



CO-PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

The Fall/Winter, 2015 edition of the Black Child Journal will focus on Self-Determination and Community Building. What is self-determination? And why the focus on self-determination in the current edition of the Black Child Journal? Self-Determination is a commitment to build our lives as Black people in our own images and interests. Black people have always understood that to achieve our goals we must take the responsibility for that achievement upon ourselves. Crucial to the understanding of self-determination is defining identity; and the acceptance of Africa as the spiritual home of Blacks in America must under gird any attempt at mental liberation and self-determination.

In our moment of history, the twenty-first century, Black people are living in the most dangerous times since enslavement. In the past it was easy to identify the oppressor; however, today it is difficult for many of us to identify our oppressors. Who are our friends and who are enemies? Who are brothers and who are sisters? All these questions were easier to answer in the past. They are more complex today.

In the past, our thirst for freedom seemed to under gird our identity as Black people. It was in our songs (People get ready, there's a train a comin'...) and in our poems, ("Speak the truth to the people"). It was the very language of the people, who greeted perfect strangers as brothers and sisters of the blood. Now, all has changed. The people who

once challenged oppression seem enraptured as never before by America's siren songs. "Me" has replaced "we," co-optation has replaced resistance, and the religion of self and accommodation has replaced that old-time religion. At the bottom, these changes are symptoms of a larger problem---the unraveling of wholeness, and the dis-integration of the social foundations and stratification. What is to be done at this place we know? It is nearly 400 years since the first Black person involuntarily set foot upon this land with the social and economic appellation, "slave". This fact, in the absence of presenting any additional evidence, should be sufficient evidence for the survival of African Americans. Thus, the questions in 2015 should not be: "Can Black people govern themselves?"; "Can Black people survive as a community in these dangerous times?" but rather "What kind of self-determining and self-actualizing will there be?"

What is to be done? This edition of the **BLACK CHILD JOURNAL** will provide articles on the concepts and practices of community--building and child development that embodies all the complexities of individuality and collective unity, as related to self-determination. Community-building among American and Canadian Blacks have been historically part of contemporary resistances to western neoliberal market driven hegemony and oppression in its many forms. However, community-building has remained out of the reach for us; it has remained out of reach partly because we have lost the power to critically define ourselves and the nature of our situation for ourselves and for our children. The following articles reflect the exception and follow in the spirit of self-determination reflected by the thoughts and practices of Harriet Tubman, Martin Delaney, Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Marcus Garvey, Zora Neale Hurston, Carter G. Woodson, John Coltrane, Ella Baker John Hendrick Clark, and Yosef ben-Johannan.

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