

Kendijah Grant-Gilbert

Blacks In Media, Race and Religion

Dr.Bennett

Why are we so hard on ourselves? Why do we believe that we are worthless? Why does society feel that it is okay to put us down? We always discuss the pass, and have that brought up as a piece of evidence towards why black people act the way they do. My research is not questioning the reasoning for african-american people being upset. It is questioning why we treat each other the way we do. It is different when a white man treats you bad then when your own black brother bad mouths you, or belittles you. Recently I read some post about Donald Glover or Childish Gambino because his music video made a statement to America about how black people are treated, but yet he is married to a white woman. Do other black people have the right to be upset? Is it fair to criticize him for standing up for our people while dating outside of his race. I think not. I believe that as a society we have to wake up, and understand that you cannot judge people for who they decide to love, but rather judge them for what they do. Donald Glover is speaking up for the rights of African-American and tearing him apart on the internet makes no sense.

Students need their voices to be heard! We need people to understand that we pay tuition, and what we want matter. I recently had the opportunity to go to Howard University, and somethings that I heard was unpleasant to the ear. People have been taking advantage due to their sex and age.

For this project I decided to focus on students. I was able to observe some students of Howard University while I was there for graduation. The point of this observation was to compare a Historically Black University to a more diverse college. I wanted to get the feel of

how students interact with each other, or if there is even much interaction. I observed a group of african-american male and female students on their school yard around 2pm. Watching these students was an experience in itself. The yard is a huge space where students can roam freely. There was a lot of things going on at once. There were fraternities and sororities strolling, some people reading, some students just talking to each other, and others just cheering on the crowd. I found the interactions they had with one another to be interesting. When you compare a HBCU to a regular CUNY the experiences are different. I notice that they embrace the culture that the school offers them. From watching students at CItY Tech in the atrium on a Thursday when events are going on, I have concluded it is the total opposite. Students at CItY Tech don't really take the time to appreciate what the school has to offer. I for one am guilty is. The question at hand is why is that? Is it because we don't feel or want to feel comfortable in the school we are in, or could it be because there isn't much promotion around events? With this information I decided to interview some students from both sides. Seeing that my friend who was graduating was a Journalism major it was very beneficial for me to get viable information from other journalist who are on campus daily, searching for stories. The information I received from multiple people is that Howard is a home away from home. It gives students the opportunity to become brother and sister, stick for each other, and raise their voices when needed. This year a couple of things happened. The two that stuck out was the student who was raped by her resident advisor, and the financial aid scam. In both cases Howard students joined together as one to raise their voice for what is right. For the young lady who was raped a protest was held, until the RA was kicked out of school. Howard student marched all around campus, having streets closed, making sure their voice was heard. During the financial aid scam Howard Students staged a sit in in the administration office. They had a list of demands and they did not move from that office

for a week until demands were met. These students create voices for themselves and make sure they were heard in a positive manner.

When it comes to media I notice that it fails in catching moments like this. Everyday we hear or read about black man being accused of sexual assault, and the numbers constantly rising. We hear about black men being shot for doing absolutely nothing. We don't hear about the positive things that students are doing to try and help impact their lives. As a HBCU they pride themselves on culture and trying to do what's right for all stated one student. Just like any other person they have self doubt, and they feel as though the work they do means nothing because its not being seen.

This interview personally opened my eyes up to know there is more to this world than what the media shows. We have to support our brothers and sisters all over who speak up for what's right. We also have to teach our brothers and sisters right from wrong.

My interview with City Tech Students went a little bit different. I found myself agreeing with so much that was said, and it made me realize that I do not practice what I preach in my own school. City Tech students feel as though they were stuck here as a last minute resort to go to College. This becomes an issue because people don't feel the need to be a part of anything or show school spirit. I wondered how can we make a change to feel as though we belong here? I discovered it starts with us. We have to stop looking at City Tech as a just a cuny, or neighborhood school choice, but instead look at it as this is where my next for years of experience will come from. The experiences we create for ourselves in college are lifelong memories. City Tech is such a diverse school that we have the opportunity to learn from others to help us grow. That is a huge difference between us and a school like Howard. We welcome everyone with open arms. One thing I heard from a student at Howard is that when they see a

caucasian person on campus they sometimes take offense to it. They take offense to it because they see it as “that person is just here because they give scholarships to minorities coming to an HBCU”, instead of maybe believing the person may just be interested in our culture.

An academic journal entitled “Cool Posing” on Campus: A Qualitative Study of Masculinities and Gender Expression among Black Men at a Private Research Institution by Frank Harris III, Robert T. Palmer and Laura E. Struve is an experiment with 22 black college students who attend predominantly white colleges. The men in this article for the most part had the same idea when it came to coping in an environment they are not used to. The results indicated that “The participants deemed it necessary for men to be unemotional and handle pressure with calmness and resolve.” Nowhere in this research did it state that the mistreatment of others are fair.

Maybe finding a way to cope with the mistreatment of one another is what we have to do to succeed. The text Cool Pose by Richard Majors & Janet Billson shows some examples of how cool pose can be used. Although the text looks at cool pose with negative aspects, it sees the positivity that it can have. Cool pose is a positive mechanism when it is being used positively. The text stated “Being cool shows both the dominant culture and the black male himself that he is strong and proud. He is somebody”. If women and men took this statement and believed that they are somebody and they worked towards it, then it would help them come out of the façade they have placed on themselves. Black men and women in particular have placed themselves in a box. In this box they hold everything and everyone on their shoulders. They use cool pose to keep calm, and sometimes hide the truth from others. The students at Howard had to break out of this. There was another rape allegation the year before in which the student did not speak up. People assumed she was lying, and spoke down on her. Why do our black brothers think they

shouldn't defend their black sisters is the question? Before we speak down on someone we need to question is this how I would speak to my mother, or is this how I want someone to speak to my little sister? During this sit in in the administration office a demand that needed to be met was how rape culture and all sexual assaults are handled. Students should not have to have fear going to the home that they live at for 10 months out of a year. It speaks volumes on how we perceive ourselves and others.

Bibliography

Billson, J ., Majors, R "Cool Pose" The Dilemmas of Black Manhood in America

Douglas-Gabriel, D. (2018, April 09). Howard University reveals that fired employees misappropriated \$369,000. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2018/04/09/howard-university-reveals-that-terminated-employees-misappropriated-369000/?utm_term=.b067ca7a0221

Harris, F., Palmer, R., & Struve, L. (2011). "Cool Posing" on Campus: A Qualitative Study of Masculinities and Gender Expression among Black Men at a Private Research Institution. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 80(1), 47-62. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41341105>

Black Media: Imagined Media: Reflection and Analysis

Yes I'm black, that doesn't mean I'm vulnerable to attack,

I'm just like you, a human, red blood, emotions and a moving figure,

Why should you treat me like I'm about to pull a trigger?

I didn't create sagging, I didn't create gang banging so why would you want to put the worst on me?

To get me jailed, tortured, and then to set me free?

My shadow is scared to walk beside me. Yes, because my shadow is black.

Walking to school to get my education, and they want to search my backpack.

It doesn't matter how long you live, but the way you live.

Having and living life is my greatest gift.

Are we recognized for what we have done? We will surely be recognized if we walk the streets with a gun.

People are scared to accept their ethnicity,

Because the color of our skin decide our destiny.

But my destiny is to stay strong, and fight not physically but verbally.

I don't have to be Alfred Austin to develop words of wisdom and passion

But I can be another student who stands to speak his mind and let it free.

The words you see above were written by Jermine Hodge back in 2014. As i read these words it makes me appreciate the life that I have. As a media object I would to create an event that can bring all races and gender together. I chose to have a diverse event because it will give us the opportunity to understand each other. There are two many situations were white people are calling the cops on black people because they fear for their lives. We cannot disparage their feelings, just like they shouldn't belittle us when we discuss ours. But the truth of the matter is some white people have a serious fear of black people, and most black people have a serious fear

of the police. Will it ever stop? It won't if we continue to live the way we do. If we could have an event that is taped by the media to show everyone coming together as one as discussing the feelings that they are having we would have a more successful city. My event would symbolize peace and togetherness. It would empower people to use their voices, bodies, and talents to create a powerful force that can't be broken for this new generation coming into the world. This would be empowering to me because its given people the opportunity to see that we are all not bad. I have personal experience and relationships with police officers, so I may have a greater respect for them then most people I associate myself with. This is because I took time to get to know and build a relationship with the neighborhood officers around my job. Sometimes if you just take a moment to get to know someone you will feel more safer when they are around, and they won't be seen as a threat. I have always had the opportunity to go to diverse schools which opened me up to not be so close minded. I have to hold back my opinions sometimes because others won't agree with it, or I will get attacked for what I am saying. An event that could bring people together to share experiences , and help everyone to truly get why we are frustrated will speak volumes for years to come. Yes I'm Black, and it doesn't mean I hate white people or police, it means that I want you to see me as a human being and know my feelings matter and exist to.

Hodge, J. (n.d.). YES I'M BLACK! Retrieved from <https://www.powerpoetry.org/poems/yes-im-black>

ALTERNATE ACTIVITIES Write a short reflection or analysis paragraph on the museum. You don't need to turn this in until the end of the semester.

After visiting the Black Power exhibit at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture I found it to be very cultivating. I never really have a passion for going to museums, but this

exhibit really opened my eyes up. The one thing I truly enjoyed was the fashion exhibit. It started with a picture of a black man in a jacket that said Black is Beautiful. As you moved across to other pictures, there were people holding signs that said “We don’t want congo blondes; and “He’s got straight hair, but he’s still an ape!”, then of course beautiful black women with their natural afros. I enjoyed this piece the most because we live in a society where little black girls don’t think they’re pretty enough, and they don’t want to embrace their natural hair. I personally find this to be appalling because black is one of the best colors in the world, and when you embrace who you are, you glow even more. I want this piece to reach more young black girls who believe that they are not good enough, beautiful enough, or worth anything. They have to see that people have been fighting for way too long to prove that we are worth something. The Black Power exhibit touched me because it helped me to gain more of an understanding of why things happen the way they do. What we can never do is give up on all the hard work that has already been put in place for us. Black people matter to the world, and we have to especially teach our black children that they matter to. \

Dr. Bennett I would like to personally thank you for opening up my eyes this semester. I had an opportunity to examine and understand so many things that I did not before. I chose this class because I always felt as though I was not well informed of my own culture, and I wanted to gain an understanding for why we do and say certain things. This was a great way to finish my undergraduate career, I thank you for sharing your mind with us. Hope you enjoy your summer.