

Opinions & Editorials

From the Editor

Inherent problems need solutions

Sometimes it is hard to see inherent flaws in one's race, and it takes an outsider to expose those flaws. Recently there was a letter circulating by e-mail that offered an interesting perspective about black people from a non-black.



JONES

Throughout the letter, the writer candidly exposed some inherent flaws in the black race. The writer said physical slavery is no longer necessary to "reap profits from the blacks" because blacks contain themselves through ignorance, greed and selfishness. Out of these, the writer asserted that ignorance is the most important. The writer explained that because of ignorance, blacks have fought long and hard to be able to read books but still refuse to read consistently.

The writer also explained how black people have been fighting to reach economic equality and that there are plenty of books "in their own black bookstores that provide solid blueprints to reach economic equality," but they still do not read them.

Secondly, the writer said that through greed, blacks place little emphasis on saving and investing. Black people would rather buy a pair of shoes and put rims on their cars than start a business. The writer concluded that anyone could use blacks as a target market because they will buy into anything.

Lastly, the writer asserted that selfishness does not allow blacks "to be able to work together on any project or endeavor of substance." The writer added that ego gets in the way of goals when blacks do work together and, as a result, the goals are never achieved.

What the writer said is debatable. However, it is a fact that blacks have yet to address many problems that exist in contemporary society. Let's assume that the writer is accurate in his or her perceptions. Will we continue to let ourselves fall victim to the open hands of ignorance, greed and selfishness? Will we continue to suffer from the evils of miseducation and misinformation? Will we continue to allow other people control our thoughts, our investments and our livelihoods? Let's become more intelligent in our ways and actions and begin looking at things under a critical magnifying glass, rather than continue to let others exploit us. Remember, the hand that provides for us rules us.

Portraits of Black Americans

Argus illustrations by Jamil Steele

Paul Leroy Bustill Robeson was born in 1898 in Princeton, N.J. Robeson was a singer, actor, civil-rights activist, law-school graduate, athlete, scholar and author. In the 1930s and '40s, he was one of the most respected blacks in the world. Robeson accomplished many things throughout his life, including starring in plays and movies; singing in America and Europe; writing books; and winning many prestigious awards.



Phillis Wheatley was born in Senegal and was the first black to be published in America. She was sold into slavery around 1760. At the age of 17, she published her first poem. A volume of her poetry was published in London about three years later. One of her many admirers was President George Washington. It was for him that Wheatley wrote this poem: "A crown, a mansion, and a throne that shine, With gold unfading, Washington! be thine."



Letters to the editor

I am an American. My skin pigment could be identified as light, or the term white or caucasian. I am personally offended by the term African-American being thrown around like it is completely meaningless.

The color of your skin does not automatically entitle you to consider yourself a part of such a rich culture. If you were born in America, you are an American. Too often the term is used to further segregate and give way to excuses. Diversity? I think not; this is segregation. You do not need a special title to be different; you need different titles to separate. The main reason I become offended at this word is that Africa's history, customs and culture are so wondrous that if you do not understand and adhere to them, you haven't earned that name.

It is shameful that many whites know more about the "Motherland" than blacks, isn't it? I know a true African-American who can tell you

his lineage from memory all the way back to the 1200s. Amazing, yet it is his duty. Family and the family name are of incredible importance there. If you know anything about African music, the name Keita should ring a bell. Mamady Keita is probably the world's most famous djembe player. That name has endured for centuries.

Another interesting note is that Keita is a Horon name. A Horon would have drums played for him, not play them himself. That is one reason Mamady sticks out. The Jelis would have played for him. But he can quote his lineage back to 1200. This is a standard there. Learning anything, yet?

Now one of the most irritating things I hear about is slavery is 439 years of captivity. Well, I can really tell you did your research. Slavery has existed worldwide since the dawn of time. And yes has existed in Africa since the different classes formed.

In Africa there are essential-

ly three different classes: The Horons, the Nyamakala and the Jon — the slaves and servants.

Africa has always been less then wealthy, and when the French came to trade in the 1530s and the British in the 1550s, the Horons would sell them many of their Jons. Yep, really ripped from your people weren't you? So slavery had existed in this country for 439 years, but wait a minute ... America is only 226 years old. Hmmm ... the math isn't adding up. Before you blame America for over 400 years of slavery, why not study some history?

Let me conclude by saying that if you didn't already know everything I have stated here, and so much more, you are not an African-American. You are an American. It's time to be proud of who you are not who you like to pretend you are. Stop trying to perpetuate even more segregation and hatred.

Sincerely,
Abaddon [Chris Hathcock]

'Revelation' is an in-depth look at Betha's life

By **Nakida McDaniel**
ARGUS ARTS EDITOR

Mason Betha — "Revelation"

Former platinum rap artist Mason Betha (Mase) recently entered the writer's market with his biography titled "Revelation."

Although many may think that it's filled with

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in-depth details about his relationships with P. Diddy and Bad Boy Entertainment, Betha goes deeper by discussing his personal journey back to Jesus Christ.

In "Revelation" this ex-rap guru turned pastor and inspirational speaker counts all the joy he's had since leaving the fame, money and drama of the music industry behind. For those who knew him as a flashy rapper, it may be surprising to read the many Bible verses and informal sermons between the pages of "Revelation."

As the founder of Saving a Nation Endangered (S.A.N.E.), a nondenominational ministry, Betha feels he is answering God's calling, which is to be his prophet and bring young people into his ministry.

"Revelation" offers hope, love and understanding to its readers who may find themselves in spiritual conflict.

It also delivers the strong message, "everything that glitters ain't gold."

Enron bankruptcy taught a hard lesson

By **Nicole Ferguson**
ARGUS NEWS EDITOR

It's practically impossible to turn on the news and not hear headlines on the latest Enron developments.

The multimillion-dollar company and its former CEO, Kenneth Lay, seem to be at the height of business and consumer news.

Enron, the once powerful oil company, literally crashed late last year.

Analysis

The company filed for bankruptcy protection Dec. 2 and was finally suspended from the New York Stock Exchange on Jan. 15.

This unexpected downfall left innocent investors and employees with nothing financially.

Hundreds of Enron employees lost their jobs and were left with little to no

retirement to fall back on due to the untimely crash. Or was it really untimely?

Speculations suggest that the downfall was foreshadowed by a series of events that are currently under investigation. If found to be legitimate, it is likely that Lay and Enron's former accounting firm, Arthur Andersen, destroyed documents that would have shown the gradual downfall of the company.

It has been said that Andersen audited Houston-based Enron's books when they overstated profits by hundreds of millions of dollars.

As a result of the Enron scandal, employees and investors have lost a lifetime of savings, the Big Five accounting firm Arthur Andersen is under investigation and companies with financial difficulties raise suspecting eyebrows toward their ac-

counting firms. A full criminal investigation is under way as announced by the U.S. Justice Department.

Several questions concerning the entire ordeal include, "Was there an actual crime committed?" and "Were there favors received?"

So what are investors saying about the "Enritis" plague? Like mama always said, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket."