

The Psychology of the "N-Word"

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I remember growing up with the notion that the "n-word" was a part of me, like my hair, nails, nose, internal organs, and so forth. I recall one day in the early 80s when my Pops, Big Floyd, nearly had a heart attack after overhearing me call my eldest brother, Wook, a nigger during a heated exchange. Pops sat me down and asked me, did I know the origin of that word and what it stood for? I told him something to the effect that it was the national nickname for Black people. Pops shook his head in disbelief and lectured me for an hour about the meaning of that word - its painful, racist history / origin. He eloquently explained why I should eliminate it from my vocabulary, pointing out that the word was an insult to our ancestors and the integrity of Afrikan people - not only in Amerika, but the world over.

At the time of the lecture, I was only a youngster of 7 or 8 years, and even though I clearly heard what Pops said, and knew he meant well, at that age I just wasn't receiving enough to grasp everything he said in its full meaning. And because of this lack of understanding, I continued to use the "n-word" to describe myself and the residents of my beloved community. As I grew, and clashed with the injustice system, hearing white racists who I was doing time with articulate the word nigger not only enraged me, but it made me pay more attention. My rage was a hypocritical rage, and I did not recognize it as such until I became conscious and aware of myself and my being.

Throughout the course of jailing, I have studied the word "nigger" extensively and found that slave holders denominated Afrikan people as such to suggest that they were scum, worse than pigs being slaughtered, worse than the outhouses they relieved themselves in. The slave holders called us niggers because a nigger was someone less than human - an ape... a "porch monkey," a "coon," a person that deserved to be raped, murdered, mutilated, neglected, and subject to a long list of other atrocities. To the Afrikan man and woman, "nigger" meant being the white man's property, being raped indiscriminately, mutilated for pleasure, murdered at random, denied freedom and treated like dirt. Some say The roots of the word derive from the Niger (Nee-jeer) River in Western Alkebulan (Afrika), but upon further investigation I found that the original name for the Niger River is "Oya." Oya means "the water in which blackness flows." The word Niger varies in definition. In Hebrew, "Niger" means Black and is the surname of one of the Prophet Jacob's (Alayhi-Salam) sons, Simeon (read Acts, 13: 1). In French, it means Black as well. But in Portuguese, it means "ape." There's a parable that says when the Portuguese exploiters saw the gorillas sipping water from the Oya River, they named it the Ape River (Niger River). During the 16th Century the Portuguese led the way in the Afrikan slave trade, and as such Afrikan human being weren't the only entities they traded with their European (English, Dutch, et. al.) counterparts in crime. They also traded bits and pieces of each other's languages and traditions. The British added to the words of the Portuguese, as was the case with Niger by annexing another "g" to it. And with malice, labeled us as such.

The same with the word "Negro" (nay-grow) in Spanish means "Black," but its meaning isn't why the racist British and Amerikkans called us negroes. To paraphrase what Brother Born Allah wrote in his piece (Sanctioned by Statute) about the words negro and necro, the British and Amerikkans, through their enslavement and dehumanisation process, reduced the Alkebulanian (Afrikan) mindset, culture, religion, and way of life to nothingness. We were violently dissuaded from maintaining our ways of transmitting religious and cultural knowledge to the future generations. In this fashion, even those of us who refused Christianity and other Eurocentric Western ideologies lost our culture, belief system, identity, and way of life. Plus, the British wanted the Alkebulanians in North Amerikkka (U.S.A., Jamaica, Barbados, etc.) to believe that we were different from our brothers and sisters in Alkebulan and that the Negroes in Amerikkka had no past, no history, nor anything other than slavery. The racist British and their racist Amerikkkan subjects reasoned that the so-called "Necro," which they began calling us, was not only a dead body, but was to them, negative and devilish in skin pigment as well. They believed that when they heard the racist white Spanish slave holders refer to us as negro, that they were really saying "necro" and concluded that since negro is a Latin word similar to necro (another Latin word), it didn't mean Black, but dead. And when they used the word "nigger," they didn't mean black, but "ape."

A lot of Afrikan individuals, like Gabriel Prosser (Aug. 30, 1800) and Nat Turner (Aug. 21, 1831), refused to be niggers and fought to break Amerikkka's chains. They realized that death for freedom was better than oppression. A nigger does not want to be free. He/she enjoys the confusion, ignorance, mental enslavement and darkness that comes with being a nigger. A nigger doesn't know who he or she is. They do not have respect for themselves. A nigger is one who has no sense of identity, nor a sense of freedom. If you are Black and have an identity and a sense of freedom, then you are not a nigger, you are an Afrikan. Stop calling yourself "nigger," for a nigger is not an Afrikan, and an Afrikan is not a nigger. Once I realized who I was as a human being, an Afrikan man, I no longer wanted to be or be called a nigger. I began to study myself and developed, in the process, a deep appreciation for those who mirror me in both Alkebulanian feature and struggle.

I strongly encourage the Black man and woman, who describe themselves and our people as niggers, or excuse me - "niggaz," to delete it from their lingo. It's nasty, racist, disrespectful, and a slap in the face to all our forefathers and mothers who rebelled against everything that the word nigger represents: slavery, rape, confusion, white supremacy, non-description, etc. Some argue that it is only a word, and that words don't hurt, which is categorically untrue. Words do hurt. In fact, they start wars. This young blood, six years back, expressed to me that his reason for using the word "nigger" was because it is cool, popular, hip, and widely used by everyone in his community. So I asked him what if a white person called him a nigger, and his reply was, and I quote, "I would knock that hunky's block off and spit on him." I pointed out the blatant contradiction of his position and he attempted to justify it by offering that it's not the same. I told him that it was the same and that when Black people use that word, they sound just like the Klu Klux Klan. Here's the deal, the "n-word" is brutal and cannot be justified. It's a word that emanated from the culture of white supremacy and oppression, and to acknowledge it is to suggest that we still belong to the slave master. Unless we are ready to say that we are members of the Aryan Nation, the KKK, and the Neo-Nazi, Skin Head Party, and are only three-fourths human, then we must concede that this word is abhorrent and must refrain from using it accordingly.