Withering Family

By : princess onika auguste

This an essay I did on Black families plan on turning into a scholarly article and submit it for academic publishing

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/princess onika auguste

Copyright © princess onika auguste, 2013
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Withering Family

Withering Family: The destruction of The Black Family

Many years ago our ancestors from Africa had been ripped from their homeland and placed and forced to work in a land that they did not recognize. These African slaves were taken away from all what they knew. Away from their friends, parents and children and more often than not they never to saw them again.

This separation of these families has come down to the modern era. Many Black families are run by single black mothers. The black men are nowhere to be found. They are either in jail, doing drugs or dead. The family system has been broken down. .These single black mothers are being not only mommy but daddy too. Many of our African American children come from a single parent family structure. What is Family? Family according to Eshleman and Bulcroft â is a kinship/structural group of persons related by blood, marriage or adoption; usually related to the martial unit and including the rights and duties of parenthoodâ . There is not too much research on the Black family especially those African American families that would be considered successful families. Though there are a few success stories of African American Families one must not ignore the fact of the increasingly numbers of black families without fathers.

African American families during Slavery

As stated before the destruction of the black family started during slavery where the slave masters and merchants made sure that the African family was separated because once the slave was away from his family, his spirit was destroyed. The effect of slavery on Black families was quite clearly an influence of the breakdown of families in the African American community. The lack of a strong father figure in the life of a black slave child has come down as part of the cultural psyche of abandonment present in modern day African American families and communities. According to Heather Andrea Williams â Slavery did not only inhibited family formation but made stable, secure, family life difficult if not impossible. Enslaved people could not marry legally in any American colony or state. Colonial laws considered slaves property and commodities, not legal persons who could enter into contracts and marriage was and is a legal contract. Until 1865 most African Americans could not be legally married. In the northern states like New York where slavery had ended slaves could marry but in southern states they could not. Enslaved families lived in fear of separation. Families were separated often through saleâ Slavery whether one wants to admit or not severely impacted the family.

Single Parent Families

It is very obvious that slavery had a horrible effect on the psyche of black families. Black men would leave the raising of the children to the black mothers. The African American family because of slavery was on the edge of destruction. Today because of this many black children are raise in single parent homes. According to News one 72 Percent of Black kids are raised by single parents 25 percent US overall. What is a single parent family? A single parent family is a unit where there is only one parent raising the children. Single parent families are on the raise in the African American Community. Because of the raise in single parent families in the African American community, other groups have a negative perception on the black family.

Many children of single parent families suffer from lack of resources and many live below the poverty belt. Since 72 % of black kids are raised by single parents many of those children live in communities where

there is lots of crime. Though it may be assumed that all single Black parent families are poor that is sometimes not the case. While many single parent families are poor there are a limited few that are above the poverty belt. Many of these single black families are headed by mothers Sara Mc Lanahan and Karen Booth state in their article â that when compared with two parent families mother only families were more likely to be poor, to have higher levels of stress and to have lower levels of social integrationâ . Economic insecurity the authorsâ state was high due to low earning capacity, lack of child support and meager public benefits. The authors also state that children living in single parent households were more likely to become poor when they are adults and children of single parents are also more likely to become single parents also. Children from Single black families are less likely to finished high school far less have a college degree. Many are also drawn to a life of crime. According to Booth and Lanahan anywhere there is a large African American community that consist of largely single poor parents the crime rate in that community rises.

Black Families and Social Class

The African American upper and middle class families are seldom or one should state rarely publicize if ever. It is the poor black families that get publicize in the media. Many problems in the African American family can be attributed to social class rather than race or ethnicity. The African American upper and middle class families as stated before are rarely known to exist. These families with two parents who have a stable marriage and have a high school education or above are more similar to the dominant white family that exists. There is a negative perception that most African American families live below the poverty line and that most of the children are either in crime, dead or jail but in recent years that perception has begun to change. In recent years there has been a increased of African Americans entering positions of leadership in law, education, medicine and business but the number of blacks that are unemployment have overshadowed these achievements by the black community. In order for these negative attributes to stop overshadowing the positive attributes of African American family; the black community must be educated on what must be done to continue these positive contributions to society.

Black Families and Education

In order for black families to improve their economic and social situation and to get where the dominant white majority is. The African American child and his parents must be educated. According to the U.S Bureau of Census â In 2003 79.6% of black males and 80% of black females had completed four years or more of high school, in the same year 16.7 percent of black males and 17.8 percent of black females had completed four years or more of college. This number was double of the number in 1970â . Though these numbers are good; there is cause to be concern for the percentage of black females being educated is almost equal that of black males being educated. The educational attainment of African Americans influences marriage patterns and the selection of a spouse or partner. The education level of black females and males have improved but black women are having difficulty in finding husbands of the same educational level or of a higher education level than them. According to Richard E Ball and Lynn Robbins state thatâ many black men are having difficulty in adequately providing for their families and this leads to difficulties in spousal relationships and satisfaction in their own lives. The authors also states that martial difficulties can be attributed to the disparities in education, with women marrying less educated men and the low sex ratio issue, whereby black women have a more restricted field of eligible partners than white women.â

Self Image

In Maya Angelouâ s autobiography I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings; she states that she wished that she was white little girl with blond hair and blue eyes. This is an example of how some black children feel about themselves. Black children grow up in a society that encourages feeling of inferiority and degrading of self worth. Black children when growing up often act out the societal prejudices given to them. In spite of this blacks have a positive self image according to Michael Hughes and David H Demo â when comparing black and white self esteem, there was no difference between the level of self esteem between whites and black and in fact in some cases blacks had higher self esteem than whitesâ Despite the negativity and prejudices of self image on blacks. African Americans retained a good self image of their self. This can be contributed to according to Tom Luster â that over the past few decades black organizations and social interactions have served to bolster self pride, esteem and identification with blackness and appreciation of black culture and life. Also black writing and poetry have portrayed the concept of inferiority as false and lastly, the family, the church, friendships and general social interactions provide positive support systems that influence blacks self evaluation.â The African American family, church and community help influence the positive self image in black children which is not suprisely suicide rates among blacks are not as high like the suicide rates of whites. According to the US Bureau of the Census the suicide rate was 10 percent among black males and 19.1 percent in white males and in females white suicides were 4.3 and in black females 1.8. Note this was the 2000 Census Though more often than not blacks do have a positive outlook; there are clearly these times where blacks do not have a positive image.

The Upper and Middle Class Black Family

This division of the black family community has been largely ignored because as stated they are more similar to the dominant white family. Social Scientists, educators and the media have often ignored this category of the black family because they cause less problems ,are more likely to conform, are better educated and to not affect anyone. According to Ann Creighton Zollar and J Sherwood Williams â generally married black people tend to be happier with their life and more satisfied than unmarried black people. Also according to the authors married black couples are more likely than single parents to be middle class or upper class; males are more likely to have more stable employment and assume an active role in decision making and child rearing responsibilities .â The Upper and Middle class black families as stated before has been largely neglected by social scientists, educators and media and pop culture. You rarely see a successful black family on television with exception of the Cosbys on the Cosby show, the Winters family on The Young and The Restless just to name a few.

Historically these upper and middle class black families were according to Elizabeth I Mullins and Paul Sites â were descendants of families charactizeried by antebellum freedom (before the Civil War) freedom, lighter skin, urban resistance and higher educational and occupational attainmentâ It is worth to note than in this type of family the father plays a more dominant role and the children identify with him.

Conclusion

Though there is an upper and middle class black family, they only constitute of a small minority in the black community. In the black community there is an increasingly population of black children without fathers and growing up in single parent families and living below the poverty line. Unless something is done drastically the rate would continue and there will be more black children indulging in crime. One must also that when coming up with a solution to solve this problem we must remember the role that slavery had in the breakdown of the black family. Because slaves lost their identity, roots and culture and were not allowed

to settle down, black families have retained this type of feeling of being rootless, unable to identify and many children grow up without fathers and sometimes mothers. The black father like the black slave leaves plenty of children with difference mothers only difference the black slave had no choice. In order to get more fathers and black families to stay together and heal we must address the issues of slavery, poverty and social class because one leads to the.

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2013-06-20 05:44:21