

Identity issues for african american woman today

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Many African American Women enjoy the diversities of their being different in a predominantly white society. Such diversities are evident in their being African, black, a member of the minority races, and being a woman. While some feel that such diversities have never been a problem there are also some who thinks it otherwise.

Basically women in America are segregated into four groups. And there is no dearth of such African American women who feel that the other three groups are socially, economically, and educationally ahead of their group. These groups are; That is basically the identity problem and issues for the black African and American woman. It does not mean that one should overlook many accomplishments that African American women have been able to achieve. Yet it may be a requirement for giving them the true identity that the nation as a whole indulges in some dialogue or discourse for understanding the phenomena that influences the identity issues. At the same time it is also necessary maintaining to some extent the status quo to ensure that their identity are not totally lost in search of new identities.

There has been no dearth of celebrities in their rank and their contributions to the society and its overall welfare have been significant. However, it is also necessary to understand the basic identify problem when the other three groups ahead of the fourth continually ignores its existence or fails to recognize its contribution to the cause of the society at large. Such attitude will not only generate unproductive system of failed economics and result in demoralizing the individuals. Even the accomplishment of Opra, a celebrity in her own rights, does not solve the identity problem significantly and the identiy problem continues unabated. Reason is that such feat does not

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translate it to the acceptance within the viable culture. So far as the discourse of the country is concerned, the national discourse should be on the possible contribution of the black president towards the black community and more so towards the vulnerable sectors of that community; the African American women.

Identity issues emanate from the fact that in any case it would be the black woman that gets the last nod socially or in for any high position in it. The entire issue can be most appropriately described in the following words. " We must move away from black women being the first entertainer, media mogul, athlete, or criminal. Instead our history must become a place where black women, white women, black men, and white men are all valued and visible in all aspects of the American culture...

. When we all see people that look like us wherever we go then we can truly say that we have addresses a multicultural society." Issues of identity also involve the conflict that occurs between the women suffrage and African American issues. It is not one of the simplest of the issues and has never been so if one looks back into the history. So when a black women reformist Truth; traveled to attend the Women's rights convention way back in 1851 in Ohio, despite being taunted by some she could put forth the case of black women's right in a most moving manner when she told " I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! Am I a woman?" It is interesting to note that at that point of time neither free blacks nor American women had the right to vote.

Dual movement took place for abolition of slavery and granting suffrage to women. While slavery was abolished in 1865, the status of black remained in question. Gradually a movement gathered for granting of suffrage to black women. Yet the fact remains that the appearance of Truth was not taken in right perspective by even the white woman at that time and even many years later. Black African American women still continued to get the least attention in comparison to their white counterparts. In the age long battles for the women's right to vote, the most interesting factor that points fingers to the identity issues of black African American woman's rights is that majority of national women's groups in America rejected black suffragists.

Gulf between the white and black still continued as they thought that allowing black suffrages will offend southern white women in the country. Identity issues thus continued unabated for black African American as usual." Many southerners, even those passionate about women's right to vote, felt strongly that black women should not be included in that right. African American suffragists, bearing the dual burden of being black and female in a nation that undervalued both groups, were left to fight their own battles." Identity problems are not confined to right to vote or colors alone.

Some ethnic and anatomic features also play important part in it. For instance; the hair of the woman is one of the delicate issues in the identity problems relating to African American black women. Some interesting questions have cropped up in result of research and cultural experimentations. One of the questions is whether black women really require silky and straight hairs so that they can fit into the white world. While the issue seems to be one of fashion and appearance, it is in fact far more

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than that. It is basically one of the cultural identities of black African American women in a predominantly white society.

In fact; hair formation has given big inferiority complex to many black women. Many of them feel “ why can’t my hair just be like normal people”. Unfortunately, it is not the hair that is abnormal, it is the mindset of such people and it is the bizarre way of the society that often looks upon thick curly hairs of black women as signs of ethnic inferiority. Thus hair has always been one of the biggest issues in providing the racial identity to people; and more to the black African American women in United States. As Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, director of Urban Bush Dance troop of New York says; “ Hair is always a metaphor of the deeper racial issues we don’t deal with in this country, issues like internalized racial superiority and internationalized racial inferiority”. While hair is important part of any culture, it has assumed much greater significant in case of African American black women with far too acute complexities involved.

According to authors like Jose Adan Silva; identity of black African American woman have been recognized but their needs are still neglected. Human rights are being recognized but economically the black woman still continues to be the most vulnerable in America. According to Alta Hooker, Vice Chancellor URACCAN, people in Central America and Mexico are the most vulnerable as well as neglected in terms of identity and the majority of them are black women.” Even since the first World Conference against Racism and Discrimination (held in Durban, South Africa in 2001), our people have gained recognition of their human rights, but have not seen much progress in terms of their social and economic needs met”, Hooker said. Though the <https://assignbuster.com/identity-issues-for-african-american-woman-today/>

rights of equality of black women with their white counterparts are recognized in United States, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, Panama, Mexico, and Nicaragua, in practice the rights are still ignored despite legal as well as institutional advancements made over the years.

Solution does not lie in legislations, rules and regulations or even stringent enforcement. Solution is available in the change of mindset of the people and global acceptance of the fact that neither the white women are more important in the society nor the black are less important there. Each have their respective contributions to make that can build up a real secular and democratic society.