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Gerald O. Johnson
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Robert Johnson
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GENERAL MANAGER

Herbert L. White
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Farrakhan and the two-party system

Lenora Fulani



I really like Louis Farrakhan. I care about him deeply. I've been whipsawed for supporting him. But caring about him means I have to point out the profound mistakes he is making — political mistakes which have grave ramifications for the African American people.

I've marched with Rev. Al Sharpton. We have shared many causes and tried to support and guide the victims of so many racist tragedies. But that history means that I have to be honest about his misleadership in this election season.

I'm close friends with members of the Congressional Black Caucus. I know them to be decent people. But the political miscalculations they are making are enormous.

American political life is undergoing a huge transformation right at this moment. The failure of both major parties to produce any kind of relief from the mounting social and economic crisis has given rise to a movement for a new party that breaks the traditional mold and brings diverse Americans together on a broad scale to restructure government, the political process and the economy. That part has arisen. It is called the Reform Party. And it is the African American community's best hope for the future.

Minister Farrakhan, while insightfully calling on the Million Man March to shape black Americans into an independent third force, has nonetheless capitulated to pressure to make yet another mournful attempt to persuade Bill Clinton and the Democratic Party to heed a black agenda. He and other black leaders are preparing to hold a black convention to issue a mandate to the Democrats.

In 1988, Minister Farrakhan and I did just that. We stood together at the Wheat Street Baptist Church in Atlanta, just as Rev. Jesse Jackson was being pointedly humiliated by the Democratic Party and urged black Americans to go independent.

It is now eight years later. Black America is going independent. The Reform Party is replete with African American activists from coast to coast: Bob Davidson, chairman of the Connecticut Reform Party; Mamie Moore, state committee member of the Virginia Independence Party; David Cherry, vice chair of the Illinois Reform Party; Jackie McBride, Dr. Jesse Fields, Allen Cox, Yvonne Braim, Wayne Griffin, Andrew Garnett, Nate Roberson, Henry Davis, Roger Griffin and Marilyn Guyden and hundreds more, including myself.

But Minister Farrakhan has not gone independent. Instead, he is orchestrating one more get-down-on-your-knees-and-beg-to-the-Democrats ceremony under the guise of militant rhetoric. In addition, he has pursued his political interface with the neo-fascist charlatan Lyndon LaRouche, who has cozied up to the Nation of Islam and Farrakhan to secure a destructive agenda in the black community.

Rev. Sharpton is planning a series of protests outside the Democratic and Republican conventions as a show of militancy and independence, while at the same time refusing to wrench black voters out of the Democrats' clutches. Rev. Sharpton is an intelligent and shrewd political leader. He and I worked closely and I know him well. More than anyone, he understands that Clinton and the Democrats concede nothing unless we are willing to hurt them where they live — at the voting booth. But Rev. Sharpton's modus operandi, like that of his political mentor, Jesse Jackson, is to use the rhetoric of independence while remaining a Democrat. He runs for office only as a Democrat. And he provides the militant cover that Clinton et al need to keep African Americans in check.

This misleadership at such a critical juncture in American history is nothing short of dangerous. U.S. politics are realigning. The current two-party arrangement will not last.

LENORA FULANI is a New York psychiatrist and former presidential candidate.

Real heroes are all about us

GERALD O. JOHNSON

As I
See It



Recently I was talking with a group of young kids about things in general. The subject in some form or fashion turned to heroes. I had to ask who these young folks most admired. The answer that came back were the obvious: Michael Jordan, Troy Aikman, Shaquille O'Neal. The

excitement these young people generated in discussing their heroes was something to behold. Then it happened.

One of the kids asked who my hero was. I thought for a minute. I responded with Tom Wilkins.

"Tom Wilkins?" a young voice blurted out, "Who does he play for?" Another young voice immediately added "What does he play?"

I responded, "Tom plays a decent round of golf, but other than that he is not an athlete." A puzzled look came across the young faces. They did not get it. Then a voice shouted,

"Why then is he your hero?"

Tom Wilkins is a friend of mine who is a loving husband, devoted father, a dedicated church member, and just an all around nice guy. He will go out of his way to help others regardless of the need. Moreover, he helps anybody in need, not just his friends. I have never heard him utter an unkind word about anybody. I have never heard him utter a profanity. He is just a solid model citizen. I am just proud to be able to call him my friend.

The kids shrugged and began to disperse. I liked what I had said, even if they didn't.

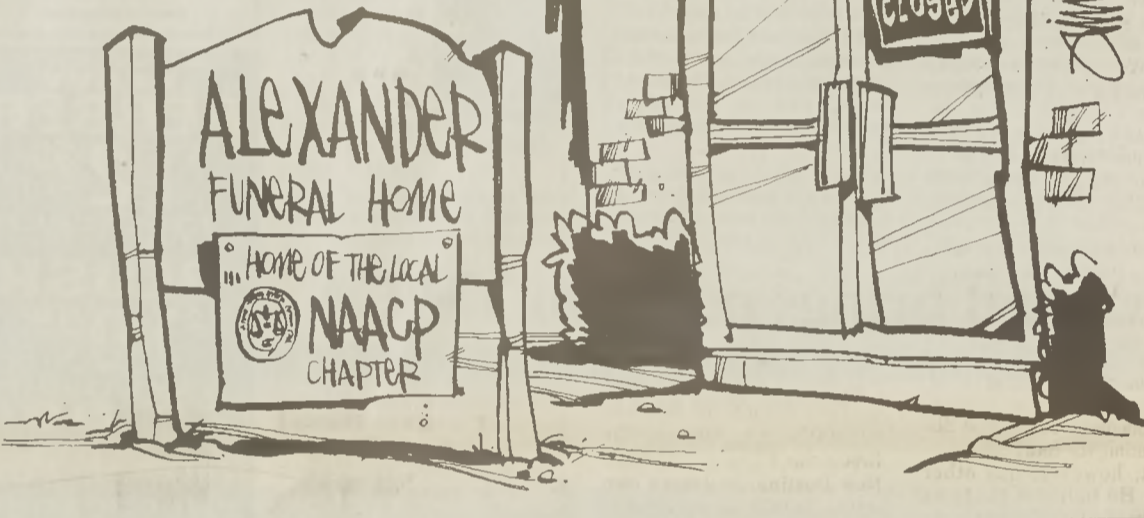
We spend entirely too much time making people our heroes because of what they do instead of who they are. We have heroes all around us, but we spend too little time recognizing them. They are our neighbors, our friends, and our relatives. People we can reach out and touch practically every day.

If you know of heroes in our midst, drop us a line and tell us about them. We will do the rest. Let's start giving these people their due.

Peace.

GERALD O. JOHNSON is publisher of The Post.

IN THE SPIRIT OF THE BRANCH
DAVIDIANS AND THE MONTANA
FREEMEN, ONE MORE GROUP
PREPARES TO FORTIFY THEIR
SURROUNDINGS WITH A 'THEY'RE
OUT TO GET US' MINDSET!!!



Positive media equals positive change

By Junious R. Stanton
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Once while attending an exhibit at the Philadelphia Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum, I came across this very profound quote by Bruce Onobrakpeya, a Nigerian artist:

"Art itself is a reflection of the life of the people...The art that we create is helping to give our people self-identity. For one to call himself an artist, one has to take a leadership role. Not just merely producing art works, but producing art works which are backed by ideas and philosophies which are calculated to help upgrade and uplift the life of the people."

Would that those of us who give expression to the creative urges within ourselves understood the implications of what this brother was saying? So much of the "art and entertainment" propagated today has little or no redeeming social value

for people of African descent. In fact, much of it is used to stifle our knowledge of self and keep us functioning on the basest animalistic levels. Many of those who create it haven't the faintest clue what it means to be a leader, a positive role model or an inspiration for the people. They are blinded by the allure of fame and fortune at all costs. They are either unaware of, or unconcerned about the images, values and ethics they're projecting to our people. The American mass media conditions us to negativism and a linear Eurocentric view of the world. The values they project are conspicuously anti-African and morally bankrupt. The images presented are so blatantly detrimental and damaging to the African psyche, it's amazing our people support it so uncritically and continue to patronize that junk. The type of entertainment you enjoy says a lot about you, what you feel is important and think is in good taste.

Europeans control the marketing and distribution of much of our creativity. They control the media, so all too often they determine who will get the exposure and become the "stars" and "celebrities." It's not coincidental that there are no positive African images pumped out by the Euro-American media. They deliberately ignore the genius, progressive and constructive activities taking place in our communities, unless, of course, they can use it to make large sums of money. Even then they don't want anything too political and definitely nothing too African. Let Michael Jordan start espousing black empowerment and see what happens to his endorsement millions!

This is why serious artists who are socially, politically and spiritually conscious are so frustrated. They can't get the exposure, even on black-owned stations, print media or galleries. It's time for serious-minded folks who are uncompromising in their desire to uplift the race

to take the initiative to create, market and distribute positive messages and inspiring products and bypass the non-African American middle men.

Our people have failed to progress to higher levels of consciousness because our artists have been derelict in their duties. Looking at the content, values and quality of much of our media, we can easily understand why our people are so lethargic and our communities in such poor shape. There is nothing in the programming to stimulate discontent with the status quo or the uplifting of the people.

Black media must escalate the challenge for change by promoting material that enhances the self-image, self-esteem and self-identity and discontent of our people. If we are to go forward, our seers, artists, thinkers and leaders must provide the vision, plant the seeds and kickstart us to positive action.

JUNIOUS R. STANTON is a syndicated columnist.

We can start learning more about the South and ourselves

DG
Martin



We live in the South.

North Carolina is Southern by almost every definition. And those of us who live here experience things every minute that would be different if we lived in another region.

Some of these are obvious. The Civil War monuments on our public grounds remind us that we are the only region to fight a war against the rest of the country — and that the rest of the country won.

Signs of two distinct racial heritages appear to us every-

where.

Sweet iced tea — or the absence of it — in our restaurants could only become a matter of community concern in the South.

There is more. But, like other peoples in other definable regions, we usually don't think much about what makes us different. We think our ways are the usual ways — and that people who do and think other ways are the different ones.

So, when a new book about our region appears, I like to see it. If it can tell me something I didn't know about where I live, it will also tell me something new about myself.

UNC-Chapel Hill professor John Shelton Reed and his wife Dale Volberg Reed are the

authors of such a book, "1001 Things Everyone Should Know About The South."

They selected the 1001 things, organized them into categories, and wrote them up. It is easy to read and understand, but serious about its subject.

"Now," I can hear you ask, "what did you learn about yourself from this new book about our region?"

Lots of things. But one of them is special and a little bit personal. So don't read further if you object to columnists writing about themselves too much.

I have always worried a little bit about my name, "D.G." Those of us who go by our initials get a little grief from time to time. "What does D.G. stand for?" "Why don't you go by your real name?" The new book

eased my concerns a little bit. It taught me that my name is typical Southern — for several reasons.

According to the book, "Initials as de facto given names are used more often by Southern men than by their Northern peers..."

This isn't a matter (as with the British) of discouraging familiarity. You first-name one of these guys by calling him R.G. or whatever."

So, here in the South, "D. G." is OK.

There is more. My full name is David Grier Martin Jr. Grier was my great grandmother's maiden name. My father was called "Grier" and so is my son. All this is just as Southern as my use of initials.

"Family names are often used as given names for both male and female Southern children, especially among the upper class or aspirants to it." (We are aspirants.)

There is more. "Jr., II, III, etc., are more common in the South — another sign of filio-pietism..." (You'll have to look up that word in the dictionary.)

I bet you or someone close to you has been tagged by some of these or other special Southern naming practices such as double names. Or using "Big" and "Little" to set apart family members who have the same name. Or using diminutives and nicknames as real names.

A double name using a diminutive is a classic Southern male's name. The most classic

Southern male name would have to be "Bobby Lee" — a diminutive double name after the Confederate general.

All of this insight about names is just an example. There is much more — from the question of whether the word "grits" is singular or plural to the stark differences between the Free Will and the Primitive Baptists.

If you enjoy finding out more about our region and want to learn a little more about yourself, you ought to own a copy of "1001 Things Everyone Should Know About The South."

D.G. MARTIN is vice president of public affairs for the University of North Carolina system. He can be reached via e-mail at dgmartin@ga.unc.edu