

An Objective Point Of View On David Walker's Appeal

EDITOR'S NOTE: The writer of this special article is Sabrina E. Johnson, a native of Charlotte who presently resides in Philadelphia, PA. Miss Johnson attends Allegheny College in Meadville, PA, where she is a sophomore majoring in political science and international economics. The daughter of Angela Johnson of Philadelphia and Robert Johnson of Charlotte is interested in reading, writing essays, music, sports, dancing and people.



Sabrina Johnson
...College sophomore poisoning.

By Sabrina E. Johnson
Who was this man called David Walker? What was his appeal? What was this message he was trying to convey then and its affect on now? Within the context of this article the writer will not answer these questions entirely, but merely scratch the surface to acquaint you, the reader, with an objective point of view on Mr. Walker's appeal.

David Walker was born in North Carolina in 1785. Little is known of his parents except his father was a slave and his mother was a free woman. Walker's father died before his birth, causing him to be reared by his mother in the slaveholding South. Walker acquired an unstructured education during his formative years. This 'education' caused him to become discontent with his life in the South so he began to search for complacency and finally settled in Boston sometime during the 1820's. In Boston Walker held various types of jobs until he had acquired enough money to open his own business - a shop selling sailor's gear (clothes, shoes, etc.) to seamen.

Eventually Walker became involved in the "unorganized" abolition movement while it was trying to organize itself. He made his contributions by writing how evil and horrible slavery was in periodicals such as "Freedom's Journal" and "Rights of All" both of New York and finally his major work, "David Walker's Appeal To The Colored Citizens of the World, But in Particular, and Very Expressly, To Those of the United States of America," in September of 1829. On June 28, 1830, Walker was found dead, in his shop's doorway, of

pressor's hand. (Let it be said that just because a man is undereducated formally does not mean he lacks the ability to reason and understand; but he lacks the ability to systematically by application of formal learning) reason, answer why and solve a problem. The absence of this ability leads to a lack of unity among blacks because of their inability to distinguish their friends from their enemies (who to trust and who not to trust) - "Ignorance is the Mother of Treachery and Deceit." (P. 21 "David Walker's Appeal").

The importance of Jesus Christ carries with it a double standard: "Believe in my God but worship Him only when I decide and How I decide you will." This concept is heavily stressed in the third article - "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Preachers of the Religion of Jesus Christ." The white man wanted to tame the savage beast called "black man" by instilling his interpretation of the gospel of Jesus Christ upon him. David Walker explains how the white man made it mandatory that his slaves believe in his superior master and, ironically, his forbidding them to worship as they pleased. The white man brainwashed the black man into believing that he was put on this earth only to serve him and by his (the black man's) worshipping Jesus Christ may his condemned soul. However teaching the slaves about Jesus Christ illustrates how subconsciously, in his soul, the white man did believe that the black man was a human being - "...There is a secret monitor in their hearts

which tells them we are (human)..." (P. 61 "David Walker's Appeal")

Finally, article four - "Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Colonizing Scheme" focuses on the idea of the white man obtaining territories and taming savagery only for his benefit. According to the white man, power was demonstrated through his wealth and his good deeds done to help civilize the world and its inhabitants. Everyone knows the white man was doing the best thing by going into "uncivilized" structured societies and making them "civilized" and unstructured! Somehow he was caught betwix and between the passion of wealth and the passion of God. Again we have his secret monitor coming through, unfortunately it was wry.

"David Walker's Appeal" voices his thoughts and views on the black-white society during the

slavery era. However it does provide insight as to why slavery existed and some answers to abolishing it. Walker's answers for abolishing slavery are to antiquate the oppressor's hand and inform the black people of there being a world out there for them to explore and manipulate for their benefit; that they are qualified and quality human beings with the ability to perform. These ideas carry into today because they provide a structured account of how things were for blacks and inspires black people to strive for the very best in their mental, emotional, physical and material lives - for we are nothing if we do not assert ourselves and allow others to dictate to us.

Walker David, "David Walker's Appeal To The Colored Citizens of the World." Introd. Charles M. Wiltse. New York: Hill and Wang, 1965.

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