

Editorial

African Americans' Victory Through Struggle

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Editor

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Many African Americans are angry or ashamed to learn of and discuss their ancestors' history. Most likely the reason is because Blacks have been humiliated, mistreated, disenfranchised and abused. African Americans have struggled harder and longer than any other race in the world, and sometimes we do not want to be associated with a group of people who have struggled the hardest. We were lynched, hanged, raped, beaten, sold, and dehumanized in so many other ways for over four hundred years and it seems that we are still struggling.

Over the years, we have been called lazy, poor readers, disrespectful, ungrateful and un-educated. People poked fun at us and displayed us in an unrealistic fashion in minstrel shows, movies, books, and even cartoons.

Whether you are angry or ashamed about your past, over the years you have learned about it because of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the man known as "the Father of Black History." He was the founder of Study of Negro Life and History. He is the man who initiated the move to bring realistic African-American experiences, life, backgrounds, contributions and struggles to the history books so that his people could learn about where they came from and how they became successful.

Woodson once said, "If a race has no history, if it has no worthwhile tribulations, it becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world and it stands in danger of being exterminated." It is because of all of our tribulations that we have a history, whether it was negative or positive. Because of our past struggles, tribulations, and embarrassments, our people will never be exterminated. Now that we know where we have been; we can see where we are going.

Dr. Woodson made it possible for us to learn about Blacks, known and unknown, who were killed and sacrificed so that their descendants could live in a better world. However, it seems as though we still lag behind in the socio-

economic world and, while some of the unfairness is not our fault, a great deal of it is.

Have you ever wondered how Blacks like Woodson were able to gain great success? It was because he was his brother's keeper, meaning that after he became successful in earning his degrees, he gave back to the Black race. Today, many Blacks who are successful tend to look down on the ones who are not as fortunate. Rather than giving back to their communities and alma maters, they have the mentality: "I have mine, now you have to get yours." On the other hand, when some Blacks become successful, often times they are unfairly ridiculed by their own people who say, "Who do they think they are now, with all of their degrees?"

In the not too distant past, there were some blacks were known to mistreat those who were darker complexioned. We all know this comes from the slave mentality that we somehow still suffer from in this century; however, its modern term is called racial profiling. Unfortunately, that attitude still exists in some people. There is a constant rivalry between our own people. We refuse speak to each other, praise each other, or support one another. We talk about one another behind our backs. Some Blacks kill each other and are constantly against their own people for reasons that are not rational. This rivalry is often the result of jealousy or insecurities. But why do we put more strain on ourselves by opposing each other? If we continue to not support each other, then everything that Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other great blacks did for us will have been in vain. Every trial, tribulation, heartache, success, achievement and glory that our people experienced will have little value or meaning. If we should be embarrassed or angry about anything, it should not be what happened to us in the past when we had no control, but how cruel we are to each other now that we do have control.

It is time now for us to grow up and mature, and to use the lessons of our dark past to guide us toward the brighter tomorrow that we deserve.

Each Year the Foundation of the Study of Negro Life and History
Has a Theme for Black History Month

**This Year's National Theme For Black History
Month is:**

**Africans For America: Contributions and
Sacrifices That Built This Nation**

The Compass

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Poetry Corner

"Black Widow"

*My heart is a black hole that lures in
lost sailors*

*My love is the poisonous venom from
the slimy tongue of a rattlesnake.
A taste from my sweet lips will leave
you dancing in dust.*

*Ash on the ground is what you shall
become if you dare to touch my soft bo-
som.*

*For I am the Black Widow that all
men dread*

*I lure you onto my silk web to devour
you soul and leave you dead.*

-Yvonne Ribeiro-Yemofio

Young Black Men

*I know it's a struggle
Day by day*

*Trying to get a job but bossman
Looking at your cornrolls instead of your
resumè*

Your image

Instead of your potential

Where's the justice

Where's my pencil

*We have been stereotyped, misjudged
And consider unequal*

But I disagree

*Because God has made us a beautiful
people*

He made no race

Better than the other

So recognize your power

Strive for the best my brother

*Instead of crime scenes, let's create a
positive scene*

So our seeds can take witness

Instead of selling drugs

Let's open a business

Let's change our train of thought

And together we can make a change

Let's see the vision together

Because together we can maintain

We wanna be hardcore

Well, lets be hardcore for righteousness

With faith in God

We can make our dreams exist

Planting a small seed

Can make a big different

Accumulation of small things

Done well - defines excellent

Let's put down the beer bottle

*Because there's a negative message in
that bottle*

I've been there before

I found to better life in the bottle

I know some cats

Hold guns to protect their homes

But let's dig some knowledge

To protect our thrones

Let's stop procrastinating

Let's stop holding back

Our youth are being mislead

Because of men figures they lack

I said men figures not boy figures

Not boy figures

*I wonder how our ancestors would feel
If they hear us, calling ourselves niggas*

We are above that

Don't forget that

We have made it too far

So don't take us back

Because we're trying to make it

We're trying to proceed

Young black men

We can succeed

Yes, we can

If only we set our hearts and minds

Wait on God

In due time, grapes will grow on the vine

But until then,

We have to stand and be strong

Rise above our expectations

And prove the world wrong

-James Hill