

The struggle of assata shakur

People



Asset Shaker is a very strong and determined individual that refused to give up her beliefs and ideas to receive her freedom. When she was incarcerated, treated like an animal, beaten to a bloody pulp and lost all basic human rights, she only grew more stronger and determined. Shaker was a political prisoner and suffered because of her Black Panther & Black Liberation Army affiliation. She spent six years in prison for crimes that she was not proven to have done or had any connection to.

Most people would have given up and "sold out" to get their freedom back, she didn't because she simply took it back! Shaker's life changed dramatically on the night of May 2, 1973 on the New Jersey Turnpike when Caddy Mali Shaker, Sundials Coli and her car was stopped because "of a taillight." After an altercation between Caddy Shaker and Trooper Harper, shots were fired which left Trooper Forester and Caddy Shaker dead, Asset Shaker and Trooper Harper wounded. Shaker's autobiography does a great job detailing the event. Shaker described the experience saying "Caddy was dead.

My mind knew that Caddy was dead. The air was like cold glass. Huge bubbles rose and burst. Each one felt like an explosion in my chest. My mouth tasted like blood and dirt. The car spun around me and something like sleep overtook me. In the background I could hear what sounded like gunfire. But I was fading and dreaming." (Asset 3) She was beaten very badly during the ordeal. The officer's were very brutal towards her because they knew she was involved in the Black Panther Party and wanted information out of her. "Where did they go?..."

Pitch you'd better open your goddamn mouth or I'll blow your goddamn head off" (Asset 3) was how these officers talked to her. She doesn't say a word. This is another example of her showing her resilience in an adverse time. She was in tremendous amount of pain. Shaker said " I felt myself being dragged by the feet across the pavement. My chest was on fire. My blouse was purple with blood. I was convinced that my arm had been shot off and was hanging inside my shirt by a few strips of flesh. I could not feel it. " (Asset 3) Eventually the ambulance came and got Shaker.

She tried to speak but only bubbled at the mouth. She blacked out during the ride to the hospital. She gets to the hospital where she is interrogated by every person that is around her. The police felt that her capture could lead to the capture of many other African American political leaders if she cooperated with authorities. If these leaders were captured, that would be a serious blow to the movement. Asset sat handcuffed to a bed as detective after detective asked questions about the Black Liberation Army. She said " Detectives and more detectives. Questions and more Questions...

Now they want to know about the Black Liberation Army: how big is it; what cities is it in; who is in it, etc. , etc. " (Asset 8) If Shaker talked, that may have lead to the end of the BLAB or Black Panther Party because the FBI and CONTINENTS was desperate for the end of these groups. The purpose of CONTINENTS (Counter Intelligence Program) was to infiltrate, discredit and disrupt any domestic political organization (such as BLAB or the Black Panther Party). It was lead by the FBI and played a critical role during this time period. The information that Shaker could have given the FBI could have lead to the destruction of these organizations.

<https://assignbuster.com/the-struggle-of-assata-shakur/>

But Shaker remained uncooperative throughout her stay in the hospital and even during her indictment. She did not say anything about her party or its members, nor the activities of the groups. Her time in the hospital became better as her body healed and the abuse from the officers stopped. A short time later Shaker was transported from the hospital to Middlesex County jail. " It seemed like the middle of the night... A wheelchair was waiting for me. I figured they were taking me to Jail" said Shaker describing the experience. (Asset 45) Shaker's status as a political activist would affect her greatly in prison.

The federal authorities wanted Shaker isolated from all the other prisoners because they did not want her to spread her " radical" ideas to any of the other prisoners which could possibly result in a revolt. Her cell was isolated from all the other prisoners and was patrolled by guards at all times. In prison, Shaker was subjected to the nihilistic ideas that she encountered on the outside. During this time blacks were treated as lower class citizens. Society wanted to keep African Americans in the same ghettos and isolate us from the nicer neighborhoods (domestic colonialism).

They did this by racial profiling (Asset Shaker's arrest on the turnpike), police highly populating certain areas and raising prices to live in certain areas. These methods create a sense of self-worthlessness inside of a person which often lead to crime. This trend often leads to African Americans being arrested and incarcerated. Once in prison, the system has now taken the little power that the person once had (the right to vote, speak etc.) The prisoner now becomes more like property, which is just like slavery in a

sense because prisoners perform labor for " free". Shaker and her party took a different approach to the nihilistic feeling.

They wanted to fight the oppressor and take what they deserved. This is why the BLAB and Black Panther Party was so feared by the government.

Government knew that these groups carried an " any means necessary mentality which meant that they would use violence if needed. Conservatism was the belief that many government officials believed during this time period. They did not want the the social or political structure of society to change. This is where the conflict occur. African Americans were not receiving equal treatment which means that if society were to remain the same African Americans would always be second-rate citizens.

Black people shared a liberal view in the sense hat liberty and equality for all. The liberal view was the driving force behind every African American group or movement for equality/civil rights. Shaker would remain in prison for six years bouncing from correctional facility to correctional facility as authorities tried to make it as inconvenient as possible for her and her loved ones. She was eventually able to escape from prison and currently lives in Cuba in isolation, but many political prisoners like her are unable to escape. Often these people remain in prison for very long periods of times because of their beliefs.

Shaker would have been the same way but she was fortunate enough to escape. These people have great pride and integrity because they are willing to withstand any abuse or consequence they might receive for doing what they believe is right. Shaker is one of those special people and her story

shows it. Shaker's story Asset documented her life and experiences very accurately and allowed for the reader to relate to her experiences. I was able to view her as an overall person and not just a political leader.

Her childhood stories in certain chapters showed her more as a normal, everyday person.

While her stories of her arrest or stay in prison show how strong of a woman she really was. Shaker was a truly extraordinary person. Many people would have crumbled under the circumstances she endured. She fought social injustices, cultural struggles and economic forces. Her upbringing was a pure example of the life of most people. Blacks were compressed in certain communities where crime and drugs were often used as temporary outlets to a better world, but Shaker chose a different path. She chose to be a leader in the community and fight for civil rights.

She did not settle for being the victim, she played the cards she were dealt and tried the best she could. The ironic part about everything is the same problems that she encountered back then, exist today. The Trayvon Martin case shows how race has not changed much in this country. White Society viewed this small woman Assata Shaker like a huge criminal, just like society wants to paint the picture that an unarmed black male could harm an armed white man. Shaker's legacy and deeds did help African Americans, but the Trayvon Martin case (along with countless others) make you ask "how much?".