lifetime. Due to discouraging statistics such as these, Black men are automatically labeled as criminals. Many become trapped in the system before they become teen-agers. Assumptions are made about Black men because of ignorance and lack of intelligence on behalf of closed-minded individuals, sometimes even members of their own race.

In our society today, is the definition of the Black man a scrub, trifling, thug or dog? True, some Black men have fallen because of some bad choices, but isn't it true that just as many men of other races have fallen too? We must encourage our Black men to be strong leaders and not weak followers. Just look around on our prestigious campus. Notice the strong Black faculty members. For instance, Chuck Stone, a professor in the School of Journalism, has been a soldier on the battlefield of solidarity for many years. Just look at the leaders in the various minority groups on campus. Look at the Black men that are seen on campus but not heard because they are Black men.

In honor of Black History month, everyone must come together to build up the Black community. The first brick starts with strong Black men. We must all come together to forge a foundation for unity. Pulling together and not pulling apart, that's what it's all about...HARAM-BEE!

Jacqueline Brown is a freshman, School of Journalism and Mass Communication major who can be reached at jlbrown@email.unc.edu.

