

BLACK WOMAN

By a Black Revolutionary

As I read and reread the words of love flowing from the minds of black men for the white woman, I ask myself — why? Are black men so blind as not to see the beauty lying dormant in the black woman; waiting to be discovered by the black man? Black women have exhibited the extreme in patience, waiting for the black man to discover himself and then to discover her.

The roll of the black woman has been dual since the times of slavery. She has been the sounding board for the black man and his frustrations for 400 years; she has been provider and sympathizer for the black man since his castration by the white racist when the slave ships arrived from Africa. Yet today, they are still waiting to be discovered by the black man. The black woman is in a peculiar position. As long as her man is deprived of his manhood, she is deprived of her man and her full womanhood. She is alone; left by the wayside her man has had a glimpse of freedom and has found that he has a mind of his own and has left her for what promises to be his Utopia: a dead white world.

Oh, black men, how can you ever wear the cloak of pride when you are ashamed of whence you came? A black womb contracted to give you life. Where is your gratitude? Where do your loyalties lie? Wake up. Wake up from your sleep of 400 years. Come to the aid of your black mothers, sisters and wives. Black women are frightened. They do not see a way to escape the chains that bind them without the help of their black men.

The black woman should take a supportive roll in the bringing about the awakening of the black consciousness of her man. Her main objective should be to assist in the re-birth of the black man's mind. Her part is by no means small. She should let him test this new mind; let him feel secure in this newly found consciousness. In this way he can grow as his mind expands. He can then show his true manhood when he has patience enough to make black consciousness understood to his own first. There is no greater love than the love one can call his own. But to realize who is your own and how to react to your own, should be the ultimate of one's thoughts. It is a woman's duty to find the beauty in life and to unfold this beauty before the eyes of her man and children; to bring the truth of life out of the darkness and into the light. These things are stimulants to the blackman's mind, therefore, making it possible for him to function at his peak. Her main objective should be to learn and constantly seek a better way of life for her own.

In racist America all the black woman has had for an image to relate to is the tired and outdated caucasian female whose artificial beauty and values leer at one from the television and movie screens across the nation. It is time now for the black woman to use her own imagination and style. She must create and maintain an active image that her men and children can readily relate to. Black women are no different from black men in the respect that they have been taught to feel inferior also. But the mind can be changed if it is open to change. Today the black woman is seeing the beauty that lies within herself. The natural beauty of her mind, hair and body. It is as though a seed has been planted and is in the first stages of growth.

To ask black women of the ghetto to make the transition from negro slave to freed black woman in mind is asking quite a bit. For she has to make this change without leadership. Black middle-classed women have failed to attain means by which to uplift and reconstruct a viable coalition amongst the lower-classed black women in the ghetto. The black women of the ghetto should completely withdraw from the competitive image of the middle-classed bourgeois black woman. She should not cling to the warped values of the women whose only contribution to the black masses of the ghetto is dissent and confusion. For they are really confused. They cannot enter into the mainstream of the white society; they reject black culture and stand suspended in space. Minds such as these are of no use to the budding black minds of the ghetto today.

The young black women of the ghetto are taking pride in themselves as well as their culture. And black people do have a culture, contrary to the thoughts of the middle-classed negro who reject their own thoughts thereby rejecting culture in the making. An artist is aware at all times that he is creating, holding and shaping, bringing something into being. It gives him great pride to be able to do this. That same feeling of pride is being shared by the new black woman of today. She is becoming a part of a new way of life being created by the black men of the "Now" generation. She no longer looks upon her man as being helpless and non-productive. She sees him fighting for his freedom by any means possible, therefore, gaining a new respect for the black man, giving him added inspiration to break the chains binding him that were put there by the oppressor 400 years ago.

Words have power. The new black woman is beginning to exercise this power by trying to find new ways of communicating with her men. They are using words that they both can readily understand to describe their unrest and profound disgust with the way they are forced to live by the existing, controlling power structure. They are also telling their men that they are ready to take arms and fight along side them for their freedom. Without the thought of freedom, the fight for freedom could not be; could not even be understood. Therefore, making it possible to accept something in place of freedom; a substitute of no value to the black mind. But once the thought process is put into motion and we think in terms of freedom and learn what it means, substitutes no longer have value. The black woman must extract from the minds of her men and children their needs, goals and aspirations so that she can more effectively play her part in this revolutionary struggle for freedom. Just being a beautiful black woman is not enough; it is what the black woman can contribute to the black man that is important. The black woman must learn to function outside the home as well as in the house. Just simply being a wife and mother is insufficient, she must show an interest in her family and her immediate surroundings. She must learn to be separate; to stop trying to be like the dead white ghosts that are slowly dying. The black woman of today must create from her soul a better life for the black family.

As the black woman's mind changes so does her values. She begins to see herself as having unlimited wealth. She can create new life and give added beauty to this creation. She then becomes an artist, existing solely for the purpose of helping the black man to achieve the heights of his ambition.

I wonder how a black man feels when he gives great respect to the

spurned the affections of the black woman out of hatred for himself. He is subject to even more ridicule because of his white mistress. If he can stand the pressure at this point, why can he not stand the pressure without the white woman? He constantly seeks to avoid the white man and severs all ties with the white world; but cannot rationalize a way to the white woman.

Negro women at this point become very disgusted with their men. Black women give them up as lost. This new class of black women find themselves more and more playing the roll of reformer. For they can see the need of reclaiming their own. Unlike the Negro woman, the black woman is not competing for the affections of the black man, she is secure in the knowledge of self and race. Therefore, she can be the reformer that is needed in the 20th Century.

There is a definite difference between the Negro woman of today and the black woman of today. The Negro woman still reveals the self-hatred and keen competitive complex of the middle-class. This complex is the result of the frustrations which they experience in attempting to obtain acceptance and recognition by whites. The same white men that are seeking to hinder the growth of the Negro man; and the same white women that are stealing the affections of the Negro man. Negro women are constantly criticizing and belittling their men, whereas black women sing the praises of their men. In fact, it is very difficult for a negro woman and a black woman to communicate beyond the news of the day. And, as a reformer, the black woman is striving to close this gap between them. This is why the roll of a black woman in this revolution is just as important as that of the black man.

The black woman understands when she sees a black man and white woman. She understands that he is trying to escape the sorry roll that he has to play in a racist American society. The black man, as we have seen, is living in a world of make-believe to shield himself from the harsh economic and social realities of the American way of life. This world is created out of the need to be recognized as strong and capable black men. Whereas the Negro woman is deceived by this world of make-believe, the black woman refuses to waste her time with such delusions. She couldn't bring her man in out of the darkness if she is in the darkness also. The black woman knows that the attraction of the delusion of the white woman is enhanced by the belief that the

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THE SKY'S THE LIMIT



BLACK WOMAN

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white woman will gain him acceptance into the white society. The same can be said of some Negro women. They reject their blackness out of the need to belong in the society world of white America.

Despite the gaiety of the world of make-believe in which the Negro man and woman take refuge, they are far from happy. They are even more insecure, frustrated and rejected. For the freedom they sought in the relationship with the white world, was not forthcoming. So black men, stop and think; is not a real black woman far better than a make-believe white woman; the Negro woman? When you feel you have reached the ultimate in your searchings, look around you and take notice of the new black woman that is emerging out of the ghettos of Black America today. The beautiful black sisters are proud of their heritage, proud of their men and have a great respect for themselves.

They have had almost no black female images to relate to, save Miriam Makeba, Kathleen Cleaver and a few others; yet they are not discouraged. They have the will to create a new image and to stand up for new ideals and beliefs. She has enough insight to see the new spark in the eyes of black men, and is trying to help that spark become a raging fire. All she needs is a little inspiration from the black masses of men in the world today.

There is another class of black woman in the ghetto that needs more than inspiration, she needs help. She is the mother of children who has been left by her black man that has removed himself from the home out of despair and hopelessness. This woman is left to fend for herself and her children alone. There is never enough food, money or clothing for the family. Yet society seems uninterested in this broken family structure and why the structure has broken down. This black woman is left alone to teach and raise these children to have racial pride and integrity. She does not falter along the way, yet the middle-classed so-called power structure rejects the thought of forming any kind of agency to come to their aid. Therefore, they are at the mercy of the exploiting white Social Welfare agencies throughout the United States.

These agencies cannot meet the frugal needs on an individual basis; therefore, these families are lacking in the basic necessities of life. The black Churches refuse to form Welfare Agencies within each community, therefore setting a poor example to the white world.

Black Social Workers within the white agencies see the need for added aid from the Negro community, but have not as yet banded together to bring about enough pressure to warrant any attention from black politicians who are supposed to have the interests of these black women at hand. These politicians and social workers are so far removed from the ghetto and its problems by virtue of there being no social status elevation for time spent looking after the needs of these women and children. They are more interested in trying to integrate into the already formed and established agencies such as: Big Brothers, Big Sisters and others that are controlled by whites. These organizations do not offer the basics such as food and shelter to these women in the ghettos across the country.

In San Francisco alone in July 1967 an attempt was made to organize the black social workers within the Welfare Department and out of fear for the loss of their jobs they refused to band together for the interests of these people. Support was offered by leaders within the community but it was spurned for lack of a written guarantee that they would not lose their positions with the agency. As one can see at this point, with the lack of unity from within the agency, it leaves little or no room for concerned people from outside the agency to offer any type of format for reform. Consequently, the masses of black people looking towards this agency for understanding and help experience a breakdown of communication.

As this agency is composed of some 300 social workers, 10% of which are black, this leaves almost no representation of the needs of the masses in the ghetto. Even if this 10% of black social workers were to organize and form a united front, they still could do little to relieve these people of their oppressions. For these social workers are now too far removed from the problems of the ghetto area. They do not identify with these black people. As one black social worker asked after being approached by a black sister with a beautiful natural, "How can you go from one extreme to another?" This clearly shows that there is no understanding of one another.

After seeing how these clients are ill represented, a group of white social workers banded together and published a handbook that was made available to each recipient to read and to better understand their rights. But if there are not enough black social workers to see that these rights are enforced the clients are then right back where they started.

These black women therefore have little or no representation. They then have no choice but to look to the community for help. The black community is not prepared to service these women because they lack the proper facilities from which to operate. Yet these black women must, and are expected to maintain adequate standards by which they are to live. The husbands of these women can offer little or no support because the same system oppresses them also. Jobless, spirit broken and frustrated these men are forced to leave the home in order to enable the women to qualify for any assistance possible.

When will the black community as a whole rise to meet the needs of these men and women? It is not enough to talk of controlling our communities, we must control them. Meeting the needs of these women is a part of this community control. As a community effort the result would benefit the community in the end. The economy would grow because the black men and women would do all their spending within the black community. This would create new jobs for the black men and make it possible for them to reunite with their women, thus taking the responsibility for these families off the community directly. Indirectly, the community has gained strength, while helping their own.

The survival of these women and all people of the ghetto depends upon how the community moves. By struggling to eliminate the aforementioned conditions we are continuing the struggle of generations of black women who have struggled up from slavery to produce beautiful black sons and daughters to fight for the human rights of the black people. Because of their struggle to gain acceptance by whites, the Negro middle-class in the black community has failed to aid these women. However, many of the sons and daughters of these women have become of age and show a sense of

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responsibility towards their own by identifying with the masses in the ghetto. They are determined to overcome the handicaps of ignorance and poverty while seeking to remove the burdens from the shoulders of their parents.

These women will survive as they have in the past, but they need the support of their black men. And from all indications, the black man is beginning to awaken to the fact that their black women are deserving of their respect and love. So black women, dry your eyes, the dawn is breaking and it is a new day. Our men are about to wake up and discover the treasures and wealth of these new days and most of all YOU.

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