

A WORD OR 2

Mba Mbulu, Editor

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“Black Nationalism is the only real solution for Black People in the United States.”

THE STIGMA OF POWERLESSNESS

I am reminded of what boot camp tends to produce--fear of that which represents authority. Black People in the United States of America spend their entire lives in white America's boot camp, learning almost from day one that white power is THE authority, white power possesses legitimacy, white power wields the big guns, white power can discriminate against you, put you in jail, make it impossible for you to get a good job and maintain a decent standard of living. White America's boot camp tortures and traumatizes Black individuals, so much so that if Black individuals happen to come face to face with their own greatness, their own legitimacy, their own POWER- they can't adjust to it, they tend to be suspicious of it, they can't feel comfortable with it or in it. As a result, Black People in the United States exist as powerless people exist, and a stigma of powerlessness saturates Our impulses, willingness to fight and thought processes.

Medically speaking, a stigma is a characteristic indicative of a HISTORICAL abnormality. From another angle, it is visible evidence of a DISEASE. A normal group of people would want to be in control, want to have the final say-so, be willing to take on the risks associated with being in control. What is prevalent among Black People, however, are a series of syndromes; the roaches in the kitchen syndrome, the illegal immigrant syndrome and the little choo choo that can't syndrome. Black People try not to make much noise or attract the attention of those in power. It's as if Blacks don't have the right to occupy the space they occupy, make demands or try to bring about "radical" changes in white Black relationships. Black People are preoccupied with what can go wrong, and rationalize toeing the line instead of seriously fighting back.

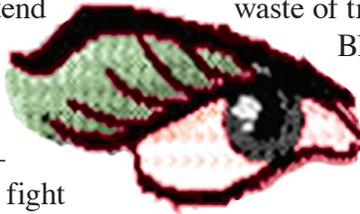
A year or so ago I was talking to a Black nationalist about taking a trip to Cuba. His response was "they" are

serious about people not going to Cuba. What he was saying is that the United States government was coming down hard on people who travelled to Cuba, so he wasn't going to make that move. This was a Black nationalist, but the stigma of powerlessness was more powerful than his commitment to being independent.

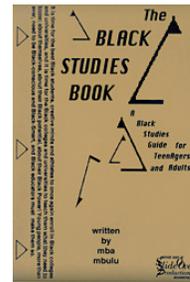
Less than a year after he would have made that trip, he died unexpectedly. Maybe things would have been different if he had defied white power and taken that trip.

Millions of Blacks succumb to the stigma of powerlessness and "play it safe" just like he did. And, just like him, they could be dead within a few month or years. What a waste of time, energy, opportunity and intelligence.

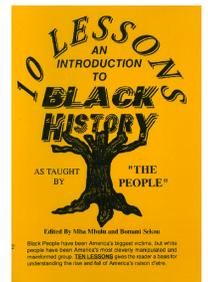
Black individuals need to start facing up to their individual mortality. No one knows in advance when s/he is going to die, so each of Us needs to make the time We live count for something real. Black individuals need to do more to overcome their feelings of inferiority and powerlessness. We need to do more to make white power feel its vulnerabilities and help bring white power to its knees. We need to shift into war mode.



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