

"The children of the despised and rejected are menaced from the moment they stir in the womb"-- James Baldwin

"If you don't understand white supremacy/racism, everything that you do understand will only confuse you"--Neely Fuller, Jr

Almost two years after the killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice, 13-year-old Tyre King has become another victim of police violence. The police claim that Tyre brandished a BB gun, but an independent medical examiner reported that Tyre was likely running away from police when they shot and killed him. Twelve and thirteen are way too young for anyone to die, but the odds were stacked against Tamir and Tyre from a much younger age.

Black children younger than Tamir and Trye are targeted by law enforcement, through school referrals that have them standing in criminal courts at rates that far outpace white children.

Raising a Black child in 2016 means preparing him or her to bear the brunt of racism in all forms, starting with hyper-disciplining in schools to hyper-policing by the criminal justice system. If they survive all that, they have fewer economic and employment opportunities.

Sure, having money helps considerably. But as recent studies show, Black youth born in middle-class families are much less likely to stay at the same economic level as their parents than their white counterparts.

These aforementioned tragedies and experiences are inextricably linked through the span of American history in the ways in which the bodies of Black children have been exploited, dehumanized and policed through the centuries.

We live in a public that accepts institutionalized racism--white supremacy in the formal institutions and reinforces it through the litany of inequalities inherent in American society.

A 2014 study published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, found that Black boys are widely dehumanized, perceived as older, less and more likely to face police violence if accused of a crime*. The researchers argued that dehumanization is the denial of full "humanness" and subsequent denial of human protections. Historians of genocide assert that humanization is a necessary preconditioned for "culturally and/or state-sanctioned violence---a view echoed by some social psychologists' theorists. The logic of this assertion is that dehumanizing groups morally excludes them, making it permissible to treat people in a way that would be morally objectable if they were fully human. United States history is replete with examples of this kind of moral exclusion of Black children. For instance, the policies of chattel slavery permitted children to be

separated from their parents and forced into labor at any age. In 1944, a Black 14-year old, George Junius Stinney Jr, became the youngest person on record in the United States to be legally executed by the state (executed without the benefit of a lawyer, witnesses, or a record of confession). And notoriously, in 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till was dragged from his bed, disfigured and lynched for allegedly whistling at a white woman. What psychological context (1610-2016) can explain this treatment of Black children from then to now?

This edition of the Black Child Journal: Racism (White Supremacy) will provide through a variety of contributions a context beyond the "what" to the "why" of such behavior and actions that have burden Black people in America for almost four hundred years.

I along with Publisher Useni Perkins, Editor Dr. Michael Edwards and Associate Editor Dr. Atiba Coppock and Editorial Advisory member Ron Hill are honored to dedicate the publishing of this edition to the memory and scholarship of Dr. Frances Cress Welsing.

Dr. Welsing has been a unswerving champion for African Americans and lover of humanity. Her analysis of the impact of White Supremacy as a global system of oppression was trenchant, hard hitting and consistent. Born in Chicago to a physician and an educator, she was trained in the liberal arts at Antioch College and in Medicine at Howard University College of Medicine, where she would eventually serve as faculty. A long-standing private practitioner and pioneer in the fields of child psychiatry and mental health, her longest institutional affiliation was as the clinical director and staff physician with the Washington D.C. Department of Human Services, where she charted policy and strategies to help emotionally disturbed children at the Hillcrest Children's Center and the Paul Roberson School for Growth and Development. Her work on improving mental health of African Americans lead to a career in the field of race and cultural analysis. Her famous work the Cress Theory was influenced by the ideas of a Washington, D.C. acquaintance, Neely Fuller, Jr., and explored the thesis that racism, aggression and hostility stems from white fear of genetic annihilation in an overwhelmingly non-white world. Fuller and Dr. Welsing contended that all of modern global relations were affected by White supremacist ideology and symbology, which they further grouped into nine categories of human activity: economics, education, entertainment, labor, law, politics, religion, sex and war. **

She initiated the development of two generations of popular discourse in Black communities on the concept and reality of White supremacy, a status confirmed by her 1991 book *The Isis Papers: Keys to the Colors*, which was a collection of essays she had written over the previous two decades. It became a perennial non-fiction best seller in Black communities.

She often said her intellectual guide was W.E.B. Dubois who accurately observed that the problem of the modern era would be the global problem of the color line and the reaction of non-whites to it.

The life and labor of Frances Cress Welsing is just one barometer of the gulf that remains between White and non-White public spheres in a society willfully blind to its inability to engage in "honest dialogues on race." She weaponized her theories with an agenda that most people are afraid to discuss openly and honestly in polite company.

The dimensions of her work that critique Whiteness and its cultural impact fit comfortably with the mission of the Black Child Journal and the focus of this edition; especially as it relates to the question of why!

Woke Up This Mornin Clothed in My Right Mind

paul hill, jr

*The Essence of Innocence: Consequences of Dehumanizing Black Children, Goff, Jackson, Leone, Cullotta, Di Tomasso, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2014, vol. 106, no. 4, 526-545

**Dr. Frances Cress Welsing: Looking Back at Her Call to Uproot Racism, Gregory Carr, Ph.D, Ebony, January 5, 2016