
Freedom Cipher Manual:

Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding



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JAMAICAN HISTORY LESSON: MARCUS GARVEY

The single greatest inspiration of the Rastafarian movement today, Marcus Garvey was born in 1887, in the town of St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. Raised in a poor family, Garvey was the youngest of eleven children. He also was a proud descendant of the Maroons, Jamaica's first black freedom fighters. Struggling to rise above poverty, Garvey left home at an early age to work as a printer in Kingston, Jamaica.

After taking part in a major printers strike in 1907, Garvey decided to travel in order to figure out how he could improve the plight of black people in the world. As Garvey traveled throughout Latin America and the Caribbean he became more concerned with the problem of black oppression. In 1912 Garvey traveled to London and met an Egyptian scholar named Duse Mohammed Ali who introduced him to African civilization and culture. During this period, Garvey also read Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*, which influenced him greatly. When Garvey returned to Jamaica in 1914 he started the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association (UNIA) and African Communities League. This organization was based on the model of Washington's Tuskegee Institute in America. Its purpose was to establish educational and industrial colleges for Black Jamaicans. As a result of the failure of this movement to take off in Jamaica, Garvey traveled to the United States and re-started the UNIA by 1917 in Harlem, New York.

During its ten years of existence, the UNIA had as many as 1 million members. Through the UNIA, Garvey launched an international weekly newspaper called the *Negro World*. He also launched the Black Star Line, a shipping corporation founded for trading purposes and also to bring blacks back to Africa. Among other things, Garvey also founded the Negro Factories Corporation. Garvey's UNIA was the largest Pan-African organization in history which worked under the slogan: "One God, One Aim, One Destiny."

Marcus Garvey's philosophy was that black people should be proud of themselves, know their history and eventually return back to Africa, their homeland. In *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, his wife, Amy Jacques-Garvey, had the following to say about his appeal to Africa:

"Wake up Ethiopia! Let us work toward the one glorious end of a free, redeemed and mighty nation. Let Africa be a bright star among the constellation of nations." Garvey's advice to 'all friendly whites' was, 'Remember, give Africa a long berth, for one day God and His hosts shall bring Princes out of Egypt and Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands.'

The connection between Garvey and the Rastafarian movement, is his prophecy which stated: "Look to Africa, when a Black King shall be crowned, for the day of deliverance is near." This was accepted as a prophecy which came true after Ras Tafari was crowned Emperor of Ethiopia in 1930, taking the name Haile Selassie. Because Garvey taught blacks to look for their saviour in the east, he is praised as a prophet by the Rastafarian movement for revealing to them their God, Haile Selassie.

In an interview held by Tracy Nicholas with Garvey's widow, Amy Jackes- Garvey in Kingston, Jamaica, 1972, she said the following about her husband's legacy:

"Garvey never believed in hate, because it's poison. You can spend time hating and hating and hating, when you could spend time loving and loving and loving your own kind and building up unity."

Although his movement did not last past the 1930's, he has influenced many Black Liberation Movements throughout the 20th century. This can be affirmed by the fact that many movements, such as Rastafari, use Garvey's symbolic colours of Red, Black, and Green in their movements. For Garvey, the **red** stood for the blood; the **black** for the earth, and the **green** for life and growth.

Groupwork Activity:

In small groups of 3-4 discuss the following questions. In your groups, think about the significance of Marcus Garvey and the UNIA to the study of Black History today.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Marcus Garvey leave Jamaica to travel around the world?
2. Where did Marcus Garvey learn about African History?
3. Where was the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) founded?
4. Why did the UNIA accomplish under the leadership of Garvey?
5. How did Garvey's UNIA influence future anti-racist movements in the 20th century?

Source: Nicholas, T. (1996). **Rastafari: A Way of Life**. Chicago: Bantam/Doubleday Bell, pp. 12-13.

THE YOUNG LORDS ORGANIZATION

The Young Lords Organization (YLO) was a 1960's action-oriented group of predominantly Puerto-Rican youth who built a revolutionary organization in the Latino community.

The YLO began in Chicago in 1956, as a Latino gang called the Young Lords (YL). In those days they were involved in inter-racial conflicts and petty crime with rival gangs from the Black, White and Asian community. Those times were about strictly hustling until the mid-60's. Then, the YL President, Cha Cha Jimenez, reorganized the group as a political organization in 1967 with the name Young Lords Organization. Immediately they took over a church and began running community-based programs out of it. According to Rafael Viera, Chief Medical Cadre of the Y.L.O., "They started community programs to help people in the streets and they just related to serving the people –which was their motto at the time." (Foner, 1970, p.230).

The YLO came together when a bunch of young people became politically conscious of their oppression. There were all these thugs robbing and stealing from each other over petty gang issues, and one day people from the streets came together and decided to fight against the real enemy –rulers of the capitalist system. A look at Vieira's reflection indicates that the YLO was a collective effort from the streets:

A lot of various cats had a lot of different experiences together and they finally woke up. They said, 'we're out here killing each other and we ain't even dealing with the system that's really messing us up.' So they got it together and organized around that main base, that is, they stopped killing each other. That was around the time when the Black Stone Rangers became political and others started getting it together (Ibid).

The YLO spread as a result of the combined efforts of both working class and middle class Latino youth. In January, 1969, the YLO was expanded to Harlem, New York when a group of revolutionary-socialist Puerto Rican college students opened up a chapter in N.Y. because they supported the work that was being done in Chicago. These petty-bourgeois intellectuals went out into the streets of N.Y. and began to connect with the "streets brothers", who consisted of dope fiends, hustlers, and pimps who gave them much support. This caused many people on the street to go through a process of transformation and politicization (Ibid). From that point on, East Harlem became the base of the YLO in NY. There they worked hard on health and sanitation issues, in the interest of the lumpenproletariat (underclass) (Ibid, p.231). The YLO also had chapters in Puerto Rico, Hayward, California and Newark, New Jersey (Ibid, p. 232).

The YLO consisted mainly of Puerto Ricans, however there were Black, Asian and some Chicanos in the organization. Interestingly, there were no White individuals in the movement:

We refuse White people admittance into the YLO for the purpose that we are out there to serve the community; the Puerto Rican community consisted mainly of Puerto Ricans, however there were Black, Asian and some Chicanos in the organization.

We refuse White people admittance into the YLO for the purpose that we are out there to serve the community, the Puerto Rican community. If White people want to serve their community then there is the Young Patriots in Yorkville or other respective organizations. Unlike us, our people are still hung up on this thing of believing that it's not the system but that it's the White man who is oppressing them. It takes time and effort to teach people it is not the White man but it's the system that oppresses them (Ibid, p. 232).

This point is significant because it reveals that anti-colonial alliances with progressive Whites must be strategic in the initial stages of a movement. The YLO was not anti-White. However, they recognized the limitations that progressive Whites can play in a national liberation struggle, and the need for their presence and influence in the dominant society.

The YLO implemented programs that met the needs of the ghetto. They had breakfast and clothing programs and garbage clean-ups in areas that were neglected by Mayor Lindsay and the city's Department of Garbage (Ibid, 234). The YLO also held demonstrations on political prisoners in the U.S.

The YLO was effective because they were very strategic in their methodology. They realized the appropriate way of developing a radical consciousness in the community –through action. In the tradition of radical socialism, YLO members initiated successful services and programs to the community that benefited the people's lives. The YLO had less interest in indoctrinating the 'hood with radical theory, and a greater concern for engaging the community in revolutionary praxis. Thus, YLO members provided ghettoized communities with basic food, clothing, and medical attention rather than handing out copies of Mao's Red Book.

The YLO was one of the most progressive youth movements of the 1960s because it was clearly guided by radical socialism (see 13-Point Program and Platform). The YLO was a people's movement that fought to organize the poor and advance working class interests in an era of anti-colonial 'Third World' revolutions.

Source: Foner, S. (1970). **The Black Panthers Speak**. New York: J.B. Lippincott Company.

Young Lords Party 13-Point Program and Platform

The Young Lords Party is a Revolutionary Political Party Fighting for the Liberation of All Oppressed People

1. We want self-determination for Puerto Ricans—Liberation of the Island and inside the United States.

For 500 years, Spain and then United States have colonized our country. Billions of dollars in profits leave our country for the United States every year. In every way we are slaves of the gringo. We want liberation and the Power in the hands of the People, not Puerto Rican exploiters.

Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre!

2. We want self-determination for all Latinos.

Our Latin Brothers and Sisters, inside and outside the United States, are opposed by American business. The Chicano people built the Southwest, and we support their right to control their lives and their land. The people of Santo Domingo continue to fight against gringo domination and its puppet generals. The armed liberation struggles in Latin America are part of the war of Latinos against imperialism.

Que Viva La Raza!

3. We want liberation of all third world people.

Just as Latin's first enslaved under Spain and the yanquis, Black people, Indians, and Asians slaved to build the wealth of this country. For 400 years they have fought for freedom and dignity against racist Babylon (decadent empire). Third World people have led the fight for freedom. All the colored and oppressed peoples of the world are one nation under oppression.

No Puerto Rican Is Free Until All People are Free!

4. We are revolutionary nationalists and oppose racism.

The Latin, Black, Indian and Asian people inside the U.S. are colonies fighting for liberation. We know that Washington, Wall Street and City Hall will try to make our nationalism into racism; but Puerto Ricans are of all colors and we resist racism. Millions of poor White people are rising up to demand freedom and we support them. These are the ones in the U.S. that are stepped on by the rules and the government. We each organize our people, but our fights are against the same oppression and we will defeat it together.

Power to All Oppressed People!

5. We want community control of our institutions and land.

We want control of our communities by our people and programs to guarantee that all institutions serve the needs of our people. People's control of police, health services, churches, schools, housing, transportation and welfare are needed. We want an end to attacks on our land by urban removal, highway destruction, universities and corporations.

Land Belongs To All The People!

6. We want a true education of our Creole culture and Spanish language.

We must learn our history of fighting against cultural, as well as economic genocide by the yanqui. Revolutionary culture, culture of our people, is the only true teaching.

7. We oppose capitalists and alliances with traitors.

Puerto Rican rulers, or puppets of the oppressor, do not help our people. They are paid by the system to lead our people down blind alleys, just like the thousands of poverty pimps who keep our communities peaceful for business, or the street workers who keep gangs divided and blowing each other away. We want a society where the people socialistically control their labor.

Venceremos!

8. We oppose the American Military.

We demand immediate withdrawal of U.S. Military forces and bases from Puerto Rico, Vietnam and all oppressed communities inside and outside the u.s. No Puerto Rican should serve in the U.S. army against his Brothers and Sisters, for the only true army of oppressed people is the people's army to fight all rulers.

U.S. Out Of Vietnam, Free Puerto Rico!

9. We want freedom for all political prisoners.

We want all Puerto Ricans freed because they have been tried by the racist courts of the colonizers, and not by their own people and peers. We want all freedom fighters released from jail.

Free All Political Prisoners!

10. We want equality for women. Machismo must be revolutionary...not oppressive.

Under capitalism, our women have been oppressed by both the society and our own men. The doctrine of machismo has been used by our men to take out their frustrations against their wives, sisters, mothers, and children. Our men must support their women in their fight for economic and social equality, and must recognize that our women are equals in every way within the revolutionary ranks.

Forward, Sisters, In The Struggle!

11. We fight anti-communism with international unity.

Anyone who resists injustice is called a communist by "the man" and condemned. Our people are brainwashed by television, radio, newspapers, schools, and books to oppose people in other countries fighting for their freedom. No longer will our people believe attacks and slanders, because they have learned who the real enemy is and who their real friends are. We will defend our

Brothers and Sisters around the world who fight for justice against the rich rulers of this country.

Viva Che!

12. We believe armed self-defense and armed struggle are the only means to liberation.

We are opposed to violence—the violence of hungry children, illiterate adults, diseased old people, and the violence of poverty and profit. We have asked, petitioned, gone to courts, demonstrated peacefully, and voted for politicians full of empty promises. But we still ain't free. The time has come to defend the lives of our people against repression and for revolutionary war against the businessman, politician, and police. When a government oppresses our people, we have the right to abolish it and create a new one.

Boricua Is Awake! All Pigs Beware!

13. We want a socialist society.

We want liberation, clothing, free food, education, health care, transportation, utilities, and employment for all. We want a society where the needs of our people come first, and where we give solidarity and aid to the peoples of the world, not oppression and racism.

Hasta La Victoria Siempre!

Source:

http://lists.village.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/.../Young_Lords_platform.htm

Young Lords Activity

Have the youth to read the Ten-Point Platform and Program of the Young Lords. Discuss the significance of this organization's mandate to grassroots organizing and anti-racism education. Then ask each youth to write a personal reflection piece on their initial reaction to the BPP Program and the insight gained from the discussion.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the goals and objectives of the Young Lords?
2. Do you agree with their list of demands for the Latino-American community?
3. What do the Young Lords have to say about community control?
4. To what extent was the Young Lords influenced by the Black Panther Party?

The Red Power Movement

The Red Power Movement was an anti-colonial political group in the Prairies created by revolutionary Métis activist and scholar Howard Adams in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Adams (1989), his political education movement was a result of the Black Power Movement in the U.S.:

The struggle of Aboriginal nationalism has been intensified by the influence of struggles by the Blacks in the USA...It was largely in the explosion of the social protest of the 1960s and early 1970s that politically organized Native movements challenged the state. Inspired by groups like the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement in the U.S., Aboriginal activists began to engage in their own liberation struggle (45).

Adams was greatly influenced by the Black Nationalist ideas of Malcolm X. He developed his own radical consciousness by becoming actively involved with the Black Panthers, while attending UCLA, Berkeley in the 1960s. Adams notes that the study of revolutionary Black Nationalism had a transformative quality on his cultural identity (Crean, 1996, 16). Instead of being ashamed of his Métis heritage, he soon began to feel proud of his identity and his people. Located in Saskatchewan Adams' Red Power Movement became involved in the fight for Native self-determination in education.

Hooks (1992) article, "Revolutionary 'Renegades': Native Americans, African Americans, and Black Indians," indicates that there has been positive relations between Black and Native Americans since pre-colonial history. Hall (1997) refers to these forgotten historical relations as "hidden histories"; the rediscovery of which can play an important role in anti-racist political movement's (52). Hooks claims that the denial of Black/Native unity by Eurocentric academics and historians is a divide and conquer tactic of Western hegemony:

Disturbed by political solidarity and bonds of affinity between Blacks and Native Americans, racist white people both then and now strategically work to separate the two groups. An important strategy has been their historical erasure and suppression of documents affirming the depth of these ties or their perverse rewriting of history from the colonizing standpoint... (Ibid, 182).

By resisting Western notions of ethnically divided political struggles in America, Adams involvement with the Black Power Movement was a part of a large historical tradition of solidarity between Black and Native communities. So when Adams returned to his Métis homeland in the prairies, his political education movement was formed to liberate Aboriginal Canadians through political struggle, in the same way as African-Americans struggled for freedom in organizations like the Black Panther Party (BPP), and the Student National Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

References

Crean, S. (1996). "Two Decades of Cultural Nationalism and the Arts in Canada." *Fuse* 19 (3) Spring: 12-19.

Hall, S. (1997). "Cultural Identity and Diaspora". **Identity and Difference**. London: Sage.

Hooks, B. (1992). **Black Looks: Race and Representation**. Toronto: between the lines.

Red Power Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the significance of the following quote stated by the leader of the Red Power Movement, Howard Adams:

"Colonized people usually express their political frustrations and abuses in personal terms in their early stages of decolonization. We must first release our anger and pain before we can hold objective discussions on the colonized institutions and how they must be changed (p.73)."

2. How does the above statement relate to the formation of the Red Power Movement and its role in the Aboriginal community?
3. Do you think that Aboriginal Canadians should set up independent organizations that represent the masses of their people, or should they remain dependent on the Government?
4. What organizations today are carrying on the legacy of the Red Power Movement in the Aboriginal community? (i.e. Toronto's Native Youth Movement)

The Native Learning Centre and Native-Centred Education

The Native Learning Centre (NLC) is an alternative satellite program of Jarvis Collegiate Institute. Located in the Native Child and Family Services at 469 Yonge Street, Jarvis Collegiate Institute has a long history of outreaching marginalized ethno-cultural communities.

The Native Learning Centre is a transitional education initiative determined to help Native youth improve their academic skills. The NLC was also created to increase the capacity of the Native community to meet needs of the youth who are disengaged from the public school system. In addition to the Math and English course (grade 10-OAC) offered to Native youth aged 15-20, the NLC offers cultural counseling, support services, and provides transportation. The NLC uses Ministry of Education curriculum at its core, and supplements it with Native-centred curriculum in order to provide the students with cultural reinforcement.

A glimpse at the Native Learning Centre's Mission State exemplifies their commitment to the intellectual growth and development of Native youth so they can become actively engaged in civic participation and social change efforts:

For more than 25 years, Aboriginal people have been articulating their goals for Aboriginal education. They want education to prepare them to participate fully in the economic life of their communities and in Canadian society. But this is only part of their vision. Presenters told us that education must develop children and youth as Aboriginal citizens, linguistically and culturally competent to assume the responsibilities of their nations. Youth that emerge from school must be grounded in a strong, positive Aboriginal identity. Consistent with Aboriginal traditions, education must develop the whole child, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. Current education policies fail to realize these goals (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples).

Here, we can see that one of the major objectives of the Native Learning Centre is to provide cultural reinforcement and increase the representation of Native peoples in the curriculum. In fact, the Freedom Cipher Community Development Initiative was implemented to help the NLC Coordinator, Bill Shmutt, fulfill this need. According to the NLC Coordinator, Bill Shmutt, the Freedom Cipher really improved the quality of the program by increased student participation, diversifying the cultural studies curriculum, and introducing a multicultural dynamic to the program.

Native Learning Centre Discussion Questions

1. What is the role of Native-centred education in the National Liberation Struggle of Aboriginal Canadians for self-determination?
2. Why is it that the Native community created the Native Learning Centre?
3. Do you think that there is enough Native History taught in the Public School System? If not, how can youth mobilize around this issue to ensure that more knowledge is available to Canadian youth about the history and political struggles of the Aboriginal people?

RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY: JAMAICA'S MAROONS

Resistance in Jamaica to slavery took many forms. There was resistance on the slave ship which led to the chaining of the slaves. There were also revolts on the plantation that inspired slaves to break tools, commit suicide, and run away. Also, some mothers preferred their children to die at birth instead of growing up to be slaves. The rebelliousness of the slaves depended on which part of Africa they came from. The Gold Coast slaves, called Coromantees were known as the fiercest. In fact, the Coromantees were feared the most by the slave traders because they started the most revolts. It was from the Coromantees, that the Maroon eventually emerged.

The first Maroon community was a small group of slaves left behind by Spaniards when the English captured Jamaica in 1655. Maroons formed free communities that provided a home to runaway slaves. Major slave uprisings in 1673 and 1685 on plantations in St. Ann and St. Catherine, increased the numbers of free slaves living in Maroon communities up in the hills.

In order for the Maroons to survive they organized a way of life similar to African communalism. This mainly consisted of dividing the tasks evenly between those who hunted, fished, and gathered fruits. Maroons also had scouts that spied on the plantation owners to learn of the military strategies of the white peoples' army. Whenever the Maroons learned of an upcoming attack, they blew the Abeng horn to forewarn the other villages. The Abeng horn, made from a cow's horn was the sound of warning, war, and battle amongst the heroic Africans who fought against European colonialism and imperialism in 18th century Jamaica.

The Maroons fought against plantation owners by using the method of guerrilla warfare. For the Maroons, Guerrilla Warfare involved attacking the plantations at night, when they were least expected. The Maroons won many battles not only because of their strength, but because they carried out detailed studies of the land and climate. This helped them to plan their battles wisely.

The major Maroon War in Jamaica, was that fought from 1729-1739. This war was fought under the leadership of Cudjo, the son of an Ashanti. Refusing to give in to slavery, Cudjo led that decade-long battle by coordinating his efforts with other Maroon communities spread out all over the island. These fighters were so successful, that the British Army begged them to sign a peace treaty. The following plea from the Whites to the British Crown for more help reveals the extent to which the Maroons conquered them. They said:

"We do...apply to your majesty to implore your most gracious assistance in our present dangerous and distressed condition – the danger we are in proceeds from our slaves in rebellion against us...our attempts against them having been in vain, only convinced us of our

weakness; so great, that instead of having been able to reduce them, we are not in a condition to defend ourselves. The terror of them spread itself everywhere...The evil is daily increasing, and their success has had such influence on our slaves, that they are continually deserting to them in great numbers; and the insolent behaviour of others gives us but too much cause to fear a general defection; which without your majesty's aid and assistance must render us prey to them."

After the British spent 100,000 pounds and the soldiers were running for their lives, Britain signed a peace treaty with Cudjo in 1739. This treaty guaranteed the Maroons a certain amount of independence, a policy unheard for blacks in a time when they were expected to be nothing but free labour, all over the world. The Maroon Treaty of 1739 had the following four terms:

1. That the Maroons should govern themselves in their own communities in five main settlements.
2. That the British stop all efforts to enslave the Maroons.
3. The right to hunt and fish untested.
4. The continued ownership and occupation of Maroon lands.

It is important to remember the Maroons and celebrate their resistance to colonization and imperialism in Jamaica. The Maroons recognized that the only way they could be free was through the violent overthrow of slavery. The legacy of the Maroons lived on in Jamaica through the 20th century with the movements of Marcus Garvey and Rastafari.

Source: Campbell, H. (1987). **Rasta and Resistance: From Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney**. New Jersey: Africa World Press, pp. 19-21.

Maroons Group work activity:

In small groups of 3-4 and discuss the following questions. In your groups, think about the significance of the Maroons as an anti-slavery movement, and also the relevance of the Maroons to the study of African History today.

Discussion Questions:

1. How were the first Maroons born in Jamaica?
2. How was the Maroons' way of life similar to the Rastafari in Jamaica today?
3. Why did the Maroons engage in open combat with Britain?
4. What gains were made by the Maroon Treaty of 1739?
5. How are the Maroons similar to the traditions of Marcus Garvey and Rastafari?
How are they different?
6. Do you think the Maroons are cultural heroes of Jamaica or symbols of hate?

WHICH ROAD TO FREEDOM?

The question that the current generation of Black youth must struggle with is this: how are we going to free our community from the historical legacy of colonialism which has kept us in physical and mental bondage for hundreds of years. Today, we continue to be oppressed under the same capitalist system that brought us from our Motherland, Africa, to work as free labour in the Colonies which are the Caribbean, Latin America and North America.

There is one fundamental difference in the slavery of the past and the slavery of the present and that is the relations of production. In the past, the free labour which slavery provided, played the most important part in the development of the world capitalist system, now called Globalization. Slavery provided the rising European Merchant Class (Bourgeoisie) with the necessary capital (super-profits) to initiate the industrial revolution in the Metropolitan Cities of Europe and America, and maintain economic relations of dependency in the Colonies which remains until the present. Today, our condition is wage slavery and we are working for minimum wages in an advanced capitalist system, which may appear to be different from its humble beginnings (i.e. Chattel Slavery) but is ultimately the same.

So what is to be done with today's generation of Black people? Well, first we must study our history and decide which way we are going to head: Reform or Revolution? We could travel the road to reform and seek crumbs from the Master's table in the form of small and ineffective Government handouts. Or, we can travel the dark and bloody path to revolution which will ultimately take the Master's house, destroy it from the bottom up, and build another house that is suitable for the PEOPLE. The question that continues to burn in the minds of Black people is just that: Reform or Revolution? This debate has been raging in the Black community, ever since the beginning of slavery with the establishment of the first Maroon communities in the Americas. Like those brave ancestors decided to be the makers of their own history, we choose revolution because all else has failed and we have not really made many gains in the capitalist system for the past 500 years anyway. We will make even fewer gains in the next 500 years if we do not begin to consider the question of revolution more seriously; by this we mean a complete break with this system that starves the poor and feeds the rich.

Workshop Activity:

Get the youth to write a personal reflection about this issue and challenge them to develop their own position, whether or not they agree or disagree. In their response, get them to provide points for or against this controversial argument.

BLACK LABOR IN JAMAICA: THE REBELLION OF 1938

In 1938, there was a revolt of the poor in Jamaica which demonstrated the revolutionary potential of the Rastafari movement. Although the Rastas did not play a leading role in the rebellion, the ideas of black consciousness which they spread amongst the masses provided workers with the confidence necessary to go up against the British State for better working conditions.

In St. Thomas, there was a rebellion where 1,400 workers armed with machetes and sticks went on strike for better pay on January 5th. Apart from demanding higher wages, they stopped wagons from coming in or leaving the estate and shut down the parish. In support of the planters, the Colonial State brought police reinforcements from Kingston to stop the strike. By the end of the day, 34 strikers were injured and 60 were arrested.

The St. Thomas Rebellion inspired smaller rebellions throughout Jamaica. In every parish workers and peasants blocked roads, cut telephone wires, destroyed bridges, burnt sugar cane fields, and fought police with sticks and stones. During the Depression of the 1930's the Garveyites and Rastas taught the masses that they were Africans who were worth more than the wage slavery they were forced into to survive. As a result, the race and class consciousness instilled in Jamaican workers by the Garveyites and Rastas had risen to the point where they demanded a living wage for their labour.

Groupwork Activity:

In small groups of 3-4 and discuss the following questions. In your groups think about the significance of the 1938 Rebellion to the study of Black History today.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Rastafarian culture play a leading role in the Rebellion of 1938?
2. Why were the masses rebelling in Jamaica?
3. How many strikers were injured and arrested for participating in the strike?
4. What is the meaning of 'race' and 'class' consciousness?

Source: Campbell, H. (1987). **Rasta and Resistance: From Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney**. New Jersey: Africa World Press, pp. 81-83.

YOUTH SPEAK ON POLICE AND RACIAL PROFILING

Policing (Perspective of a Black Youth on the Question of the Police)

Summer time is a time for relating and getting comfortable.

But summer time is when a lot of things go on. It's when more police are on the road. Some doing their job most overdo their job. It's when more black people are harassed by police in Scarborough and Toronto.

Winter it's almost the same thing. It's just cold when they hold you up and get ideas like stripping you bare naked talking about their looking for drugs.

More time in de summer, people such as myself worry about them crooked cop who jus wants to take your earned money or lock you up for trafficking, but smokes half of the product, or especially trying to serve shells and say their protecting themselves.

Sometime they'll draw you down saying you fit a description, but when they grab the wrong person it seems like they're very stereotyping.

I wanna know is it my colour or is it the area I live in that makes them think every person they hold for whatever cause makes them a professional crook like we took oath to have the life we live today.

DRE-Z, June 2003

Police/Youth Discussion Questions

1. What does this youth have to say about police/youth relations in Toronto?
2. Why is this youth so upset at the police?
3. Do the police serve the interests of Black youth?
4. What possible strategies do you think Black youth in the community can develop to address the police question?

ANTI-RACISM EDUCATION WORKSHOP CHART

Group Activity: Defining Racism and Anti-Racism Education

As a group, first elaborate on all of the following spheres of racism and anti-racism education and add other examples that are not listed below. When discussing the different types of racism and anti-racist action, be sure to use personal examples and experiences to make the debate more grounded in reality.

1) What is Racism?

Individual

Stereotypes
Negative comments
Privilege/Lack of Privilege

Family

Parent/child interaction
Race inferiority/superiority socialization
Reactions to inter-racial dating

Community

Group Isolation/
Marginalization
Segregation
Group discrimination

State/Government

Employment/underemployment
Police
Job Discrimination

2) What is Anti-Racism?

Individual

Marcus Garvey
Martin Luther King Jr.
Angela Davis
Malcolm X
Bell hooks

Organizations

Black Action Defense Committee (BADC)

Movements

United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA)
Black Panther Party
Rastafari

LESSONS FROM ABORIGINAL YOUTH IN TORONTO

On Native Drumming

When a drum group picks a name for the group they usually pick something that has some sort of significance. Like "Grassy Narrows", may they live near some narrows or maybe a cemetery is there. "Chi-Nodin" means "Big Wind", when the group gets together they are very loud and it carries really far outdoors. I know this because I drummed with them for a while.

Now the thing about the songs is they start off high pitch to sing and honour the sky spirits (birds, Sun, Moon, clouds, etc.). When it gets middle pitch it honors the people, animals, trees, etc.; and when it goes to the low pitch at the end it honors mother earth (water, food, etc...)

Michael
(Native Learning Centre)

Group work Activity:

In a group discuss the relevance of drumming to reclaiming their cultural identity and decolonizing the mind.

Discussion Questions:

1. How is Aboriginal culture embedded in traditional drumming?
2. Why is Native Drumming important to Aboriginal youth in maintaining their cultural tradition?
3. What is the relevance of drumming to the struggle for Aboriginal Self-Determination?

Aboriginal Youth Reflect on the State of Hip Hop

The foolish talk and the wise listen. There's too much talk or talking going on in the hip hop industry today. The constant repetitive mainstream is damned with envious followers coming out with one hit wonders. Record labels sign anyone who talks like they've been there and done it, while the true soldiers stay true to the underground. The O.G.'s are sitting back and listening to these new young cats and thinking "Punks gonna get served" soon enough. The true spirit or soul of hip hop has been neglected and set aside. Once a long time ago, I remember when it was a message I was listening to. A message it took a person a whole life to get and compile with knowledge, wisdom and true skill. Now I just hear all this talk about how much ice one fool has to waste. As soon as half these new young kids get up the "ladder of success" they don't bother looking back down from which they came. The cracks of society are filling rapidly with the dead bodies of brothers and sisters, from which we turn our backs on. Sacrifice and survival is hip hop now. You get burned if you want to reach out. Hip hop's new message is shine, kill and fuck. I hear it, but never listen. And talking, talking will get you nowhere. It's the actions that matter most of all.

Steve

Native Learning Centre

Fist of all I'm a big hip hop fan. I've been listening to hip hop for years now. Personally I prefer to hear female artists. Female artists such as Rah Digga, Da-Brat, Eve, "Lil" Kim, etc., show females everywhere that females can really throw down. If they put their minds to it. The way I'm looking at shit today thou is that female artists feel that they have to dress a certain way to get the respect they deserve from the males out there. For example, Da Brat when she first stepped on the scene she was all in the baggy jeans, Tims and baggy sweaters on that Tom boy tip. This time around you find her wearing tight leather suites and shit like that. Differently, I like her better when she was back then. Next are "Lil" Kim and Foxy Brown. Both have some tight lyrics but feel they have to dress a certain way to get respect. I don't believe that what you wear makes you a better person, as long as you can throw down shit! You got respect in my books. Well not to say that they get no luv.. They can dress as they please, but I don't feel it's necessary.

Jane

Native Learning Centre

Groupwork Activity:

In a group discuss the significance of hip hop culture to Aboriginal youth and how this urban street-involved culture is closely linked the Aboriginal Struggle for Self-Determination. To what extent are the politics of hip hop inter-linked with the politics of liberation in today's generation of Aboriginal youth?

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS FROM ABORIGINAL YOUTH ON COLONIALISM

Some stories I've heard about the past during residential school years have really changed the way I look at certain people.

All through those years we've been stripped of our dignity and our way of life. Now that capitalism has set in, it has our people struggling and fighting for a piece of paper called "money".

I was taught at a Mohawk teaching once, in a conference in Ottawa, that there are 5 evil objects that have destroyed our people:

1. The Holy Bible
2. Money
3. Playing Cards
4. Education System

I also see greed and corruption in our own communities caused by our own people who have made it somewhere in their lives but have grown up in European society and have had greed and corruption (materialism) rub off on them.

Shane
(Native Learning Centre)

There is no way that colonialism has not had an effect on us and still doesn't have an effect on us today. Everything is the way it is today is because of colonialism. We are fixated on looks, style, money, and most materialistic things. Native people are forced to live on reserves in order to have their own land, and most of our youth don't speak their native language because of things like residential schools. Because the Europeans thought we had zero class structure and no civilization of our own, they made it their right to change our culture, language and lifestyle. Europeans also figured that they would brainwash the Native youth so that all of our people for years to come, would forget all about our ways and our culture and live normal lives. Colonialism has had nothing but a negative impact on Native people.

Shelly
(Native Learning Centre)

I feel strongly that colonialism is affecting Aboriginal people of today as it did when it first happened way back when. As people we feel confused, lost, frustrated and angry. I, like many other Natives feel confused and have a great sense of loss because I cannot speak my language nor do I know of Native traditions.

Mark
(Native Learning Centre)

Groupwork Activity:

In a group discuss what these commentaries have to say about the historical legacy of colonialism in Canada. What do they tell us about the state of the Aboriginal community today?

1. Based on these comments, do you think that colonialism still exists in Canada? Why or Why not?
2. Why are Aboriginal youth so critical of Colonization in Canada?
3. What are some of the ways that colonialism contributed to the underdevelopment of Aboriginal Canada?

HIP HOP FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: NATIVE YOUTH ON VIOLENCE

Thru my Eyes

Violence ain't no fun
Carrying gunz, carrying knives
Husbands beating wives
People taking lives
For some! It's everyday life.
Killings and warfare
Life seems unfair
Over seas they got bombs flying
Through the air
All this commotion
Violence it's grown way out of proportion
Seems like kindness just got an abortion
Violence it's grown way out of proportion
Seems like kindness just got an abortion
Violence can be seen through the eyes
All the cold stares,
Harsh looks
Instead of resorting to violence
We should be resorting to books
Get an education
Learn about loving relations
Redz, blacks, whites and Asians
All my people
Stand up, speak out
The silence or violence has to end
Brothers and sisters
With one strong loud voice
We will make the right choice

Cheryl
Native Learning Centre

Native Youth Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think this is an example of how Hip Hop can be used to speak about relevant social justice issues? i.e. violence against Women.
2. What does this rap lyric reveal about violence in the Aboriginal community?
3. What does this Rap Lyric say about war and peace? Would you say that this is an anti-war piece?
4. Was this lyric written from an Aboriginal perspective?

BLACK PANTHER PARTY THEORY AND PRACTICE

Introduction

In 1966, the Black Panther Party (BPP) was born in Oakland, California, by Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton, two university intellectuals of both middle-class and working class origin. The BPP began as a critical reaction to police brutality in the Black ghettos and the failure of white labour activists and white liberals to challenge the institutional racism in the dominant society. The Panthers were the first Black radical organization in the U.S. to address the racial contradiction between Black and White labour in American society. They gained immediate popularity in the Black community for challenging racist oppression and white privilege in the midst of Black revolt (riots) that occurred in the late 1960's.

In order to attract people to the movement, Seale and Newton began by speaking to people on street corners of Oakland. They never spoke above the people with intellectual jargon, but instead used the language of the street. In the beginning, Newton and Seale would stand atop the roof of cars, explaining the Party's Ten Point Program to those who would listen (Anthony, 1990, 29). The Panthers had widespread appeal because they were the first political organization to advocate Black Power, violence and self-defense in the community by any means necessary. The BPP's grassroots organizing strategies followed in the tradition of Malcolm X, and their goal was to fulfil his legacy.

A major problem affecting Blacks living in the ghetto during the 60's was police brutality. The racist oppression of the police force was the catalyst that inspired Newton and Seale to form the Party. The Panthers started out by patrolling the streets of Oakland at night with loaded guns, cameras, law books, and tape recorders, in order to monitor the police in the Black community. In fact, Newton gained a reputation on the streets for his ability to face down officers by carrying a loaded gun and his familiarity with the law (Abron, 1998, 180). In those days, police patrols were a major source of recruitment for the party.

Historical Context

From the 1950's to the 1960's, Oakland, the home of the BPP, was transitioning from an industrial city, to a post-industrial one. Up until this period, Oakland was the industrial core and manufacturing centre of the San Francisco Bay Area. However, the increasing urbanization of African-Americans and the exodus of Whites from the city to the suburbs resulted in many problems for the Black community (Smith, 1999, 25).

In the '50s the industrial sector was in a period of decline, reflecting post-industrial national trends. African-Americans experienced a decrease in employment opportunities as manufacturing jobs went overseas or to the suburban white areas.

These jobs ended up being replaced by white-collar positions that required a high level of skill and education that the community did not possess. This resulted in the eventual loss of 3200 jobs in the city from 1958 to 1963 (Ibid, 26).

By the mid-60's, the Federal Government classified Oakland as a depressed area. Approximately 39.6 percent of Whites and 66.1 percent of non-Whites lived in poverty. The life chances of Blacks were further reduced by institutional racism, which created systemic barriers to finding adequate housing and public services in the Black community. Panther Reginald Major described Oakland during this time, as, "a slum characterized by ramshackle buildings, poor city services, inadequate transportation, a too high concentrate of unemployed persons and an almost total disregard for the needs of the residents by official agencies of government (qtd.)in, Ibid, 26)".

In those days, public and private economic institutions used the tax payers' dollars to fund business interests rather than anti-poverty programs. Despite the housing shortages, the government failed to build new public housing. In fact, both property owners and government agencies conspired to prevent private and public low-income housing from being built (Ibid, 27). Also, schools were being understaffed and under financed in this impoverished working class community because the capitalist class did not see any need to improve the quality of schools in the ghetto. In reality, the Black Power movement was a reaction to these socio-economic conditions that were worsening with time. Through necessity, concerned citizens came together and formed radical organizations in order to alter these desperate living conditions in Oakland.

There were many international factors that contributed to the radicalization of African-American organizations, such as the Black Panthers, in the Black Power era of the 60s. First of all, many African nations gained their independence from imperialist Europe. Secondly, Smith (1999) argues the war in Vietnam mobilized people world wide against the capitalist system and imperialism: "Rather than see the war as one waged against communist aggression (USSR and China), many saw the war as a war of imperialism to prevent the Vietnamese from gaining their independence" (22). Thirdly, systems of communication and transportation improved dramatically so that people could communicate between radical organizations on an international level (Ibid, 24). And fourthly, the '60's was a time of radical social change in which large numbers of people in America began to question the legitimacy of the dominant political, economic and social systems that were in existence:

The surge of national liberation movements and the war in Vietnam provided the spark for a wider debate over what direction the world and nation should move. People spoke openly about the contradictions and inequities of the past; they wanted change and new institutions which would better serve their needs and would be more just and equitable (Ibid, 23).

These factors caused the Panthers to become the catalyst that would spark social change in America.

On the Relation of Theory to Practice

The writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Mao, were required readings for Party members and the leadership in particular (Smith, 1999, 40). The Panthers used a class analysis in order to understand racist oppression and Third World colonization. They were the first group to transform the Black Power ideology into socialist Marxist-Leninist ideology (Clemons & Jones, 2001, 29).

Guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism, The BPP advanced anti-racist action along the path of revolutionary struggle. The Panthers understood that the purpose of a revolutionary organization was to make revolution. Thus, instead of merely sitting around discussing radical politics, they took it to the streets. This often meant defending the Black community from the wrath of violent policemen, and merchant capitalists (Newton, 1972, 45).

The Panthers organized the impoverished Black masses who were a part of the lumpen proletariat (underclass). Although Marx did not see any viable role for this class in the working-class revolutionary struggle, the Panther leadership did see the potential to build a revolutionary movement from the bottom of the social ladder. In the following statement Panther founder, Bobby Seale, reveals that Newton's motivation to organize the lumpen street-involved Blacks was based on his study of anti-colonial theorist Fanon:

Huey understood the meaning of what Fanon was saying about organizing the lumpen proletariat first, because Fanon explicitly pointed out that if you didn't organize the lumpen proletariat and give a base for organizing the brother who's pimping, the brother who's hustling, the unemployed, the downtrodden, the brother who's robbing banks, who's not politically conscious—that's what lumpen proletariat means—that if you didn't relate to these cats, the power structure would organize these cats against you (qtd. in Clemons & Jones, 29).

Despite their Marxist influence the Panthers organized their movement around the primary social contradiction of American society, that being racial stratification.

In order to gain theoretical knowledge of the revolutionary process and advance the Black struggle in America, the Panther leadership studied Marx's dialectical materialism. Then, they applied this method of critical analysis to the problems of race and class in order to reinforce it with practice. Dialectical Materialism is the historical study of social change, resulting from class struggle. The class struggle is the social conflict produced by the economic forces of production in capitalist society. According to Marx, the class struggle is a dynamic movement

characterised by the antagonistic relationship between the working (proletariat) and ruling (Bourgeois) class, who are opposing social forces united in struggle.

The Panthers studied dialectical materialism in order to understand the class contradictions between the social forces in America, and how these conflicts could be resolved through political struggle. Newton claimed that all social phenomena was informed by dialectics, even the internal differences of Party members. He once affirmed that, “nothing in nature stands outside of dialectics, even the Black Panther Party” (Ibid, 44). Here he was referring to the contradiction that had evolved in the leadership, between his revolutionary nationalist orientation and the cultural nationalism of Stokely Carmichael, or the ultra-leftist tendencies of Elridge Cleaver. Marxism appealed to the leadership because they recognized that on the international scene, it was the only ideology that prepared “Third World” colonized nations to successfully engage in national liberation struggle.

The Panthers Pedagogy for the Oppressed

The BPP’s progressive model of education was also informed by the student/teacher dialectic of education. The Panthers were pioneers of anti-racism education, instilling critical consciousness in the Black community by engaging its members in anti-racism action. The BPP led by example, by teaching anti-racism education by practising anti-racism action. Newton stated the following about the Panthers’ radical pedagogy:

We recognized that no party or organization can make the revolution, only the people can. All we could do was act as a guide to the people because revolution is a process that moves in a dialectical manner...We always emphasized a concrete analysis of conditions, and then an appropriate response to these conditions as a way of mobilizing the people and leading them to higher levels of consciousness (Ibid, 49).

It can be noted here how the Panther’s community mobilization strategy was based on a radical model of anti-racism education.

The Black Panther Newspaper

In order to spread their views and ideas throughout the Black community, the Party published a newspaper paper called: *The Black Panther*. The first issue was published on April 25, 1967 as a monthly but by January 1968 it had become a weekly publication (Abron, 1998, 181). The Black Panther received financial support from the radical White activist, Beverly Axelrod, and her group of communists who supported the cause (Anthony, 31). The Newspaper was originally written and distributed by the likes of Cleaver, Newton, Anthony, Seale and later, Elaine Brown

(Ibid, 32). By 1970, the weekly circulation of the Black Panther was over 125, 000 copies. It sold for 25 cents and served as a major source of revenue for the party.

The Panther contained news articles from all over the world to teach people about the anti-colonial struggles of oppressed people in the developing world (Smith, 1999, 5). Their international news was critical because the mainstream press would not cover the liberation struggles of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, from a radical perspective.

The Panther Model of Anti-Racism Action

The BPP was a revolutionary Black Nationalist organization that functioned as a Vanguard Party that engaged African-Americans in community action for basic change. The BPP consisted of the following elements. One, there was a small cadre who dedicated their lives to the growth and development of the movement. These soldiers worked full-time to advance the mandate of the organization (see 10-Point Program). Two, there was an organizational structure through which the cadre functioned. Chapters were set up all across the U.S., which organized most party activity. Three, there were a set of revolutionary goals the party strove towards, that were based on the basic needs of the community such as safety, food, and clothing (Newton, Intro.).

Anti-Poverty Action: Survival Programs

The Panthers mobilized the Black community around grassroots community-based initiatives that focused on anti-poverty. Abron (1998) states that the Party's survival programs were all about helping poor people in their day-to-day struggle for survival in a capitalist system built on a racist foundation:

Panthers established a network of community service projects designed to improve the life chances of African-American people. Institutional racism relegated a disproportionate number of African-Americans to deplorable housing, poor health-care services, an unresponsive criminal justice system, inadequate diets and substandard education. The Party's survival programs aimed to help Black people overcome the devastating effects of racism and capitalism (178).

The Peoples survival programs were the driving force of this anti-capitalist revolutionary movement.

One of the greatest accomplishments of the BPP was a community-based "Breakfast for Children" Program for Black children in America's low-income communities. The breakfast programs were conducted out of community churches in the 'hood.' Basically, Panthers and parents served eggs, grits, toast and bacon to

children before they went to school every weekday morning (Ibid, 182). The BPP developed this initiative because they were concerned with the fact that Black children were unable to learn on an empty stomach at school every morning. They developed the initiative through donations from concerned citizens who lived near the schools, and a few donations they received by pressuring greedy merchants who owned local grocery stores (Foner, 168). Former Panther leader, Elaine Brown (1992) said that not only Black, but many Latino, White and Asian children also benefited from the program (p.16). Since the school system would not take responsibility for the children's health, the Panthers had to step in with this socialist People's Program (Ibid, Foner, 169).

The breakfast program was a reaction to the malnutrition experienced by impoverished African-American in low-income communities. As stated by Cleaver during exile in 1969, the breakfast program had political implications that could mobilize the community against the State:

Breakfast for Children pulls the people out of the system and organizes them into an alternative. Black children who go to school hungry each morning have been organized into their poverty, and the Panther program liberates them, frees them from that aspect of their poverty. this is liberation in practice...if we can understand Breakfast for Children, can we not also understand Lunch for Children, and Dinner for Children, and Clothing for Children, and Education for Children, and Medical Care for Children? And if we can understand that, why can't we understand not only a People's Park, but People's Housing, and People's Transportation, and People's Industry and People's Banks? Why can't we understand a People's Government? (Foner, 167).

This program was effective in developing the political consciousness of the community.

Another survival program that was successful was the free health clinics that Panthers opened all across the country. The clinics offered sickle cell testing, first aid care, physical examinations, prenatal care, testing for lead poisoning, and high blood pressure. These public health programs served a large number of people in a relatively short period of time. For example the Winters People's Free Medical Care Centre, which opened in Chicago in January 1970, served over 2000 people in its first two months of operation (Abron, 1998, 185). The medical teams from this clinic went door-to-door helping people with their health problems. The staff included obstetricians, gynecologists, pediatricians, and general practitioners. In regards to sickle-cell anemia, Panther Chief of Staff, David Hilliard, recalls that the Party "...established nine free clinics, publicizing the problem so successfully that president Nixon mentioned sickle-cell in that year's health message to Congress" (qtd.) In Ibid, 185).

Education for Change: Liberation Schools

On June 25, 1969, the Panthers opened their first popular education program for youth in Berkeley, California. The purpose of the school was to educate Black youth about their role in capitalist society, and how it might be changed for the better. The BPP taught anti-racism education with a particular emphasis on class struggle and the development of working-class consciousness. According to the July 5, 1969 issue of the Black Panther, "The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the youth, to guide them in their search for revolutionary truths and principles" (qtd. in *Ibid*, 170). The class lessons included presentations on party activity, Black history, and current events. The school was a great tool for developing the revolutionary consciousness of Panther children.

The Liberation School replaced the Breakfast for School Children program in the Summer of '69. The program consisted of group study, Monday-Wednesday; a film viewing on Thursdays, and community field trips on Fridays. Brunch was provided every day to ensure that the Liberation School did not contradict the breakfast program (*Ibid*).

In January 1971, the Oakland chapter of the Party introduced the Intercommunal Youth Institute that was attended by 28 children ages 2-11. Students were placed in levels instead of grades, based on ability rather than age. This system was designed to accommodate those who had problems with literacy. Unfortunately, the attendance was minimal because government officials reduced public support of the school by encouraging parents not to send their children there (Abron, 1998, 186).

The Problem of Gender

In the mid-60's the Black Liberation Struggle was often perceived to be the regaining of Black man's manhood. In the beginning, the BPP was an all-male organization concerned with recruiting and training Black men to engage in the "self-defense" of the community; hence the original name: Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. The early speeches and propaganda contained sexist language that encouraged Black men to be the saviours and protectors of women and children. Also, the Party's male-dominated Para-military structure, "suggested a particular definition of Black masculinity that assumed men had the skill, inclination, and obligation to be warriors while conversely women (and children) did not" (*Ibid*, 278).

Former Black Panther and activist Angela Davis claims that the sexual politics of the Black Panther Party remained to be unresolved, internal contradiction throughout the course of the movement. Although the Panther newspaper advocated women's rights, males had a tendency to treat female Panthers as "objects of sexual desire" (qtd. in James, 1998, 7). In her autobiography, *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story*, Party leader Elaine Brown (1992) recalled witnessing a young woman in the party being exploited by members of the Central Committee. She had the

following recollection of Bobby Seale introducing her to a fifteen year-old recruit when she visited the Central Committee in northern California:

'This here is Sister Marsha,' Bobby said. "I want you to meet her. Although she's a young Sister, she's got a full-grown dedication to this party...Marsha, tell the Sister here what a Brother has to do to get some from you," Bobby commanded...

She stood at attention. "First of all, a Brother's got to be righteous. He's got to be a Panther. He's got to be able to recite the ten-point platform and program, and be ready to off the pig and die for the People...Can't no motherfucker get no pussy from me unless he can get down with the party," she added without prompting...

'And what's a Sister got to do?' Bobby pushed.

'A Sister has to learn to shoot as well as to cook, and be ready to back up the Brothers. A Sister's got to know the ten-point platform and program by heart.'

'And what else?' Bobby urged.

'A Sister has to give up the pussy when the Brother is on his job and hold it back when he's not. 'Cause Sisters got pussy power.'

'Ooh-wee!' the Brothers laughed (189).

This is an example of the male leadership treating sex and female members as though their bodies are "commodities to be exchanged in service to the revolution" (281). Brown was also an unfortunate victim of verbal and physical abuse while a member of the party. For example, she received countless death threats from the exiled Elridge Cleaver while visiting him in Algiers, because she would not obey his orders. She recalled him saying, "If you don't want to work with me, it's simple. I'll bury your ass. In Algiers...I got AK-47's and twenty niggers, and I will put your ass in the fucking ground!" (Ibid, 224 -225). On another occasion, she was disciplined by receiving ten lashes from a whip by Panther member John Seale, on orders from Panther Leader Bobby Seale for her inability to edit the Panther newspaper on time (Abron, 275).

In Elridge Cleaver's 1968 presidential campaign, he promoted the idea of "pussy power". This involved encouraging Black Women to control and limit their sexual activity to those men who identified themselves as revolutionaries: "Until he ready to pick up a gun and be a man, don't give him no sugar. Politics comes from the lips of a pussy." (Ibid, 282).

It is important to note that the BPP's internal struggles over gender politics caused the Party leadership to eventually advocate a feminist position in theory, even if it was not followed through with practice. For example, the following statement from Cleaver in 1969, a year after his sexist political campaign, exemplifies this fact:

...our women are suffering strongly and enthusiastically as we are participating in the struggle...we must recognize that a woman can be just as revolutionary as a man and that she has equal stature...That we have to

recognize...revolutionary standards of principles demand that we go to great lengths to see to it that disciplinary action is taken on all levels against those who manifest male chauvinist behaviour" (qtd. in 282).

Also, the following recollection from a Panther woman in 1970 reveals how the critical study of the role of women in revolutionary struggles (i.e. Vietnamese women) developed a feminist consciousness in the party membership:

I can see since the time I joined the Party that the Party has undergone radical change in the direction of women leadership and emancipation of women...because we have come to realize that male chauvinism and all its manifestations are bourgeois and that's one of the things we're fighting against. We realize that in a proletarian revolution, the emancipation of women is primary (qtd. in 284).

The view that sexist practices characterized the Party's male membership does not reflect the opinion of all Panther women. Panther leader Kathleen Cleaver claims the Panther experience was liberating for Black female activists because they had the autonomy to help build the movement. Cleaver (2001) said her involvement in the party was not marginal but critical; she wrote leaflets, designed posters, held press conferences, attended court hearings, appeared on television, spoke at rallies and ran for political office in order to organize the community around the Panther program (124). Evidently, the Panthers did provide many opportunities for Black women to advance the interests of the party.

Conclusion:

The Panthers inspired movements all over the world that were created in their likeness. The following table lists the different panther movements that were inspired by the original group:

Table 1 Global Emulators of the Black Panther Party

Organization	Country	Year Founded
Black Panther Movement	England	1968
Black Beret Cadre	Bermuda	1969
White Panther Party	England	1970
Black Panther Party of Israel	Israel	1971
Black Panther Party of Australia	Australia	1972
Dalit Panthers	India	1987

(Clemons & Jones, 23)

This is a sign that the spirit of that movement will continue on far into the future. As Allen (1968) said in his critical appraisal of the movement: "The Panthers may well be wiped out, but the history of struggles in other countries suggests that after a certain point in a liberation struggle develops a continuity which is independent of individuals or organizations" (18).

Literacy Assignment:

Get each youth to write a summary of any particular heading which they can present to the group when all are done with their topic.

Black Youth and the Drug Trade

This workshop will address the problem of Black Youth caught up in the local drug trade, and how this limits one's ability to work or attend school. It will involve looking at the movie, *Paid in Full*, and then discussing the other options which exist, such as work or school. We will also discuss how this has contributed to the over-representation of Black youth in prisons.

Discussion Questions:

Do you think youth are caught up in the drug trade for economic survival, or greed and materialism (i.e. to commodity consumption)?

Why does Hip Hop media seem to glorify drug dealing, and portray that as the only option for Black youth in our society?

To what extent are drugs responsible for the current upsurge in Black-on-Black across the city?

Besides drug dealing, are there any other ways that youth can become empowered and take charge of their local communities to create change?

WALTER RODNEY'S FOUNDINGS WITH BROTHERS (JAMAICAN HISTORY)

The Revolutionary Scholar and Activist, Walter Rodney, from Guyana went to Jamaica in the early '60's. In Jamaica, Rodney taught history at the university, but he also went to the streets and reasoned with the Rastas. For Rodney, the Rastafari movement represented the greatest revolutionary force in the Caribbean because of their ongoing efforts to educate and uplift black minds. In these Groundings with his brothers, Rodney taught the Rastas his knowledge of African History in order to build up the consciousness of the working poor in Jamaica.

Although Rodney supported the Rasta movement and always pointed out the positive aspects of the movement, he also pointed out weaknesses in their philosophy. For example, the idea that Selassie is God. Rodney made it a point to educate the Rastas about some of the lies that they believed to be true about Ethiopian culture and history. Rodney taught the Rastas about the importance of Ethiopia to African History, without the mysticism of Haile Selassie. At the same time, although he revealed that Selassie was not divine, he did show the positive contributions that Selassie made to the African liberation struggle. For example, Rodney said that it was Selassie who recognized the importance of adopting the European invention of aircraft and bought aeroplanes for his nation –not because he wanted to be European, but to preserve Ethiopian culture by providing it with something new.

Rodney not only taught the Rastas, but he learned a lot about African history from their culture. He understood the wisdom of the Rastas was a part of the Tradition of Oral History amongst the African peoples of the Caribbean.

Rodney built with the Rastas because he knew they understood the importance of race consciousness in the Black Liberation Struggle. He said:

Colour had become important because the white man found it convenient to use racialism to exploit the black peoples of the world. As Africans, we will use the question of race to unify ourselves, and to escape from the oppression of white men and their black lackeys. So long as there are people who deny our humanity as blacks then for so long must we proclaim our humanity as blacks."

In reference to the Rasta movement, he also stated that:

In our epoch the Rastafari have represented the leading force of this expression of black consciousness.

Groupwork Activity:

In small groups of 3-4 and discuss the following questions. In your groups, think about the significance of Walter Rodney to the Rastafari movement today.

1. What types of lessons from African History did Walter Rodney teach the Rastas in Jamaica?
2. What were Rodney's thoughts on the role of African History in the struggle of the Jamaican people for liberation?
3. Why did Rodney go to live and teach amongst the Rastas in Jamaica?

Source: Campbell, H. (1987). **Rasta and Resistance: From Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney**. New Jersey: Africa World Press, pp. 128-130.

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