

# Humiliated



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

No one likes being humiliated. It is a horrifying experience and people will do anything avoid it. Most would wear a mask while smiling “ with torn and bleeding hearts” (Dunbar 4). There are people who act the ironic way of portraying what is truly inside in order to hide the emotions that seemed to be unacceptable to many. Pretending to show anything that is the opposite of what is really within to mask the great pain and anger is what Paul Laurence Dunbar's “ We Wear the Mask” speaks of.

Great dishonor and contempt towards African-American slaves in the early United States made them conceal their real thoughts and feelings. To bear the daily pervertive treatment of their white owners, these people had to draw on their inner strength. Dunbar's penned line: “ We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries” was evident by the slaves' profound religious faith and devotion.

African American religion historically has functioned as a “ refuge in a hostile white world. Swatos, 1998)” It has served as a form of cultural identity and resistance to a white-dominated society. We all have hidden our emotions at one time or another. We put false faces and pretend for many different reasons. We see celebrity couples pretending to be sweet on camera to protect their team. We knew parents hiding their conflicts to protect their children. We see politician’s waves to gain votes.

We knew a gay friend disguising to be a macho to lift up his parents’ expectations or a friend trying to be in high society to belong with her rich friends. We pass by clowns performing on the streets showing people their smiles behind their necessity to earn money. They are just among who wear

their masks to protect, to mingle, to disguise and to amuse in order to hide their fear, grief, arrogance and desire to the world. One uses to hide behind. Whether it is from humiliation or non-acceptance, people will use mask to hide their true feelings.