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WHY BLACK MALES HAVE EMERGED AS ONE OF THE MOST TROUBLED GROUPS
OF AMERICAN SOCIETY: THEIR ACADEMIC CHALLENGE, POVERTY, AND SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

BY

NICOLE M. PRIDE

Thesis Advisor

Michael S. McGraw, Ph.D.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

In <u>Empowering Young Black Males</u> , Courtland C. Lee (1992), writes that Black males in

contemporary society face many challenges that shape their physical, psychological, and social

development. Evidence from both popular and social science literature over the last decade

suggests that Black men in the United States constitute a population at risk. Lee further suggests

that most social and economic indicators for Black men depict individuals whose development

and quality of life are in serious jeopardy (Lee, 1992, p.2).

This is illustrated, in a 1990 National Urban League (cited in Lee, 1992) report on the

status of the Black male. The report offered a disturbing portrait of Black male life. It stated that

Black males have a shorter life span than any other population group in America, due to a

disproportionate vulnerability to disease and homicide. In every age group, Black men are

significantly more likely to be victims of violent crime than are White men or women of either

race. Furthermore, the report from the Urban League points out that structural changes in the

labor market and discriminatory hiring practices create wide gaps between the earnings of Black

and White men, and a disproportinate number of Black men living in poverty (Lee, 1992, p.4).

Finally, Lee (1992) suggests that from birth to death, Black males in America face a

series of challenges to optimal development and that these challenges take their toll at every age,

but at every stage of life the toll is very high and the effect is cumulative. Collectively, Black

males are often powerless and generally find themselves marginalized in contemporary society.

These challenges faced by the Black male have always existed. Not only for the Black male, but

for the Black family structure.

Segregation and slavery have played a great role in the degradation of the Black family, in particular the Black male. The Black family, once a cohesive family foundation, with the traditional mother, father and children, was torn apart at the seams by slavery and more recently, drugs and poverty. Many Blacks were taken from Africa, sold, killed and separated from their families. In America, Black families were destroyed as the industrial economy began to change leaving unskilled and uneducated Black males with no where to turn. Black families began to re-build with the assistance of the extended family, aunts and uncles. These families have come face to face with issues that challenge the family structure once again. Racism enslaves minds and continues to poison the quality of life for Black and White America.

In 1887, Florida enacted the first Jim Crow law: laws which were statues passed by the legislatures of the Southern states that created a racial caste system in the American South. At this time, many Whites believed that non-Whites were intellectually inferior and they sought their rationalizations through science and religion. Scientifically, this thought existed through the studies of Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin was a British Scientist (1809-1882). Darwin taught survival of the fittest, and his belief was there is a genetic pre-disposition of abilities and the key to learning is getting one to adapt to its environment. This thought set the foundation for the course of thinking in every science discipline that can still be seen in today's society. Social class, rank and file are characteristics of Darwinism that exist today. In religion, many people use the Holy Bible to support theories that Blacks are inferior to Whites.

This way of thinking was also supported by laws in society. The U.S. Supreme court supported the theory that Blacks are inferior to Whites and in 1883 declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional. This thought persisted among the masses and by the end of the century,

segregation had officially become established throughout the South. The Northern states had become more progressive and slavery wasn't quite the establishment that it had become in the South. In Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896 the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of state-enforced segregation and upheld the Separate Car Act, requiring racially separated rail cars. The "separate but equal" doctrine extended to many areas of public life. This doctrine insisted that Blacks were equal to Whites, they could do the same things White people could do, but they had to do it separate from Whites. For example, Black people could drink from a public water fountain, but they couldn't drink from the same water fountain White people drink from, it had to be a fountain for Blacks only. Separate but "equal" was a way of life.

Embedded in the soil of America, is the attitude that Whites are superior and Blacks inferior. This attitude has been established throughout American history. Jim Crow laws, the civil rights debate, and continued controversy over affirmative action laws whether they should exist or not are a few examples of how the attitude of inferiority persists. In 1968, the Kerner Report, issued by a national advisory commission on civil disorder, discussed a study on the riots in the United States and concluded that America was moving toward two societies, one Black and poor, one White and rich, separate and unequal. Almost three decades after the Kerner report, the conditions of Blacks have changed, but not much.

The persistence of poverty generates levels of despair that deepen social conflict; the escalation of paranoia produces levels of distrust that reinforce cultural division. Race is the most explosive issue in American life precisely because it forces us to confront the tragic facts of poverty and paranoia, despair, and distrust. In spite of legislation to combat gender and racial based discrimination, Black men still face many challenges such as education, economic

advancement, poverty, crime, and substance abuse.

The struggle of the Black male has either been ignored and/or forgotten because much of the interest in discrimination has been written on women and minorities, not the Black male. This study will look at the Black male and his opportunities and challenges in American society. It will examine the Black male and education, and trace the progress of Black businessmen, several of whom have made great strides in business. This study will look at strides and obstacles that have been faced by the Black male within the context of the past two centuries. This is done to enable the reader to identify with what change has taken place in Black business over the last 200 years and to better understand the condition of the Black male in contemporary society.

Historically, racism has been the plight of the Black male. However, within their own culture, Black males have other struggles-- poverty, substance abuse, and crime. Often, ones behavior will reflect defiance by form of protest. The riots in 1967 across the United States, and in 1994 in Los Angeles, California, were public demonstrations of protest. Many Blacks participated to reveal their anger and frustration with treatment of their race. This ostensible protest is an indication of the desire to be accepted as an equal. Unfortunately, violence and drugs have become a way of life for many Black males. However, there are Black males who face the struggle of poverty and substance abuse and make every attempt to succeed. Very often, they find another obstacle, education.

Background

The Black Male and Education

In the early 1950s, racial segregation in public schools was a normal phenomenon across America. In the South, the law segregated schools; however, in the North, there were no laws to segregate schools and segregation existed because of economics. Blacks lived in Black neighborhoods, and Whites lived in White neighborhoods and school districts were split up to ensure there was segregation. The segregated schools were supposed to be equal, yet " Most black schools were far inferior to their white counterparts. In 1950 adult nonwhite males had completed a median 6.4 years of schooling, compared with 9.3 years for adult white males" (Wheelan, 1991, p.5).

In Topeka, Kansas, the landmark Brown v. Board of Education case in 1954 changed the legal segregation of schools. Although segregation was changed in schools, this ruling did not have any impact on segregation in other areas. For example, restaurants and restrooms remained segregated and the societal way of living on a day to day basis hadn't changed. Furthermore, Brown v. Board of Education didn't rule on a specific time period for when desegregation had to be in place. This lack of specified time allowed society to move on just as it had been. Most importantly a written law does not change morals, values, and beliefs. The Black race still had many challenges to face.

An education is necessary not only to become a productive member of society, but it is also a necessary means of survival and daily living. Education is a vehicle for information. This necessary information assists individuals with getting a job that enables them to supply themselves and their families with the basics of food, clothing, and shelter. The assumption is

that the purpose of public or private education is to provide a place for individuals to receive the training, academic, technical or vocational, necessary to gain the information needed for survival. The ability to receive an equal education has not always been available to Black people. More Black students on the elementary level through high school are attending nearly all Black or all Black schools because education is a function of economics. School reports have shown that typically, these schools are found to be ill equipped with the proper educational tools: books, maps, pens, pencils and computers as compared to the school systems of their White counterparts. This is further supported by a personal interview with a Black teacher in a White, suburban school district. Teacher C said, "I always wanted to be in a place where I can have the best advantages of teaching and not worry about supplies and danger or safety. I wanted to be in a place that embraced new thoughts in education, and had the resources to do so" (see Appendix C).

The historic Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954 that outlawed segregation in public schools did not secure equal access to equal education for minorities. In 1979 Linda Brown, the subject of the original Brown v. Board of Education case, sued the Topeka School System to secure, for her son and daughter, the educational benefit of having the right to attend any school under the desegregation law that her parents fought for and had supposedly won in 1954.

In the United States, it seems that the traditional models of education are inefficient in terms of effectiveness for Black male children. Recent estimates indicate that by the year 2020, the majority of school age children will be minorities. If the public education system continues at the current pace of curricula, it suggests that Black students will remain on top with the highest

numbers for drop out rates, low college attendance, and low academic achievement as compared to other races (Wheelan, 1991, p.3).

If the negative experience of Black children in schools is to be remedied, a commitment from government, churches, community groups, school officials, and parents has to be agreed upon in order to make a change. Some educational systems have been working to determine the best approach for educating young Black males, who are the largest group that is failing in the school system. Single sex elementary schools, among other ideas, have been introduced as an alternate approach for a more effective learning environment for young Black males.

In addition, other efforts have been introduced. A program entitled "The Young Lions" is a program that can be adapted nationwide. It assists in the development and education of Black males. It attempts to enhance the self-esteem and support needed by young Black males and directs them in a path of strength and self-respect. Another program called the Posse Foundation, is a scholarship program that pulls together groups of New York City high school students who are carefully selected. They are prepared for enrollment at participating universities. Another vehicle that addresses the issues faced by young Black males in education is the annual Black Male Development Conference. The focus of this conference is on the education Black males receive in this country, and implementing plans of action that will empower the Black parent to take control and responsibility over his/her child's education. Also, the conference helps the parent(s) shape the educational system. National data shows, that while more money is being spent on education, and legislation is written in an attempt to guarantee equality for all in the educational process, the nation is still losing Black males to crime and joblessness (Wheelan, 1991, p.1).

The Black Male: Crime, Unemployment and His Struggle While Employed

Unemployment often promotes poverty and substandard living conditions. The United States Government built projects and multi-family units as early as the 1960s as a supplement for low income families with housing assistance. Building low income housing for poor minorities was supposed to solve homelessness in the inner cities, but instead problems mounted. Drugs and crime became a way of life for many of the Blacks living in these dwellings. These low-income housing units serve as identifiers to economic status. Another problem with multiple family units is that people are forced to live on top of each other, under each other and around each other. Most of these family units had anywhere between 85 to 125 families living in one place. High rates of unemployment and substandard living conditions are directly associated with illegal activities, spouse and child abuse, drugs and alcoholism and the breakup of the Black family. The family in any race, is the moral fiber that connects the community to morals, values, and dignity.

Violence often is the direct result of social conditions, and one half of all murder victims in America are Blacks (Hill, Billingsley and Engram 1993, p.45). Homicide is the leading cause of death among men between 15 and 44 years of age. Black men are six times more likely to be murdered as compared to White men, while Black women are four times more likely to be murdered than White women (Hill, 1993, p.127). The sad scenario is that most of these killings will be done by other African-Americans. Black on Black crime has become popular in the Black community. On a daily basis Black crime can be experienced by society through different media tools. The Black crime experience, whether Black on Black crime, or Black crime against another race, the incidents are many and there are penalties that must be paid for crime.

Prisons have become overcrowded. The major supporters of these penal institutions are Black men. These men comprise 12 percent of the U.S. population, but they account for one-fourth of the arrests and one-half of the inmates in state prisons (Hill,1993, p.128). Black males are more likely to drop out of school and have a better chance of going to jail than to college. Studies have shown that one in three Black males in America between the ages of 20 and 29 are now either in jail, on parole, or on probation. While Black men are incarcerated, who is taking care of the family? The Black woman. Here is another example of how the social conditions of Black men have contributed to the demise of their families. In addition, as the Black male fights a battle against crime and overcomes the negativism in his environment, there are obstacles the Black male faces when he does become gainfully employed.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1995) has documented an alarming increase in discrimination complaints filed with their office. In 1995, the commission received 87,600 charges of discrimination which showed an increase of about 42 percent over 1990. Almost 30,000 were based on race, and Blacks filed 88 percent of the complaints. These data definitely refutes the assumption that discrimination has been eliminated as a contributory factor in the isolation of Black males in the job market.

Along with alarming statistics, Denny's Restaurant, Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America, and Texaco showed examples of discrimination that is alive and well in our society. On April 1, 1993 Denny's settled a federal suit for discrimination. The law suit was originally filed by six secret service men accusing the restaurant chain of discrimination. Denny's was found guilty and found themselves paying out a total of $54 million dollars by December 1995 to 295,000 aggrieved customers and their lawyers. Mitsubishi, another company found guilty of violating

the rights of minorities recently agreed to spend $200 million dollars over 5 years to improve minority opportunities, including pay raises and new car dealerships for Blacks.

Texaco Corporation found itself in the eye of the storm. It settled the largest class-action suit for discrimination in history. This conglomerate was accused of racial discrimination by two Black employees and the company vigorously fought the lawsuit. Later, hundreds of other African-Americans joined the law suit which eventually evolved into a class-action suit that was settled for approximately $176.1 million dollars.

Exactly where does it end? Does this mean that all companies, corporations or entities discriminate? Certainly not. But, does this not help to shed some light on the plight that Black males face? Yes it does. There are trials faced by the Black male with employment that aren't faced by other groups, yet there are deeper issues faced by the Black male.

To understand the Black response to the feeling of helplessness and despair, and to help the Black male and society understand, it is necessary to examine the plight of the Black male and his changing opportunities and challenges over time.

Statement Of The Problem

This study will explore why Black males have emerged as one of the most troubled groups of American society their academic struggle, poverty, and social and economic isolation. Information will come from a review of the literature guided by one major research question. How have these factors helped shape the Black male in contemporary society?

Purpose Of The Study

The author will discuss the plight of the Black male, specifically the Black male and education and how the social factors, the glass ceiling for a Black male in corporate America, the Black male as father and husband, and the Black male and the struggle with poverty, substance abuse and crime relate. This study hopes to enlighten the Black male and society as a whole to conditions that affect the Black male, which in turn affect the Black family and ultimately have a profound impact on society. Black men are capable of succeeding in education and business and have always been capable. Yet, success remains relative and many Black men wonder why they continue to be faced with so many obstacles.

Definition Of Terms

1. Black: Pertaining specifically to dark-skinned people from Africa or America; also referred to as Negroes, African Americans

2. White: The opposite of Black people, very little to no pigmentation of the skin, which includes a number of different categories. Referred to as Caucasian, Jewish, and White American, Anglo-Saxon and many other groups of people.

3. Poverty: The state or condition of having little or no money, goods or means of support; condition of being poor; indigence. Living below an annual income of $15,000.

4. Corporate: A large business that accrues millions or billions of dollars in

assets on an annual basis.

Limitations

There was not an abundance of literature written on the Black male. The literature on Black owned businesses covers approximately 10 decades to show the progression of Black business over time. The literature on Black males and poverty, substance abuse, and crime was limited to statistics. Most of the statistics didn't separate Black males from Black females. In many instances, these two groups were recorded as one statistic under the headings "Blacks" or "African-Americans". In the areas of education, the study is limited to a 10 year time period. Much of the literature didn't focus on the education of the Black male and the problems that exist in his pursuit of education until the past decade. The plight of the Black male encompasses so many issues that it was difficult for the author to discuss one issue without exploring another.

Chapter II

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Background

This literature based study on the topic of the Black male and issues that contribute to

his plight in American society are documented, but not as well as many other topics affecting a

large group of people. Over time, much has been written about discrimination in the work

place for minorities. However, much of the literature has been focused on women as a

minority. Information on the Black male as it relates to discrimination and the glass ceiling was

sparse. Most of the documentation was grouped under affirmative action. Educating the Black

male is a topic that hasn't been of importance to society it seems. Consequently, the majority of

the literature found on this subject wasn't significant, thus a recommendation for further study

in the future.

Although the author found a significant amount of material on affirmative action, this

hindered the research because this was not the area of study. Information on the Black male

and the glass ceiling was more elusive. Although much had been written on the glass ceiling, it

was gender specific to women and not men. Since the scope of this thesis/literature review

encompasses many aspects of the Black male, it was difficult to tie in all of the issues of

importance that affect the Black male and contribute to his plight. Also, because there was so

much written on Black business, the effort to tie in business to render an understanding to all

that affects the Black male was cumbersome. Furthermore, it was impossible to stay within a

certain time period, because the plight of the Black male follows a history of challenge. To

pinpoint a recurring theme in the literature was almost impossible.

Instead, the author focused on each issue individually that addressed the plight of the Black male. Education, business and change to compete in contemporary society were areas of concentration because of the information found in the literature. By using the limited amount of reference material that specifically addressed the glass ceiling, and then tying in personal interviews, it enabled the author to build a relationship between those references and material which addressed past and current business and education issues, to create the foundation and direction of the study.

Data Base Search

To begin gathering information for this study, the author began by searching through database reference material. ERIC database at Seton Hall University rendered many hits when the search information phrases such as "black males in education", "african americans and education" and "black males and education". The process of elimination of articles and reviewing article abstracts was a lengthy and frustrating task. However, this proved to be a major resource and a solid base of literature to begin the education section of this study.

Books

Prior to the data base search for materials, the first set of reference materials the author collected were books. Again, the primary subject criterion was searched and not to the surprise

of the author, not much has been written on the glass ceiling and the Black male. Yet, a wealth

of information could be found on the Black male and slavery. The television proved to be a

source for the author. Fox 5 news station was interviewing Earl Graves, the author of the book,

How to Succeed in Business Without Being White, which proved to be a solid source of

information for this study. Also, the author found books of relevant information through

friends. Some of the author's friends had read books in reference to these topics and offered

them to the author on loan. Further information became available through the bibliography

section of these books.

Business Periodicals

In Seton Hall University Library, the author searched the Business Periodical on Disc,

known as the BPOD. Magazines and journal publications contained minimal articles addressing

the Black male and education, economics and the glass ceiling. It wasn't enough information for

the author to see a relationship develop in this literature. Finally, the author discovered a

magazine that had done a study on the history of the Black business. Needless to say this was

beneficial to the author, because not only was the article full of information, but the bibliography

provided a plethora of information.

Chapter III

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE LITERATURE

Education

October 16, 1995 has been recorded as one of the greatest moments for Blacks. A day when an estimated 1.2 million Black men across the United States gathered in Washington, D.C. as a show of solidarity. Black men from all walks of life and religious beliefs were represented. Christians, Muslims, doctors, lawyers, actors, young men, civil rights activists and private business owners were all assembled peacefully in support of the goals and objectives of the Million Man March, so eloquently called The Day of Atonement by the organizer of the event, Louis Farrakhan, a Muslim minister.

On this day, Black men were called together in an effort to show strength and solidarity and pride in their race. Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the Muslim faith, called on Black men to stop the violent attacks in the community and on one another, to have pride in themselves and to take responsibility for their families. To many, a day long overdue in the Black community, to others a frail attempt to fix an un-fixable phenomenon.

It will certainly take more than a Million Man March to change the social and economic state of the Black male, but it is a start in the inner healing and bonding process that would have to occur to make a change. This reformation of the Black male is imperative in order to save the Black community; it is also their responsibility to save themselves. Yet, this is a great challenge for a race of people to undo what has been done to them for centuries by White people who are greatly responsible for the condition of the Black race today.

Segregation and slavery have played a great role in the degradation of the Black male

and his family. In 1887, Florida enacted the first Jim Crow law, laws that created a racial caste system. Louisiana in 1890, required racially separated rail cars. There were numerous methods of separation that by the end of the century, segregation had officially become established, particularly throughout the South. In <u>Plessy v. Ferguson</u>, in the case involving racially separated rail cars, the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of state-enforced segregation and set the precedent that "separate" facilities for Blacks and Whites were constitutional as long as they were "equal" (Lively, 1990, p.48).

Segregation comes out of the minds that suggest inferiority. This can be seen as far back as slavery, and as recent as the 20th century, with examples like the book entitled <u>The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life</u>, written in 1994, by Richard J. Hernstein and Charles Murray, which suggests Blacks are genetically inferior to Whites.

Embedded in the soil of many White Americans is the idea that Blacks are inferior. In the 19th century, Jim Crow Laws which created a racial caste system, and the 1954 Supreme Court case of <u>Brown v. Board of Education</u> are examples of the feeling that Whites have against Blacks. In reference to <u>Brown v. Board of Education</u> in 1954, one author writes:

The Board of Education's defense was that, because segregation in Topeka and elsewhere pervaded many other aspects of life, segregated schools simply prepared black children for the segregation they would face during adulthood. The board also argued that segregated schools were not necessarily harmful to black children. (Lively, 1990, p.56)

There are many rules and laws in history that have been implemented to reveal this feeling. This attitude has been a constant reminder to the Black male even in today's society. Corporate giants like Denny's and Texaco are examples of prevalent cases that the inferiority

mind set exists in many Whites against Blacks. Black men are clandestinely reminded of their inferiority to Whites by their living conditions, types of employment, and job wages. In 1995 there was a reported 3,805 anti-black hate crimes committed. When people are constantly reminded that they are not supposed to rise above a certain level, it will have an astounding affect on their self-esteem. Often, ones behavior will reflect that defiance by a form of protest. Riots and Black on Black crime throughout the United States are forms of protest of the living social and economic conditions the Black male faces. Psychologically, this ostensible protest is an indication of a desire to be accepted as an equal.

The riots throughout the United States in 1967, and recently in Los Angeles, California, were public demonstrations for equal treatment. In 1968, the Kerner Commission conducted a study on the riots in the United States and concluded that America was moving toward two societies, one Black, one White: separate and unequal. Twenty-seven years after the Kerner report, the conditions of Blacks have not changed much.

One of the biggest contributory factors to the plight of the Black male is education. In an article written by Courtland C. Lee (1996), the author presents a profile of widespread failure. For example: Black males are far more likely than other ethnic/ gender groups to be placed in general education and vocational high school curricular tracks than in an academic track. Black males are three times more likely to be placed in classes for the educable mentally retarded and for students with learning disabilities than in gifted and talented classes. Black males drop out or are pushed out of school systems at higher rates than other ethnic/gender groups. Black males are suspended from school more frequently and for longer periods of time than other ethnic/gender groups. Finally, Black males complete high school at significantly

lower rate than other ethnic/gender groups (Lee, 1996, p.5).

This issue of education being a central challenge to the Black male has existed over time.   During slavery, Blacks weren't allowed to be educated. They were captured and held physically and mentally. The idea of a formal education was something that Blacks couldn't have imagined for themselves. Although great effort was put into keeping Blacks uneducated, some organizations sought to help slaves.

A handful of brave and caring "Whites of good will" dared to work to abolish slavery and to encourage the education of people of all colors (Low & Clift, 1981, p.332). While not a popular notion with all slave owners, there were some that taught many how to read and write. Prior to the American Revolution, northern Blacks were receiving an education both in the public and private sector.   According to Low and Clift (1981):

New Jersey began educating Black children in 1777. In addition, Quakers and other humanitarian groups taught Black children privately, and Quaker philanthropist Anthony Benezet provided funds to enlarge the Quaker program begun with the school session of 1774. In 1787 a school for Afro-Americans was built in Philadelphia, and 1797 had established at least seven schools (p.333).

As seen in the Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896, southern Blacks did not experience a significant difference in "separate but equal" until 1954. Far too often, cases such as this one have been deliberated in the courts with Blacks fighting for integration. After fighting so long and so hard for desegregation in schools, the issue has once again resurfaced in the 1990s with educators questioning whether Black males should be taught in schools that enroll only Black males.

The Academic Performance of Black Males

A study done on college bound Black male students by Walter Williams reports that in 1983, fewer than 4,200 Black college bound high-school graduates, out of 75,400, had grade point averages of 3.75 (B+) or better. Compared to 7,858 out of 36,048 Asians, and 115,722 out of 701,345 White students. This translates to a mere 5.5 percent of Black college bound seniors who earned B+ averages, compared to 22 percent for Asians and 16.5 percent for Whites. The author doesn't report why this is so.

In a study done by the American Council on Education (ACE) in 1990 (cited in Wheelan, 1991), it reports that Blacks are graduating from high schools and, as a group, Blacks are doing better on college entrance exams. However, fewer Blacks are going to college. The report further states that the percentage of low income Black high school graduates attending college dropped from 40% to 30% (1976 to 1988). Enrollment of Black middle class graduates dropped from 54 percent in 1976 to 36 percent in 1988 and enrollment of middle income Black men dropped from 53 percent to 28 percent from 1976 to 1988 (Wheelan, 1991, p.7).

President Ronald Wilson Reagan, during his administration, impacted opportunities that had seem to help move Blacks forward in education. No longer was the idea of opportunity for all cherished in leadership. Many of the programs that were supported by federal funds dissipated. For example, Head start programs that were implemented to provide education for children that had been deprived of the education process due to economics and parental involvement were stopped. These policy changes implemented during the eight years of the Reagan administration had a negative impact on the Black community. Much of the progress

that had been stopped. Head Start programs specifically affect the Black community because the assistance is for low income families or parents who cannot afford to pay for child care services on their own.

Higher Education

Pride conducted a survey with four different colleges and universities; Boston University, Howard University, Jackson State University and the University of California Los Angeles. Table 1 shows the number of males, Black and White respectively, the number of each who entered these universities in 1990 and the number that received bachelor degrees by the year 1996.

Table 1

Black and White Males Entering Selected Universities and the Numbers That Graduate

	Black males			White males		
University	Entered 1990	Graduated 1996	Percentage %	Entered 1990	Graduated 1996	Percentage %
Boston	46	24	52.2	1052	649	61.7
Howard	1272	579	45.5	1272	579	45.5
Jackson State	822	180	22	15	1	0.07
UCLA	133	67	51	819	678	82.8

Note. The numbers for Howard University represent all undergraduate attendants; they do not separate by race and gender. However 86 percent of their students are Black and approximately 2 percent are White. Results were given by permission of the Universities (Howard University admissions office).

As the data shows there is a significant difference in the rates at which Black men enter and complete higher education, than their White male counterpart. White males enter at higher rates and have a higher graduation rate. As the table shows, Black males graduation percentage rate is low even in a traditionally Black college or university. This concludes the deep social challenges that must be overcome in order to achieve educational equality. Table 1 contains data for both White and Black males.

Although Black enrollment in higher education has grown in the past decade, the

numbers are still low because enrollment numbers aren't growing relative to the growth of the

Black population. This under-representation is especially true at the more prestigious research

universities and the most expensive 4-year colleges and universities. Black males make up 3.8

percent of the total higher education enrollment. Because of the disparity between Blacks and

Whites in the percentage who receive college degrees and in the highest degree field, Ph.D.,

Blacks are less likely to fill their share of new work force positions that require college degrees

(Nettles, 1997, p.56). The U.S. Bureau of the Census shows that in 1996 12.4 percent of Black

males have completed four years of college or more compared to 26.9 percent for White males.

The reasons for such a large disparity in graduation numbers is difficult to define. Many

college students, Black or White don't render an explanation for why they end their education.

Yet some contributory factors are economics, cultural differences, and perhaps the educational

challenge faced by many of the students. The reasons are many, but underlying all the many

reasons lies one main theme, which is discrimination. One author's opinion states that if a

black male keeps his nose clean, stays away from drugs and crime, graduates high school, gets

accepted to college, and graduates with a degree, he is still more likely not to get a job. If he

does get a job, he will likely earn less than what a white person is earning in a comparable

position.

In their book entiteled A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society the authors,

Gerald David Jaynes and Robin M. Williams, discuss the changing status of Black Americans

since 1940. They indicat that while the status of Black Americans on the average has

improved, one third of the Black population, which includes nearly half of all Black children,

still lived in poverty. They further state that assuming no significant policy changes developed

in the near future that the rate of increase of the Black middle class is likely to decline.

Approximately one third of the Black population will continue to be poor and the relative

employment and earnings status of Black men, now declining, is likely to deteriorate. Drugs,

crime, teenage parenthood, poor education, and joblessness will maintain their grip on large

numbers of poor and near-poor Blacks. Furthermore, high rates of residential segregation

between Blacks and Whites will continue and the U.S. faces the continued great inequality

between Whites and Blacks and a continuing division of social status within the Black

population (Jaynes , 1990, p.54-55). Dent (1989) further notes that:

The U.S. department of Education reports that nearly 20 percent of all black males drop

out of high school. Additionally, black boys score lower than any other group of youngsters on

standardized tests. Black males are disproportionately misclassified and placed in classes for

the mentally retarded or are tracked into low-learning classes more often and with more

consequences than for any other group of children (p.42).

These factors are believed to be the prime reason why Black men end up in jail or dead,

go to college, or earn a decent living. In many instances, the violent way of life is often

chosen.

Darrell Dawsey (1996) in his book entitled, Living To Tell About It, related a personal

experience of violence. In 1994, Dawsey and his father went to a club in Forest, Mississippi.

While in the club dancing and having a good time, four boys attacked Dawsey and beat him

unmercifully. Dawsey screamed to his father to get his pistol and his father quickly obeyed.

When Dawsey's father came back with the gun, there was a shoot-out in the parking lot.

Dawsey was shot.

The tragedy of this story is that Dawsey is 18 years old and is crippled for life.

Interestingly, this kind of violence is an everyday occurrence in many Black communities.

Drive-by shootings and gang related crimes are not rare. Dawsey's book makes a statement that

is horrifying. Killing is fun and holding a gun in my hand is power (Dawsey, 1996, p.65). Ice

Cube, a rap artist, sings: I'm about to fuc#*% up the program shooting out the window of a

drop-top Brougham... These are the Black men who serve as models for the youth in the Black

community. This is not a positive image that is being created for young Black males. With so

many negative forces surrounding them, many Black males have a difficult time moving

forward in their educational experience.

Certainly the struggle for equal education continues to be an uphill battle. More

Black students on the elementary level through high school are attending nearly all Black or all

Black schools. Again, this is so because of economic issues. More Black children are living in

urban areas where the school systems are nearly or all Black. Without the proper education on

the lower level, higher education then becomes yet another hurdle for the Black male.

Grammar School

A review of the literature shows that a contributing factor of the academic struggle of

the Black male is teacher expectations. Dent (1989) reports that Black males are twice as likely

to receive corporal punishment and to be suspended as their White counterparts (p.44). He

also suggests that the Black males' perception of their high rate of punishment is because they

feel they have no place in the academic world. In a 1998 conference entitled Focus On The

African American Male: Survival In The 21ˢᵗ Century, presenter and psychology expert Dr.

Andrew Brown III addressed this issue as "social Darwinism". He suggests that the thoughts of Charles Darwin (1809-1882) promote a rank and file system in society. Within the classroom setting, the idea of chairs being aligned in rows and columns as opposed to learning in a circle, promotes competition and individualism in children as opposed to group and team spirit.

A study conducted by Yale University's Child Study Center on two inner-city schools in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1968 concluded that the way to academic achievement is to promote psychological development in students, which encourage bonding to the school. Four years later at the end of the study, the school, which ranked 25 in its district, raised its rating to number three. This 1968 Yale University study supports Dr. Brown's thoughts in 1998. Yet, psychological development and academic team work is not a part of the educational process in most academic environments.

It goes on to say that by the age of 8, kids begin to recognize how other families differ from their own in income, education, and sometimes race and style. Many are unable to achieve in school and subsequently see academic success as unattainable. They, therefore, decide that school is unimportant. With education no longer an option, they turn to other ways to seek a sense of adequacy, belonging, and self-affirmation in non-mainstream groups that do not value academic achievement, that is dropout, teen pregnancy, drug abuse and crime. This gives insight to where Black male students begin to fail. More information surrounds this phenomenon.

Maryland's Prince George County is comprised of 65 percent Black people. In 1990, a study showed that out of the 105,000 Black male students studied, Black male pupils performed comparably to boys and girls of all races on first and second grade standardized math and

reading tests. But by fourth grade, Black boys showed a staggering decline in their scores. In 1994, fourth grade reading scores of Black boys lagged behind those of all other groups at the same grade level, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (Wheelan, 1991, p.3).

The question that would have to be asked is what happens between third and fourth grade? Harry Morgan (cited in Parenting, 1997), an early childhood development professor at the State University of West Georgia suggests that there is a shift in the way teachers instruct all children. Mr. Morgan has also spent over 20 years training teachers and conducting research on classroom behavior and learning styles. In the earlier years, teachers encourage social interaction, he says, but by fourth grade, classrooms become more of a static, lecturing environment (Parenting, p.1, 1997). How can a teaching style have such a drastic affect on a child's ability to learn?

This change in teaching approach, from an informal, learning-by-doing style to the more structured, sit-down-and-listen setup is toughest on male students, who tend to be more active than girls in the elementary grades. And for black boys, a teacher's reaction to these high energy levels may be compounded by racism. Most fourth grade teachers approach their curriculum based on the assumption that their class is full of readers, according to Spencer Holland, an educational psychologist in Washington, D.C. So if a child isn't literate by then, the new teacher isn't going to go back and teach him how to read, because she/he's hamstrung by his/her own curriculum (Parenting, 1997, p.120).

In one of the largest studies of Black male students ever conducted it points out that the New Orleans public schools found that while 8 out of 10 Black parents believed their sons

expected to go to college, only 4 out of 10 teachers believed their Black male students would receive a higher education. In the New Orleans study, 58 percent of the 5,423 Black boys who responded said they believed that their teachers should push them harder, and 34 percent said their teachers didn't set high enough goals for them. More than half of these boys were only in grades four through six. Eight percent of the children in America's public schools are Black boys, yet their representation in the nation's special education classes is nearly twice that 15 percent. Black males are also three times as likely as White males to be enrolled in special education programs for the mildly to moderately mentally retarded, according to a 1992 report released by the Office of Civil Rights.

In addition, Black males in primary and secondary schools were suspended more than twice as often as White males in 1992, according to the Office of Civil Rights. If national statistics are astounding, no relief is found in the numbers that have been reported on the district levels. Reports indicate that in the Minneapolis school system, for instance, enrollment of Black and White males is nearly the same, but 43 percent of all students suspended during the 1995-96 school year were Black males as opposed to 14 percent who were White males. Moreover, more Black boys were suspended in this city for lack of cooperation and disrespect than for various categories of fighting, profanity, and verbal abuse put together.

Something must be done in an effort to educate the Black male to meet the technological era in which we live. At a time when a well-skilled and a well-educated workforce is in demand, Black males are digressing instead of progressing. Educators, government, and families are faced with the great challenge of securing educational opportunities for the Black male that are comparable to their White counterpart.

One program designed by Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu (cited in Lee, 1996) focused on the

Black male that can be implemented in schools across the country deserves attention. The

Young Lions program is a multisession, psycho-educational empowerment experience for

Black males in grades three through six. The program is designed as a mentor program and can

be implemented nationwide. During the school day, Black males in these grades meet with

Black men who serve as role models/mentors to the students. The program stresses the

development of the motivation skills necessary for academic success, and the development of

positive and social behavior. Young men are also taught an appreciation of Black history and

culture, and the modeling of positive Black male images through their mentors. The program

that has been implemented is geared toward identifying Black males that have been labeled

"at-risk" in an effort to avoid ultimate failure in school.

Interestingly enough, in order for this program to be successful in any school system, it

requires the efforts of Black males who, themselves, have continually met challenges in their

efforts to succeed in school and in the workplace.

Black Business and Black Businessmen

The bridges of pain, grief and self-determination that Black people, in particular the

Black male, have faced and continue to face in contemporary society come from many aspects

of life. Poverty, crime, substance abuse, and education are overt challenges faced by the Black

male. The struggle in the work place, which has traditionally been labeled the "glass ceiling",

has been examined extensively on it's affects against women as the minority. But, the glass

ceiling is very real for the Black male who beats the odds of crime, poverty, substance abuse,

and failure in education.

Black businessmen made major gains in the post-Civil War period, establishing firms and moving to positions of eminence in several industries. These industries include catering and barbering. Many of these businesses were owned and operated by Black men during a time when slavery prevailed. However, all of this changed in the last decade of the 19th century as prejudice continued to smother Black life as a result of the Jim Crow system. That system was a racial caste system that reversed the progress built by Black laborers and businessmen. This system created laws that promoted segregation. Separate schools, water fountains, and riding on the back of the bus are just a few of the most well known examples. Clearly this was a system to oppress the Black community.

As the system of oppression grew across Black life, one author (cited in Ebony, 1996, p.104) writes that the Black business world became smaller and White merchants took over the Black market. Because of this system, White people who had originally dealt with Black merchants began to cease business dealings with Black merchants, and White property owners stopped lending to Black businesses. This action, of course, began to put Black merchants out of business. This enabled White merchants to take over the businesses that had been in control by Blacks.

Not content with the white Main Street triumph, white merchants pursued black merchants into the black community and laid claim to the so-called Negro trade. The freeing of blacks had created an enormous black market, and white merchants were not slow in recognizing its significance. As early as 1870, Charles Nordhoff noted that the Negro is the principal producer in Mississippi, and since the war has become a large consumer also.... The

[white] men who have the Negro trade all get rich (Ebony, 1996, p.105).

The Black community had to turn somewhere for support. Historically, the Black church has been a vehicle for building within the community. History reveals that from the late 1800's forward, many Black people were involved in church building and organizing. Many Blacks found the church to be a connection to other Black families like themselves. Many Blacks embraced the church as a place not only for spiritual gratification, but also as a community center.

Because of the ability to meet and socialize with other families in a spiritual setting, history reveals that benevolent and fraternal organizations began to form. Many of these fraternal organizations are still in existence today. For example, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a non-sectarian agency was established by Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and his followers in 1957. It was founded to coordinate and assist local organizations working for the full equality of Blacks in all aspects of American life. Another like organization is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), with a similar mission, and Operation (PUSH), People United to Save Humanity, a national organization that promotes economic empowerment for minorities and the disadvantaged. Fraternal organizations such as the Masons and Elks formed between 1865 to 1915, had a major impact on the Black community. Forming relationships that encouraged and supported one another while collecting large amounts of money in dues and business ventures, these organizations became a focus for Black life. This force of income and stability was an attraction to the Black community then, and these organizations continue in contemporary society.

It is estimated that "Blacks contributed $168 million to fraternal orders between 1870

and 1920" (Ebony, 1996, p.106). Furthermore, some of the organizations have been credited with creating the first Black banks. At that time there wasn't a place for the Black community to keep funds in such great amounts where they felt it would be safe. From these organizations, there were Blacks that started their own businesses -- through networking and pooling resources together.

The Grand Lodge of Masons of Mississippi, for example, bought 1,000 acres of timberland and went into the lumber business. The True Reformers organized a bank; a chain of retail stores, a hotel, a newspaper, an old folk's home, and an all-black community called Brownsville. Finding a way to establish its own community, blacks began to use these fraternal organizations to support the building of a new black society (Ebony, 1997, p.106).

Out of this new society, the first Black owned bank was formed in 1888. Capital Savings Bank, a Black owned bank opened in Washington, D.C., in October 1888. The Savings Bank of the Grand Fountain United Order of True Reformers opened in April 1889. Banks had become big Business in the Black community. Between 1899 and 1905, 28 banks were organized by Blacks (Ebony, 1998, p.107).

Following the organization of Black owned banks, the Black community moved forward. Although faced with the Jim Crow system and cases such as Plessey v. Ferguson, Black business continued to grow. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was the organization of the first Black insurance companies. Two examples are North Carolina Mutual formed in 1898 and Atlanta Life formed in 1905. According to an Atlanta University study (cited in Ebony, 1996), in 1898 there were 1,900 Black owned businesses in America (p.107). Although businesses in the insurance industry and banking, most of these businesses were small

retail outlets, but some were of substantial size.

It was because of these firsts in the Black community that Blacks were able to build, what White people had considered being the impossible for Blacks as a people. These businesses enabled the Black community to move into the 20th century with strength because of their resources as a group.

In 1900 there were 40,445 Blacks in business for themselves or business-related occupations, twenty years later, in 1920, there were 74,424 Blacks in business for themselves or business related occupations. Today, the most recent statistics reported in 1992 by the U.S. Bureau of the Census there are 620,912 Black owned firms (Ebony, 1996, p.104).

The Black community not only made great strides as entrepreneurs in banking and insurance, but also in industry. Most black-owned firms were still concentrated in the service industries in the 1900s. The New York metropolitan area had the largest number of black-owned firms, 39,404, compared to 37,088 in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, 32,645 in the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area, 24,644 in the Chicago metropolitan area and 23,488 in the Atlanta area (Ebony, 1996, p. 105). Black people organized factories for the manufacturing and processing of mattresses, cotton goods, oil, shoe polish, and hair penetrations.

With the sinking of the first foundations of the Black colonies of the North, the stage was set for a business boom that lasted until 1929. It was during this period, Vishnu Oak wrote (The Negros Adventure in General Business), that Negro businessmen talked about million-dollar corporations as if they were playthings and started corporate enterprises for the production of articles of every description, including brooms, dolls, mayonnaise, perfume and

toilet goods, hair preparations, soap, hosiery, cotton and woolen goods, mattresses, flour,

chemicals, radios, movies, lumber, burial caskets, tiles, coal, oil, and stoves (Ebony, 1997,

p.106).

One man, a pioneer of history and a creator of hair products, was John H. Johnson, one

of the most successful entrepreneurs in the history of Black business. In 1942, Johnson

borrowed $500 on his mother's furniture and started Negro Digest and Johnson Publishing

Company. Three years later, in 1945, he produced the first issue of EBONY, which grew to be

the most successful Black commercial publication in history. By 1997 EBONY had achieved a

circulation of some 2,000,000, and Johnson had been honored by numerous organizations. By

that time, he had expanded his operation to include other magazines, including Jet, EM and

EBONY South Africa, Fashion Fair cosmetics and a hair-care company. In 1982 Forbes

magazine named him to its list of the 400 richest Americans. He didn't get there without a

struggle.

That same struggle is evident throughout the history of the building of Black businesses.

Black people began to seek other areas to invest in and other means of operating their

businesses. In the 1900s Blacks entered the entertainment field. In these years Black

businessmen financed and produced major musicals and dramas. They built and bought movie

houses. Also, Black businessmen began to create viable institutions by mergers. One of the

most successful was the 1929 merger of Northeastern Life Insurance Company of Newark, NJ,

the Supreme Life and Casualty Company of Columbus, Ohio, founded by T.K. Gibson Sr., and

the Liberty Life Insurance Company of Chicago. The result was Supreme Liberty Life of

Chicago with Harry H. Pace as president.

In the same decade, Black merchants created a network of cooperative merchants associations, to protect and nourish the success Black business people enjoyed. This network, which was called the Colored Merchants Association (CMA), was created by Black merchants and the National Business League to make it possible for Black merchants to deal with the challenges of chain stores and mass production outlets by teaching the Black business man the operation of those stores and mass production outlets.

In 1924, at the height of economic drama, an article appeared in Forbes magazine (Ebony, 1996) about the owner of the largest Negro Commercial Enterprise in the World. According to the story, this Black man (in 1924) was the directing genius of a $30,000,000 enterprise, earns $75,000 annually, is insured for $1,000,000 and is said to be worth $8,000,000. Who was this man? His name was Herman E. Perry, and he is almost wholly forgotten today. Born in Houston, Texas, on March 5, 1873, he completed the sixth grade and went out into the world to make his fortune. He went to New York, he said later, "with the idea of getting rich". Failing there, he decided to go to Georgia and start all over again. "I went to a pawnshop, he said, and disposed of my cuff buttons for $5. I went down to a riverboat and gave the purser the $5 to work my way to Savannah. Before the boat got out of the water I made 65 cents in tips" (Ebony, 1998, p.108).

Mr. Perry went on to create Standard Life Insurance Company, the first Black legal reserve company. Furthermore, Perry created a pyramid of satellite businesses, including the Citizens Trust company Bank, the Citizens Discount Corporation, the Penny Savings Bank of Augusta (Ga.), the Service Engineering & Construction Company, Service Farm Bureau, Service Foundation, Service Fuel Corporation, Service Holding Company, Service Laundry,

Service Pharmacy, Service Printing Company, Service Realty Company, and the Sunset Hills

Development Company. Some commentators have said that he almost single-handedly created

the foundation of the Black Atlanta business dream.

There is an article on Mr. Perry from a Forbes magazine interview (cited in Ebony,

1997), which appeared in February 2, 1924:

When I entered the $152,000 office building of the Standard Life [Eric D.

Walrond wrote] I felt like one in a trance. I could not imagine Negroes owning or operating

anything like it (the office equipment alone cost close to $100,000). I saw dozens and dozens

of colored men and women, of the very finest type, employed as clerks, stenographers,

bookkeepers, statisticians, accountants, actuaries and executives.... Altogether this company

and its affiliates have 2, 500 people, all colored, on its payroll... Wherever I went, whether to

banker or college president, lawyer or minister, laborer or politician, farmer or millionaire,

white or black, I heard in glowing terms of the financial genius of Herman Perry (p.108).

The dream would eventually become reality. Like other obstacles to the Black

movement, Mr. Perry could not overcome the struggle with capital available to Blacks. His

empire eventually passed into the hands of White men.

History shows many more Black businessmen who have fought and struggled to be

entrepreneurs in their time. Jesse Binga is one that made his mark in Chicago real estate and

branched out into banking. Binga shared the Chicago and national spotlight with Anthony

Overton, a cosmetics tycoon who was also president of the Victory Life Insurance Co. and the

Douglass National Bank, the second Black bank after the First National Bank of Bole,

Oklahoma to be granted a national charter. By 1929 the Binga and Douglass banks in the

nation showed combined resources of almost $4 million.

Many Black businesses (North Carolina Mutual, Atlanta Life, Supreme Life, etc.) weathered the storms of the Depression, although, White businesses improved their position so dramatically on war profits that the net result was a relative impoverishment of the Black entrepreneur.

Nevertheless, Black progress continued. The Black movement, a movement to fight oppression, of the 1950s and 1960s accelerated by raising the consciousness of Blacks to fight for change and forcing substantial government intervention. By the late 1960s there was activity by a number of government agencies, including the Small Business Administration to redistribute resources back into the Black community by assisting with the start of new businesses. Many critics said this government action was a classic example of too little, given too begrudgingly, too late. They said in general that none of the programs dealt with the imperatives of redistributing the national income and transforming the Black community by massive doses of capital controlled by Blacks.

If the new climate of the 1950s and 1960s did not, as the critics charged, change the economic position of Blacks, it did at least change the morale of Black entrepreneurs. An example of this new morale is seen in entrepreneur Berry Gordy Jr.

Similar to the start of businessman John H. Johnson, another loan, $700 from a credit union, was the beginning that enabled Berry Gordy Jr., a young Detroit automobile assembly worker, to start Motown Records. Under Gordy's leadership, Motown became an icon in its own right in the entertainment industry, creating stars like Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder, giving Blacks, for the first time since the turn of the century, a measure of economic control

over the fruits of their talents. In 1990, Gordy sold Motown to White interests but retained movie, television and sheet music subsidiaries.

These men, Johnson and Gordy, displayed the new possibilities of an age which saw important changes for the Black entrepreneur. According to the first comprehensive survey of the Black business field, there were 163,000 black-owned businesses in 1969 with total receipts of $4.5 billion and 151,996 employees. This compared favorably with the number of black-owned businesses reported in 1930, yet comprised only 2.2 percent of the total number of businesses which totaled 7,489,000.

Although Black-owned firms accounted for only one percent of the total sales of American businesses, they were the focus of considerable attention in the 1960s and 1970s. There was a resurgence of the Black consumer movement under the leadership of Jesse Jackson, a religious and political leader in the Black community, and a follower of the late Martin Luther King Jr. Jackson added a new twist by negotiating covenants requiring major White corporations to use Black banks and Black insurance companies and to employ a higher proportion of Black workers and Black executives.

Reverend Jesse Jackson, a religious leader in the Black community and the first Black American to run for president of the United States, followed the teachings of the great Martin Luther King Jr. in the 1950s and 1960s. He fought for the rights of Blacks, specifically for Black businesses. He continues the fight today. Black people entered this century with some 70 banks, and now have approximately 34 (Ebony, 1998, p.108). As of 1917, Blacks owned 21 million acres of farm land eighty years later, they own three million acres. But during the same period, the Black middle class increased enormously, and Black businessmen entered corporate

America. Yet, the Black community and business is stagnant. Black population increases, but Black business growth has not. There isn't the growth in the Black community that was once experienced. The Black male has been confronted with a different experience in corporate America; however, not unlike what he has experienced over the last 50 years.

In an effort to root out corporate discrimination, Jackson launched a new program in 1971, Operation PUSH. This program was designed to assist Blacks to move the nation and the world toward social, racial and economic justice. The Rainbow/PUSH Coalition is the merger of Operation PUSH and the National Rainbow Coalition, founded in 1985 by Jackson. This multiracial, multi-issue, international membership organization expanded the focus of Operation PUSH. The Rainbow/PUSH Coalition's Wall Street Project focuses on monitoring the hiring and promotion practices of corporations. The office, opened by Jackson, is headquartered in the heart of the world's financial center, Wall Street. The project was launched in 1997 because Jackson identified a large problem in the hiring practices of corporations toward Blacks and a multi-billion dollar trade deficit between corporations and minority consumers. Jackson identified a study done by a Washington D.C.-based Investor Responsibility Research Center (IRRC) (www.rainbowpush.org). The IRRC is an independent research firm that provides impartial research, software and services on corporate social responsibility issues. It found that companies are becoming more reluctant to give out data on their hiring of minorities.

Of the 601 publicly traded companies recently surveyed by the IRRC, only 10 percent said they disclosed their hiring practices to the public. In a 1993 report by the IRRC, 19 percent of the 809 companies surveyed said their companies made public their EEO-1 reports, which

detail the hiring of women and minorities. Systematically, there are obstacles faced at every level for the Black race, particularly the male. During research on this topic, most information documented in the literature has been that of the struggle for minorities as a whole and not that specifically of the Black male.

During the 1960s Blacks made their biggest gains in the corporate world as a direct result of the marches and demonstrations led by Martin Luther King Jr. and the efforts of Jesse Jackson. After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and the chaos that followed, the alliances that were formed with Black executives and some White corporations ended, were sandbagged, or were forgotten.

Although many changes had taken place, Jackson's efforts were producing results. Some notable exceptions of the forgotten alliances with Blacks and corporate positions are: Clifton Wharton Jr., who was named president of a Fortune 500 corporation, Teachers Insurance Annuity Association/College Retirement Fund; A. Barry Rand, who was named president of Xerox Marketing; Kenneth I. Chenault, president and COO of American Express; and Ann Fudge, executive vice president and general manager of Maxwell House Coffee.

In addition to these top-level executives, there were owners and part owners of corporations with a predominately White clientele. Reginald Lewis and his associates, for instance, created a billion-dollar corporation, TLC Beatrice International Holdings, Inc., with a leveraged buyout of some of the international components of the Beatrice Food Corporation. Lewis died in 1992, and the company is now owned and operated by his wife Loida Lewis. J. Bruce Llewwllyn and his associates bought a Pepsi Cola franchise. Black Enterprise Publisher Earl Graves and basketball star Magic Johnson bought a Pepsi Cola franchise in Washington.

Along with these, other Black entrepreneurs took advantage of the business climate of the 1980s.

According to the 1987 Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, published by the U.S. Department of Commerce (1998), Black owned firms accounted for 3.1 percent of all U.S. firms in 1987 and 1 percent of gross receipts. Between 1987 and 1992, the number of black-owned firms increased 46 percent from 424,165 to 620,912. In the same period, receipts increased 63 percent from $19.8 billion to $32.2 billion.

Mega-stars like Michael Jackson, Bill Cosby, and Oprah Winfrey, became corporate giants by organizing and controlling themselves and their entertainment properties. Certainly, the success of Black superstars like these are exceptions, but Black business does continue to make strides in spite of the many challenges.

In June 1997, the leading Black business magazine, Black Enterprise, reported that the total sales of the 200 top black-owned industrial/service corporations and automobile dealerships were $14.11 billion in 1996, an increase from $13.09 billion in 1995. For the first time the magazine reported 17 Black-owned firms topped the $100 million mark. Although this shows substantial gain, if compared to the total revenues of White owned firms, it amounts to a small percentage. Given the many obstacles to Black economic development, the miracle was not that Black entrepreneurs made so little but that they made so much.

The Black population was large in 1990, and it will be even larger in the 21st century. By the year 2000, according to the population projections by Decision Demographics, Blacks will be 72 percent of the population of Detroit and 73 percent of the population of Atlanta. By that time, Blacks and Latinos will be the new American majority in nearly one-third of the 50

largest cities, and White Americans will be the largest ethnic minority in 6 of the 10 largest

cities, including New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and Houston.

Everything has changed in the field of race relations, and yet nothing has changed. This

means, among other things, that the country has not yet gotten down to the bottom line: the

integration of the money, and the power, and the resources for all people (Ebony, 1998, p.108).

The Corporate Struggle

America has an annual income larger than India, Switzerland and Sweden and yet has

millions of people living below the poverty line and millions more unemployed and

underemployed. Black America is on the edge of the new century facing many troubles and a

series of contradictions. The atmosphere of race relations in America continues to breed a

society of mistrust, anger, and resentment. This in turn breeds racially turbulent times as it did

in the past. History does repeat itself. According to many Black males, corporate America is

an example of one force that takes from Black America, gives nothing in return, and fosters

negative biased feelings that affect their progression in the workplace.

During these racially turbulent times in corporate America, with discrimination suits

being filed by minorities, there are yet other forms of discrimination faced by Black men that

occur in the workplace. In an article entitled What It s Like To Be A Black Manager, Mr.

Edward W. Jones gives his personal account of one experience he had as a Black male in

corporate America. He notes that there are a lot of Black managers who do fail, but it is

relative to how the corporation handles the in-culturation process. Failure is likely because

most companies merely substitute Blacks in positions formerly filled by Whites and then, acting

as if the corporate environment is not color-sensitive, consider their obligation over. In short, U.S. business has failed to recognize the embryonic Black manager's increased chances of failure due to the potentially negative impact of racially based pre-judgements. Gaining acceptance in the organization, which the embryonic White manager takes for granted, can be a serious problem for his Black counterpart (Jones, 1973, p. 42).

In a book written by Robert Conrad on organizational behavior, the author teaches that there are three phases of learning a culture. They are externalization, objectification, and internalization. Within these three phases a new employee will experience the anticipation stage, the encounter stage, and the identification stage. If White employees experience uncertainties in their new culture, one in which they fit, what then is the impact of this new culture on an employee who doesn't fit? These phases then become more of a struggle to adapt to the new culture. If the corporation is not set-up in such a way to assist employees during these stages, it is inevitable that culture shock will be overwhelming.

In Jones's article he speaks about some of the subtle reminders of race that Black men encounter. For example, Jones was asked by a White co-worker, "Why is it that everyone likes Roy Campanella, but so many people dislike Jackie Robinson?" (p.42). In addition, Jones notes that he was repeatedly called on to be the in-house expert on anything pertaining to civil rights (Jones, 1973, p.43). These frustrations are noted as he experienced being the only Black trainee in a department of more than 8,000 employees. In an article written by Allison Lucas (West, 1998, p. 86) Mike Meitzenheimer, a Black male in sales, tells of his encounter in which during a meeting (informal), one of his White co-workers stated "at least he can read, he's not like the others." There are numerous accounts of bigotry, some more obvious than others, yet

no matter how inconspicuous or direct, each comment breeds resentment, insecurity, and defeat.

Another stumbling block identified by Jones (1973) is performance appraisals. In his article, he cites two of his experiences as "yes-but" appraisals. For example, Mr. Jones doesn't take notes and seems to have trouble using the reference material, but he seems to be able to recall the material. This is the type of appraisal that says you've done satisfactorily, yet leaves a negative or dubious impression. In Race Matters, one Black notes his experience, "I was number one out of 150 people, and I still wasn't promoted. No minorities were ever promoted. Like anyone who wants to be successful, I realized I had to move on" (West, 1993, p.4).

In a personal interview on November 14, 1996, Mr. Smith, a Black male employed at the New Jersey Department of Health as a senior chemist shared his work experiences as a Black male. Mr. Smith had been employed there for 15 years, and he proudly noted that he was the only Black male in his department out of 500 people, and that he was the first Black chemist for the New Jersey Department of Health. He recalled when he was going through the interview process and walked around to the different departments to be interviewed, the manager left him in a department and told the supervisor to interview him and he would return in 20 minutes. Once the manager left, the supervisor looked up at him and looked back down to what he was doing. The gentleman stood for 20 minutes and no words were exchanged, nor was he offered a seat.

Mr. Smith also shared his experiences during training. He said that when a person is in training, they are learning a new and they're bound to make mistakes. This was true for Mr. Smith as well. Yet this view wasn't taken by his superiors. Mr. Smith's mistakes were documented and said to be proof of his incompetence, despite the fact that his credentials

showed him to be over-qualified for the position. He stated that he encountered many other incidents. He was told by his supervisor, "If I want to get rid of you, I will, all I have to do is keep telling Guy what type of errors you make, and he'll get tired of you and let you go". Mr. Smith viewed this statement as a threat. In addition, he felt that he was always made to feel as though he is doing something wrong.

For example, the department has a 15 minute grace period to get to work before someone is considered late, and when Mr. Smith was 3 minutes late, it was documented, while others who were late were ignored. Mr. Smith now laughs at all of the episodes he experienced and still does experience, he boasts, "my stubbornness makes me successful." "I refuse to let anyone dictate my life and career to me. I stay for overtime without pay, and I exceed what they say is the minimum amount of work that needs to be done. I have reduced the time of sample testing from 4 weeks to 2 days and have never been documented for errors, after training of course, as he laughs; I'm good at what I do" (Mr. Smith, personal communication, November 14, 1996). Similar experiences have been shared by other successful Black males.

"You can graduate from Yale University, You can graduate from Harvard Business School. But you don t graduate from your blackness" (Graves, 1995, p.18). In an article entitled Graduation Day (1995), Earl Graves Editor and Publisher of Black Enterprise Magazine, and author of a book entitled How to Succeed In Business Without Being White (1995) speaks of an encounter his son had during a morning commute. The son is the company's senior vice president of marketing and advertising (and a graduate of Yale and Harvard's Business-school).

One May day, Earl Graves, Jr. stepped off of a commuter train, and in full view of his

fellow commuters he was frisked by police officers who suspected him of carrying a gun.

Butch, who is 6-foot-4, 225 pounds and clean shaven, had only two things in common with the

5-foot-10, trim and mustached suspect sought by police, both were Black and male (Graves,

1995, p.14). Police unfairness and even brutality have been an issue that many Black males

have identified as one of the challenges faced in their community.

In a recent Black Enterprise (Grave, 1997) reader survey, 82 percent of the respondents

said that police brutality is a major problem for Blacks. Police brutality in the Black

community is something that Black parents and children face. Although a challenge not

accepted by many, it is a phenomenon that exists because there are many Black males who

commit crimes. Abnur Luema a Black male beaten and brutalized by some policeman from the

New York Police Department, became a major new figure. Rodney King, a Black male who

was stopped by the police in Los Angeles and brutally beaten, became a national figure when it

was revealed that the episode had been taped by a bystander. This case fueled the Black

community with anger because the White police officers involved were not found guilty of

police brutality. These are just a few of the incidents that have happen to Black males. This

issues very often make it difficult to help Black male children understand their place in society.

In the book, How To Succeed In Business Without Being White, author Earl Graves (1997)

writes:

On the one hand, we want our children to take pride in their Black identity and to obey

and respect the law. On the other hand, we have to teach them that too many people will

automatically equate their blackness with intellectual and moral inferiority at best and violent

criminality at worst even when presented with clear evidence to the contrary. It s not unlikely

that many of those people will wear a uniform and carry a gun or a club (p.259).

Beside the police brutality issues, Blacks face many more issues in contemporary society. Labeling, discrimination, and racism are just a few. Many of the issues experienced in the past by Blacks still exist today. Many contributed to forces within the Black community; others come from other forces. In Graves book, he identifies the "Ten Greatest Challenges Facing African Americans." Something that could be challenged by others, yet when reviewed something that supports much of the literature that has been written about the Black community. The challenges are: one, Racism in America; two, Leveraging Our Might; three, Developing a New Generation of Leaders; four, Sustaining our Black Institutions; five, Building Pride in Our History and Culture; six, Restoring Our Communities; seven, Rebuilding the Family Structure; eight, Refocusing on Education; nine, Maintaining Our Physical and Spiritual Health; and ten, Building Black Wealth (Graves, 1997).

Graves notes that while he was writing the book, Black churches were being burned.

"As I wrote this book, more than 40 Black churches were burned down in what some described as a mysterious series of crimes. It s no mystery. Black and White, we know the source of it. Racial hatred always burns, whether on a crude cross in a Black family s front yard, behind the door to the executive suite at Texaco or in the smoldering resentment of a fired White worker who feels that his job was cut to make way for some undeserving damned nigger" (Graves, 1997, p. 261).

Chapter IV

CHANGE: FROM A DREAM TO REALITY

Racism In America

The first problem that Blacks must face is racism in America. Racism is a battle that the Black community has fought for years.

Not only can it be found in the California Civil Rights Initiative aimed at destroying affirmative action policies", but he says that "it can be seen in the continuing judicial assault on the record of 41 Black representatives in Congress as, for the second time in three years, the U.S, Supreme Court strikes down legislative districts created to eliminate American apartheid (Graves, 1997, p.261).

It doesn't matter which way it's viewed; Affirmative Action is a policy that continues to cause major debates among the Black and White community, Graves (1997) states:

Racism continually fires the rhetoric of national politics. Blame the welfare queens, parade Willie Horton, cite reverse discrimination, study The Bell Curve, return to traditional values of bygone days when Blacks knew their place and it wasn't the voting booth, the college classroom or the corporate office tower. The torchbearers misrepresent the impact and intent of

affirmative action and minority business development. They rule vindictively form a high court of corrosive conservatism. They create a malicious legislation to turn back the clock and set back a major segment of the population in is honest effort to contribute to the world by strengthening itself. In the United States, perhaps no area of public policy debate symbolizes the struggle for racial equality and equal access to opportunity more than the heightened assault on affirmative action. Make no mistake; this is a battle for the survival of African Americans. Every facet of our lives-education, housing, economics, employment-will be affected by the outcome of this war. We cannot afford to be silent. We must vote. We must communicate with our elected officials at all levels. We must use our collective dollars to support those who endorse equal opportunity for all (p.261).

In his book, Graves (1997) supports his opinion with statistics from Economist Margaret Simms. She cites figures that show that the median income of college-educated African Americans, $46,980, is only 86 percent that of college educated White Americans, $54,680. This clearly supports that Blacks don't get equal billing. Furthermore, Graves cites that Blacks experienced employment drops in 36 states and in six of the nine major industry groups, according to the results of a 1993 Wall Street Journal study of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission figures (p.262).

Blacks have to accept that racism still exists and the struggle is not yet over. Because the struggle exists, it does not mean that the Black community should give up. Graves (1997) suggests, "We must attack the fires of racism with our best weapon-our collective strength" (p.266) Collective strength is something that the Black community used to fight in the decades before to have progressed as a race. Some Blacks could identify the struggle. In Mr. Graves's

book (1997), he notes the great W.E.B. Dubois who said that the 20th century's struggle would be that of the color line. He continues to say, as we move toward the beginning of the 21st century, America s struggle has broadened to include gender and ethnic conflicts over jobs, education and business opportunities (p.265).

Leveraging The Might

The step for the recovery of the Black community is to encourage Blacks to use their strength as a group. Because changes have been made and progress has come to the community, Blacks must continue to "march, work and strive together". Graves (1997) says, "If we don't leverage our collective economic, political, spiritual and cultural power, we can never expect to control our own destiny" (p.267). As one of the largest consumers in the world, he suggests that Blacks need to challenge the White community to respect Blacks as consumers and as players in the business world. "E-mail them. write them. Telephone them. Demand the respect that our buying power deserves, and spend with black-owned businesses" (Graves, 1997, p.268). To assist Blacks with this effort, a committee was recently formed. The group formed is entitled the Mobilization for Economic Opportunity Political Action Committee. It was founded on May 10, 1995, by the CEOs of the nation's top Black owned businesses. Graves notes that this group has been formed to ensure that the interests of businesses that create wealth and provide jobs for the Black community are represented in Washington, D.C. Its mission is threefold : (a) to support candidates who support us and oppose those who don't, (b) to educate the American public with the truth about affirmative action and set-aside programs, (c) to conduct a major lobbying effort on behalf of affirmative

action, set-asides and other programs and policies that benefit African American business and the Black community in general (Graves, 1997, p.270).

Developing a New Generation of Leaders

Historically, great Black leaders have helped the Black community to realize their dreams. Martin Luther King Jr., a famous civil rights leader, and Malcolm X Shabazz, leader of the Muslim faith, are two great leaders in the Black community. Today, Black leaders such as Louis Farrakhan, a leader in the Muslim faith, and the Reverend Al Sharpton, civil rights leader, are voices in the Black community who help to educate, defend, and direct. Where are the leaders in education? These leaders that have strong voices in the Black community should be demanding that Black children strive for education, a major component to the progress of any individual. This is also an issue Graves (1997) has addressed. He suggests:

The challenges facing us in many instances are the challenges we have to face ourselves. Nobody s going to do it for us. The battle must be taken to the field of economics. We need African American leaders to step forward, and we need to practice leadership on a daily basis as individuals. We need to encourage young men and women of vision who can show all of us the way. Promote and hire your own (p.273).

A new generation of Black leaders must be formed in the Black community if the community itself intends to survive.

Sustaining Black Institutions

If Black people are to gain strength as a group, each and every Black organization plays

an important part in helping Blacks gain the strength in their community. Historically, Black

organizations were formed in the church because that was where Black strength was found.

Many of the fraternal organizations formed in the 1800s and 1900s exist in the Black

community today. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

(NAACP) is one of the most vital institutions that exist for Black people. Other institutions are

the Urban League, which assist Blacks in training and placement as well as jobs, the Southern

Christian Leadership Conference, formed to support the Black community spiritually,

Operation Push, TransAfrica, and the United Negro College Fund, are vehicles to the better the

Black community. Each support and address the needs of the Black community by providing

assistance in area like financial assistance for education, employment and equality in the work

place.

Graves (1997) points out that Black people must support these organizations in order to

move ahead. He says that the organizations are nothing without the support of the people for

whom they are built. He also suggests that the Black people, who have become successful with

the support of these institutions have created, have a responsibility to give support to these

organizations with time, money, and ideas. He recognizes that there may be some Blacks that

feel they have not received any benefit from such programs. For those who feel so, Graves

suggest that the "take another look" and if things aren't the way they should be, help make

change in the organizations, not walk away. Black people have to take responsibility and pride

in their own community, and in themselves as a people.

Building Pride in Black History and Culture

Interestingly enough, there has not been enough pride in the Black community. Far too many statistics show Black on Black crime and many young Black males on the path of self-destruction. Many young Black people today have no real knowledge of, or respect for their culture. This is partially because Black history and culture in the school systems aren't often taught as a consistent part of the curriculum. Many Black children don't see themselves in history and have difficulty relating to success without examples. There are many great Blacks that historically have made great strides for Black people. Harriet Tubman, known for creating the underground railroad, Frederick Douglass, self taught orator, publisher and abolitionist, Thurgood Marshall, first Black Supreme Court Justice are just a few of the significant Black people in history. Yet, many Blacks have no knowledge or understanding of their significant contributions to their race. Other incidents in Black history are often not given the attention they deserve in reference to the great impact it has had in the Black community. Mr. Graves (1997) notes:

How many of our young people fully understand the history of our enslavement, which has had such a lasting and profound impact on our development? When the Holocaust surfaces as a topic of conversation, it is always discussed reverently as the great injustice and horror that it was. When slavery or institutionalized racial injustices against African Americans are brought up, Whites often roll their eyes or dismiss the subject as ancient history unworthy of discussion. Often Blacks, too, seem embarrassed; as though slavery was something we brought upon ourselves, or volunteered for (p.276).

If the Black community is to identify with the positive in their community, its historical existence, and not the negative and racism, the community can move forward if the role models

that exist are viewed as inspirational. Thus, there is importance of knowledge and understanding of history. The combination of progress in contemporary society and the pursuit of the American dream must be combined with the past.

Restoring Black Communities

It is not possible to achieve the American dream if destruction within the Black community continues to exist. The condition of Black community, most would say, is one of the most crucial issues that not only the Black community has to face, but the nation as a whole. Urban America is comprised of mostly Blacks. Economically stagnant, many Black families find themselves struggling. Again, past history haunts the Black community. The housing projects that were built decades ago still serve as shelter for many, yet that same housing has been labeled as a negative in society. In his book, Graves (1997) renders this explanation:

Economic studies have shown repeatedly that the greatest opportunity for Black economic development lies in those cities with Black mayors. But even great Black mayors are not miracle workers. They have to have the support of the federal government in tackling the complex problems they face. The leaders of this country have turned their backs on the cities and, in particular, on the Blacks in them (p.277).

Many young Black youth have not prepared for their future. Instead, many have turned to destroying their lives and the lives of others around them. Many young Blacks, mostly Black boys, are preoccupied with staying alive. Graves shares a story in his book about a Navy Admiral named Anthony Watson. He recalled a visit back to his hometown in Chicago, when he happened upon a little 7-year-old Black boy. He asked the boy what he wanted to be when

he grew up, and the boy replied, "alive".

There are many things that can be said for this. However, the author suggests it is very disheartening to hear a 7 year old boy be preoccupied with survival at such a young age. The Black community needs to be re-built.

A solution, Graves (1997) suggests, is to build a community through economic health and its educational system. Its people must also desire a better life. Blacks have become lost because they can't see a way out for themselves.

To fix a city Graves (1997) says a real foundation of jobs and a tax base of businesses and factories needs to exist. Government and private enterprise will have to work together with neighborhood churches to rebuild the total infrastructure. Black churches collectively deposit $10 billion a year in white-owned banks and savings institutions. Those same institutions often refuse to make loans to Blacks. The Black church is the largest most powerful organization in the Black community, and that should provide a foundation for the Black community.

"Nearly three decades after the Kerner Commission Report described two distinct Americas-one White and rich, one Black and poor-after millions have been spent without much progress, the question remains: how can we restore our inner cities and our Black communities" (Graves, 1997, p.278)?

Rebuilding The Family Structure

Decades ago, the Black family was a solid foundation. The structure, torn apart by slavery and discrimination, healed itself, as the extended family of the Black community, aunts and uncles, stepped in to support one another. That cohesive foundation has been, in many

cases, lost. No longer are the families directed by the morals and values that once existed. The most recent census figures show that a single parent heads 30 percent of all homes in the country with children. But the figure is 65 percent for African American homes (Graves, 1997, p.280).

Graves (1997) suggests that studies show that Black children are nearly three times as likely to be poor as Whites. The dissolution of the traditional family -- mother, father and children under one roof -- is a tragedy for all of America. For Black folks, he says, it has been a disaster.

There is the need for the positive role models in the Black community. Many Black children don't have a positive role model in the one parent that heads the household. Black people must understand and embrace the importance of a solid family relationship. This understanding, Graves (1997) suggests, is mandatory in the positive development of Black children.

Refocusing of Education

School systems where students who attend are all Black, or nearly all Black, continue to be under-fire. Many believe that these school systems are ill equipped with the proper tools and equipment necessary to educate its children. As in the past, White schools continue to have computer systems, and educational systems that shine in comparison to their Black counterparts. Most White Americans, when looking for a place of residence, seek to reside in the suburbs where the educational system offers all that they feel meets their requirements for their child or children. Most Black families don't have that advantage. The urban areas are

filled with Blacks that struggle to survive on a day- to-day basis. It is no secret that education is a function of economics, as Graves (1997) suggests.

Graves (1997) states that almost three million crimes occur on or near school property every year. About half of violent crime involving teens occurs in school buildings, on school property or on nearby streets. Everyday, 135,000 guns are taken into schools and those juvenile homicides are expected to skyrocket from 2,555 in 1990 to 8,000 by the year 2000 (Graves, p.282, 1997).

In a recent Black Enterprise poll (cited in Graves, 1997), 70 percent of respondents said they believe public school teachers have failed to provide quality education and learning skills to Black children (Graves, p.282. 1997). He suggest that Blacks must be concerned, involved, and unafraid to challenge the system. He supports this with statistics that show Blacks make up 10 percent of the labor force, and are only three percent of scientists and engineers in this country. Though he suggests there are several reasons for this, many Black children are not encouraged to develop interests. Also, lack of exposure in early childhood can not be made up for later in life for Black Americans.

However there is a difference for Whites. Graves notes that White males, whether educated or not, still hold economic power in this country. High school graduates get jobs at higher rate and make more money than non-graduates. Black graduates still earn less than White graduates do. In fact, Mr. Graves points out, some White high school graduates make more money than some Black college graduates. Yet, Blacks must continue to strive to be the best just to tread the same ground. It is the responsibility of Black families to educate their children outside of the schools. Black people, says Mr. Graves, are not fully responsible for the

condition of the school systems. The local, state and federal government all play an important role. However, Black people must take a stand.

Maintaining Physical and Spiritual Health

Black people continue to out number other groups with high rates of high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, numerous types of cancer including breast and colon cancer, AIDS, and other illness related to poor lifestyle, suggests Graves (1997). Clearly, many of these statistics can be attributed to the lack of healthcare in the Black community. If Black children rely on their Black parents, how then can unhealthy parents help direct young Black children to live healthy and productive lives? Furthermore, faith has historically sustained and help build the Black community.

In contemporary society, the Black community must restore its spiritual faith. Evidence of lack of faith in the Black community is seen far too often with the presence of crime and drugs. The Black community must become healthy, united and build its faith.

Building Black Wealth

This country revolves around money. Without this, any community of people would be lost. In his book, Mr. Graves (1997) suggest that Black wealth where the ultimate survival lies as a people. "Without money, we have no leverage. Without leverage, we have no power. Without power, we won't matter. We will never matter. Not as individuals, not as a group. No

one will listen. No one will care. Nothing will improve" (p.285).

To improve the Black community and have Black wealth, Black people must invest in their own community with time and money, says Graves (1997). Furthermore, Black companies should hire Black people and form alliances with other black-owned businesses and consider starting a business. He notes that one must make sacrifice and work hard, reduce debt and increase savings. One must be willing to make money for others as well as for themselves. Also, one must have a solid education, be focused and have goals. There will be a challenge with this because resources are a must. This does pose a problem for many Blacks. That is why networking and building relationships is crucial to development and growth.

In summary, Graves (1997) notes that racism is a fact, not a myth, and to be successful Blacks have to focus on their goals and personal agenda as a Black to overcome the problem that other Americans have to overcome on their own.

Chapter V

SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, the author believes that the Black male and Black community overall clearly have many hurdles to overcome in order to re-build and compete in today's society. Education, family, and society, three main components in this struggle, all play an important role. The literature shows that equal education for Black males and an understanding of the culture on the part of the educator, is necessary to help them to achieve. The implementation of support and mentor programs designed to target young Black males will also have a positive impact on the Black male and the Black community.

As Graves (1997) notes in his book, these efforts within the Black community are steps that must be taken for the survival of the race. Outside of the Black community, the literature shows that responsibility lies in other areas of society. Ensuring inclusion in corporate America is the responsibility of the Black community who should fight for that inclusion in corporate society. A quality education would provide leverage for the Black male. Furthermore, Black business would help to eliminate some of the fight, if Black people would build business and

help one another in their own communities.

Creating a workplace in which Blacks can thrive requires a comprehensive, company wide commitment to inclusion and diversity and not just a name placed on a department to enable a company to say one exists. In many companies that might require a massive culture change. It is important that companies are aware that discriminatory practices affect their image, and damage to a corporate image could be very hard to recover from, if recovery can take place. Also, it is up to the company to recognize that there are many qualified Black males that have the ability to perform well on their jobs.

There are steps that corporations must take to prepare themselves for the uphill battle with diversity issues. Companies need to build widespread support for actively recruiting and promoting Black male managers. Management involvement from the top down is crucial, only then can the employees of the company follow suit. Ongoing diversity training is necessary for all employees, along with mentoring within cultures. Seasoned Black executives should be available to counsel newly hired Black employees. Open communication is a must for problem solving within an organization. Newsletters, seminars, e-mail and or speeches are necessary tools to ensure a message of fairness and commitment.

Finally, the 10 challenges faced by Blacks as outlined by Graves (1997) provides an excellent "how to" for the Black community. Certainly one must understand that not all Black people have access, or the ability to do or achieve the things Graves has outlined. Nevertheless, it is a starting point of direction to re-building a community. The American society must realize that what happens in the Black community affects all.

As the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice

everywhere"(Graves, 1997, p.289).

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Appendix A

My Opinion: A White Teacher in an Urban School

White Teacher in an Urban School District: Third Grade

1. Yes, all children not just Black children. Years ago when Blacks were the minority in the school, behavior was still a problem.

2. Equivalent

3. Lack of respect for authority is a major concern. The second concern is pysically fighting one another.

4. Absolutely, a teacher can educate a child on how to be a good citizen, it's a total package. Overall self-esteem is needed, not just reading and math.

5. There is no difference. It's the normal bell shaped curve. There is a normal learning pattern. Approximately 23 students are in the class, 10 are superior, 5 are average, and the rest below.

6. Yes

7. No, most are teachers.

8. My particular third grade children can compete with anyone. They can compete in district or in the United States average to above average student

9. Not applicable

10. It was the job that was offered to me. When I started it wasn't urban it was half and half. Jobs were hard to get. I was offered other positions, but I love it here, the

children want to learn.

11.   Different children learn in different ways. Some need structure, some

creativity,   some need contact. You, the teacher, have to find the situation best

for the child. Separating the children is not it. More males teachers are needed.

12.   It's hard to say, our schools never lack for anything. I know we are not a true

picture of what's out there.

13.   That's hard to answer. More reading and math, maybe not science and social

studies because we only work on it two hours per week.

14.   25 years, yes.

15.   All year, yes.

16.   If a child doesn't have a solid foundation the it is hard to succeed. Yes, the key

role is making sure the foundation is strong.

17.   Equal. Based on my experience. The PTA was 90 percent White. Over the

last 10-15 years it began to change. The PTA is now only Black parents, and they

are equally as involved.

18.   Middle

19.   I don't think they know I'm White, children don't see color.

20.   I guess it still exists. I can't say that I'm aware in my environment. The only

place is Television.

Appendix B

My Opinion: A Black Teacher in an Urban School

Black Teacher In An Urban School District: Fifth Grade

1. Yes

2. More

3. It stems from the lack of a father . Mothers' having children by different fathers. It promotes aggression, defensiveness. The child can't take constructive criticism. They ignore authority and have a lack of respect.

4. No, maybe to a certain extent. It's the parent's job to do that. The teachers job is to teach not to police or discipline a child on a daily basis.

5. They need a lot of motivation and tough love to get results.

6. Yes

7. Yes, one. The others are teachers. His parents died young and his perseverance and love of God got him through.

8. Majority are on level.

9. Not applicable

10. Because I'm from this area. I've gone through this school system and I've come across uncaring teaching and I didn't want to emulate what I got. Either you get it, or you don't.

11. Mixed environment with other children.

12. It depends on who's in charge. Either you're for the children, or not. There is an abundance at this school.

13. Math. I think because of the challenge. Computers in school are fun.

14.   25, yes.

15.   Throughout the year with multicultural learning.

16.   Yes, the foundation is your building block. If you miss these you're lost.

17.   A lot more cooperation. You can call anytime and they are always there.

18.   Middle

19.   It helps because I'm from an urban area and I know.

20.   Yes it exists. It's everywhere. We have to teach our children to be strong and overcome

racism. Teachers I know are racists.

Appendix C

My Opinion: A Black Teacher in a Suburban School

Black Teacher In A Suburban School District: Third Grade:

1. Yes

2. More

3. Lack of preparedness for class. Inappropriate behavior, not able to follow rules, bad response to correction and poor interpersonal skills.

4. Yes, because part of Black children's education is learning how to become an effective part of the community.

5. They can achieve the highest degrees.

6. Yes

7. The majority of my friends are Black. Most are in education.

8. It depends. Black males who are from non-traditional families, father and mother in the household, are usually disadvantaged. They don't come hugged, loved and ready to learn.

9. I always wanted to be in a place where I can have the best advantages of teaching, and not worry about supplies and danger or safety. I wanted to be in a place that embraced new thoughts in education, and had the resources to do so.

10. Not applicable

11. I like to think an integrated environment is a good thing for the majority of the students. But a different environment should be made available if needed. At this age, they should be together. These children are already separate. They live in all Black neighborhoods anyway. They also ride the bus together.

12. Yes

13. Math, because it's not a tedious as reading.

14. 27, suburban and a mixed environment, not urban or suburban.

15. It's available to be taught, it's in the text, African tales and vignettes. Also, African Americans and their contributions.

16. Yes, because children remember feelings about education. I hope it would set a work ethic to last through a lifetime.

17. Less, because they are afraid to approach the school. They are afraid to express desires and wants for their kids. Because of inadequate clothing they are reluctant.

18. Middle

19. Yes it does help. Some children ask to come to my class because they see a Black teacher. For some of the White children, I am the first Black that they have seen in a role outside of their maids and nanny's. The find difficulty with respect as a teacher figure.

20. Yes

Appendix D

My Opinion: A White Teacher in a Suburban School

White Teacher In A Suburban School District: Third Grade

1. Yes

2. Equal

3. Re-occurring patterns. They won't listen, they say no I don't have to listen to you, they have a lack of respect for authority.

4. Yes, you have to. It's one of the hazards of the occupation. They will never learn from you with out respect. You want them to trust you and realize that the whole world is not rotten.

5. Yes they can, but do they?, No. Because the vinacular is different. They don't speak the same phonics. It is clear cut hyperactivity in the Blacks, some in the Whites.

6. Yes

7. No

8. No, they are already behind. Here it's the have or the have nots'. There are White children that are brought to school by their nanny's and Black children that come in hungry.

9. This is where I got the job.

10. Not applicable.

11. They shouldn't be separate. In this school there are 40 teachers and one Black male teacher. There is a need for more role models in the same environment.

12. No.

13. None (no subject).

14. Two, yes.

15. Only during February.

16. It does if it's tracking is done in the district, because there is not much room for improvement. On the other hand no. It is possible to rise to the challenge later in education and you can pull it all together.

17. Less, because of finances. Many White mothers play tennis or golf. They don't work, and they come to the school all of the time and are involved in everything. Mothers of the Black male children have to work to put food on the table.

18. Middle

19. I think it promotes an understanding of humanity, but it presents a misunderstanding of a role model. They don't look up to me or think that I really understand them.

20. Yes, because we are all not the same. For no discrimination, we would all have to be carbon copies of one another.

Appendix E

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

1. Have you experienced any behavioral problems with Black male children?

1. Have you experienced behavioral problems with Black male children more, less, or equivalent to their White male counterparts?

1. How do you assess a behavioral problem? Can you site some examples?

1. Do you feel it's your job to help children overcome their behavioral problems? Why or Why Not?

1. How do you personally feel about the ability of Black males to learn?

1. Do you have any Black male friends?

1. Are any of these friends successful (middle to upper management) in the business world? If so, what do you contribute his success to?

1. Do you feel that Black male children are at the same level of learning when they come to your classroom as other children?

1. Why have you chosen to teach in a suburban school district?

1. Why have you chosen to teach in an urban school district?

1. In your opinion, what type of learning environment is best for Black male students?

1. Do you feel that urban schools are ill equipped with the proper tools; computers, books and supplies, to educate their children?

1. What subjects do Black males do well in, and why do you think this is so?

1. How many years have you been teaching? Have you always taught in an urban/suburban school district?

1. Does your school offer education on the history of Blacks? If so, is it throughout the school year or only during Black History Month (the month of February)?

1. Do you think elementary schools set the tone for a lifetime of failure or success? Why or Why not?

1. Are the parents of Black male students actively involved in the education of their children more or less than their White counterparts? Why do you believe this is so?

1. What is your background middle, upper, or lower class?

1. Do you feel that being a Black/White teacher in a suburban/urban school promotes conceptual understanding and communication skills to Black males, or does the cultural, racial and ethnic difference promote a problem?

1. Do you think discrimination still exist? Why or Why not?