

Black Man Rise! by Stephen Johnson



During the last 150,000 years that modern man has walked the earth, strong nations have been built on order and discipline. These principles among others were taught by the elders to the young. During the Great Dynasties of Kmt and throughout most of ancient Africa, man's sole purpose was to become like God.

Today in the 21st Century, when you look at the young black man's state of mind, for the most part you can see how we have not become a strong nation. Although there are some very strong black men, however, too often when you think of a young black man you think of the black on black crime epidemic. Why is this? One reason I believe this is, which has been spoken about by numerous scholars in our community is that we are losing an intellectual war; since the Greco-Roman Period beginning in 450 B.C., we have failed to be on the winning side of this war. Why is it that so many black men do not understand our history correctly? John Henry Clarke stated, "History has the function of a watch." Black men must understand that we are made by how we think of the past. The truth is hard to see for some, but others have a clear understanding.

Initially, our parents' failure to understand the young black male's genius has caused them to fail us. They have not given us the appropriate vision to motivate us to achieve obtainable goals. To say that we have reached this level of consciousness that exists in many of our so called "ghettos" by ourselves would be untrue. What's happened as a result of this lack of guidance is that many of our young black men have become a prisoner of our own culture. The things we love and cherish are destroying us. It was taught to me by one of my elders that it is not enough to just have knowledge, but you need to know how to use your knowledge to help people.

Barack Obama, the newly elected President of the United States, has opened up a lane for the young black man. We must realize a purpose to live and understand that it's not enough to just have a black President. We must do the ground work to make this change happen. We are lacking the true understanding of who we are which is the first step to maturity.

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson speaks of a functional solidarity. The fact that we won't always agree but that we can have some sense of solidarity through self love. Imagine the Cripz and Bloodz, Gangster Disciples, or the Mexican Mafia reaching this level of consciousness...you would see change in our communities instantly. Black man rise.

We have helped the world civilize itself through science, math, agriculture, and religion. We must begin to inspect ourselves and analyze everything we put in our minds and bodies. This is most important when it comes to the Hip Hop generation. This beautiful art form was sent by God to uplift us and allow the world to see and feel our pain. What happened to this beautiful art form? Many people including one of my favorite MC's "Nas" believe its dead; others think it's just in a state of complacency. Whatever the case may be, all forms of media including music and TV play a huge role in the youth's consciousness. The numerous polls shows that over 2/3 of mainstream media coverage of young black men are negative; this has to change because the stereotypical view is not only destroying how others see us, but how we see ourselves as well.

There's evidence when you look at other cultures who have adapted to the Hip Hop way of life. Many have stayed true to the origins of Hip Hop, but many have not. In this lies proof of our strength as a people that even though we are at the bottom of the barrel, the world still imitates us through our music and fashion.

I see on a daily basis, the underlying love that we have for each other that doesn't get portrayed in mainstream media. Just look at the way we dress like each other or the way we speak, to imitate

something you must love it. We just need to re-channel that love into more positive things. We must eliminate the separation of the old and the young on a wide basis through respect of one another. A legendary southern rapper, Scarface says, "The old folks are mad at us cuz the kids are lost. How do you expect us to teach them when all you did was talk?" The separation, hating, and the killing must stop.

Black man...we are the answer to our problems. Let's stop sabotaging our future with our behavior. Let's re-adjust our mentalities so we can become a better people.

About the writer:

Pittsburgh, PA native Steve Johnson is the CEO of WNW Designs, Inc. a web design company and author of "Wake up Young Black Males, Life is What You Make it!"