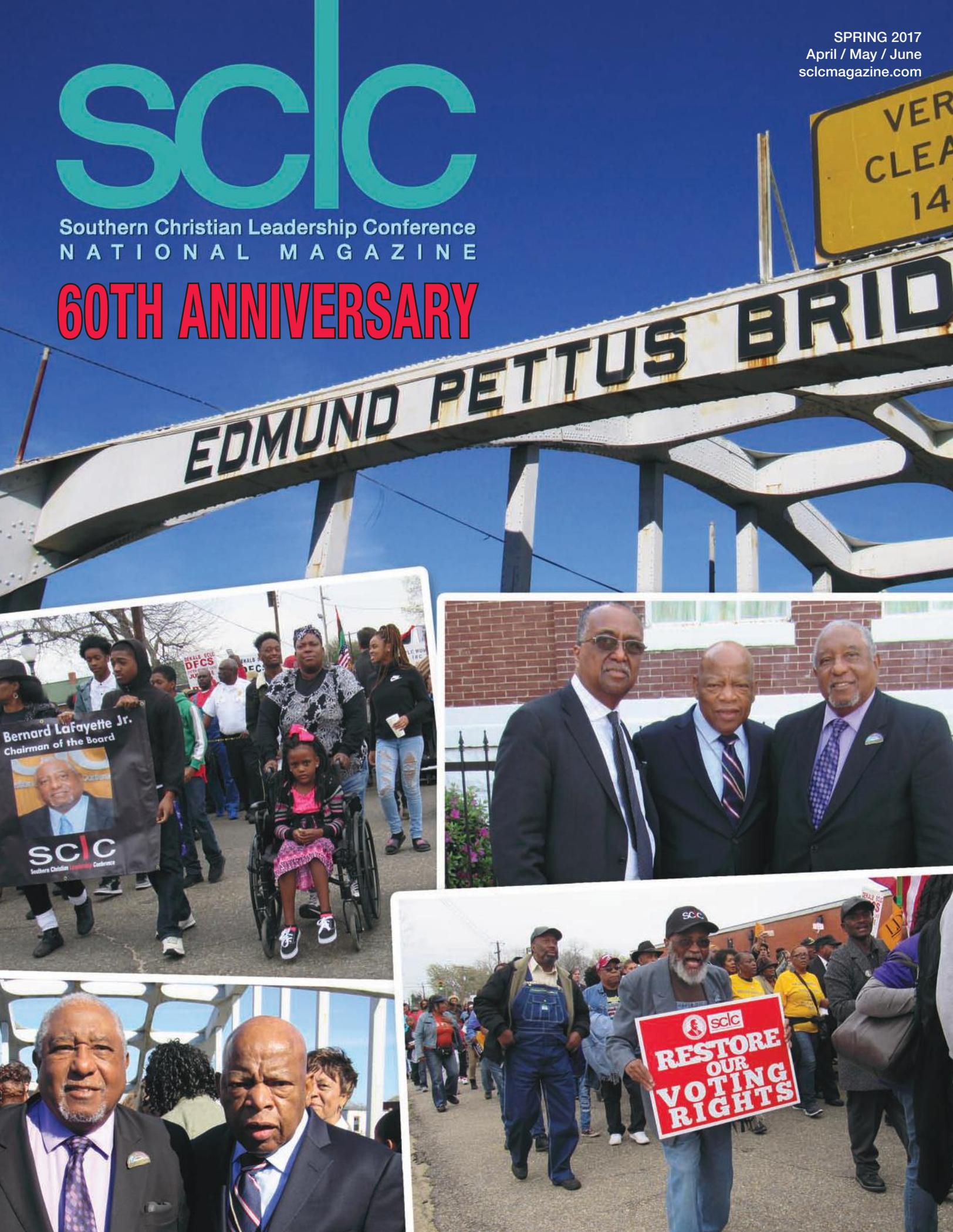


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Southern Christian Leadership Conference
NATIONAL MAGAZINE

60TH ANNIVERSARY



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Martin Luther King Jr. is deeply connected to events in Alabama that forever changed American history. In 1963, King made it clear that Alabama and its citizens would be significant partners in his dream of racial equality. In 1965, following actions that shocked the nation on Bloody Sunday, King successfully led marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge out of Selma toward Montgomery. It was a seminal act that, in part, led to passage of the Voting Rights Act.



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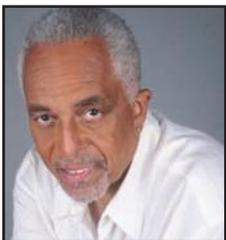
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contributor

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



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FOUNDING PRESIDENT
1957-1968



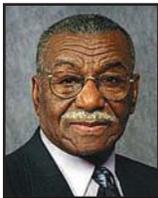
Ralph D. Abernathy
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Joseph E. Lowery
PRESIDENT EMERITUS
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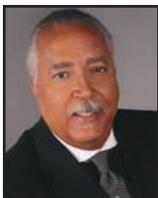
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PAST PRESIDENT
1998-2003



Fred L. Shuttlesworth
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R.I.P. 1922-2011



Charles Steele, Jr.
PAST PRESIDENT
2005-2008



Howard Creecy, Jr.
PAST PRESIDENT
2011
R.I.P. 1954-2011



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Education is the New Civil Rights

BY DR. CHARLES STEELE JR.

As we enter another year that our Lord and Savior has allowed us to see, there is a very historical anniversary coming up on the horizon in 2018. The anniversary of the Poor People's Campaign of 1968. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Poverty is the worst form of violence".

On January 18, 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Lyndon B. Johnson agreed to join forces to launch a "War on Poverty." The Poor People's Campaign was organized in 1968 by Dr. King and the SCLC. This campaign was organized as a civil and human rights agenda to ensure that poor people of all backgrounds would have a right to economic justice. It is time to revitalize that movement!

Prior to 2018, the SCLC will be announcing a caravan starting in Marks, Mississippi and ending at the Mall on Washington, DC. In the spring of 2018 (official date TBA) we will speak to the issues that continue to face us today just as they did in 1968. We will demand parity for jobs, education and equal respect for all citizens of this nation. We are seeking to make sure that we have access to affordable credit for the working poor with affordable interest rates. Poverty in this country and abroad is a crisis.

This campaign is needed all across this planet because there are so many people across the world suffering from poverty. The SCLC intends to make sure that all aspects of poverty have a plan of eradication. We can begin the process of economic success by the uplifting of all people through education and financial training. We know that education is key to our children's future. Whether it is traditional education, vocational education or non-traditional education and training, education is key.

SCLC believes that "education is the new civil rights". As SCLC stated in 1968, "We, the poor people of America demand: decent jobs and income as well as the right to a decent life." We are committed to reaching the poor, teaching the poor and feeding the poor.

As the 50th Anniversary of the Poor People's Campaign approaches, SCLC is preparing to provide an innovative and people centered solution to the growing gap between those who want to obtain college degrees and their ability to afford it. SCLC and partners will be working with accredited colleges and universities to bring education to our communities through technology such as group virtual classrooms. By



Charles Steele Jr. speaking at Selma's Historic Tabernacle Baptist Church during the 52nd "Bloody Sunday" Jubilee services. Photo/Erica Fox Washington/ WJAB-FM

eliminating the brick and mortar model of education, SCLC is using technology to better serve the people in the communities in which we operate. The key to poverty eradication is education. SCLC hopes to begin the process of economic success by the uplifting of all people through education and financial training.

As we prepare for another historical anniversary, we must remember that this is a celebration of accomplishments and not a commemoration, for there is still much more work to be done. SCLC has been at the forefront fighting for freedom and justice for 60 years. We have impacted the world with our message and will continue to make an impact as we stand strong and fight for justice for all God's children.

Join us in our fight for jobs, justice and equality for all!

For more information on the SCLC's Anniversary of the Poor People's Campaign 2018 contact the national office at (404) 522-1420. sclc



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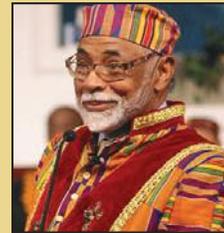
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from the chairman

Building the Nonviolent Community for Social Change

BY DR. BERNARD LAFAYETTE JR.

Through recent decades, civil rights movements have generated significant social changes. These transformations can be, undoubtedly, attributed to a nonviolence “factor,” led by organizers like the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), with support from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Urban League—each of these organizations focused on separate issues within the various communities. Those societies, that have participated in bringing major social change, formed local coalitions that were affiliates of the national institutions. Also, many of the aforementioned groups were supported by their local churches.

National labor unions, not to be left out, also took part in the civil disobedience. For instance, as the bus boycott in Montgomery, Ala., played out in the mid-1950s, you had A. Philip Randolph and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters assisting efforts because the cause dealt with transportation.

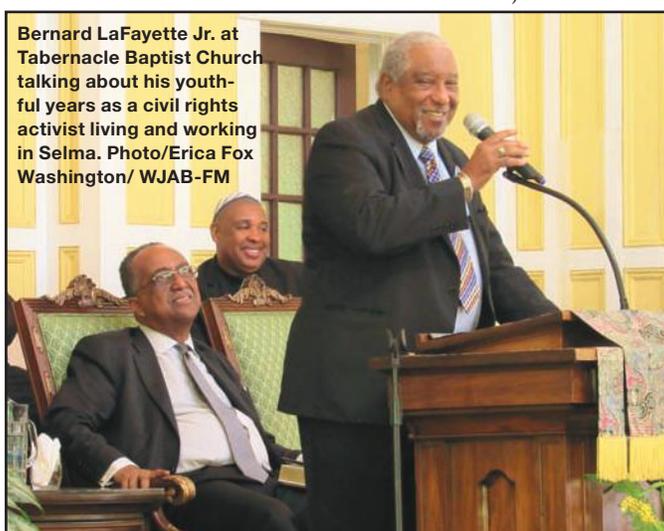
All of these organizations coalesced, lending their knowledge and adding their numbers for the seminal March on Washington on that historic Wednesday in late August of 1963.

The successful strategies used for these causes and in these movements were based on the philosophy that Martin Luther King, Jr., espoused and championed, which are more familiarly known as the Nonviolence approach.

Kingian nonviolence is a philosophy rooted in six principles that follow a six-step process to effect social changes, all starting from a personal level. The desired result of applying this “way of life” is an absolute reconciliation of conflict and not merely defeating and vanquishing the opposing side. To counter unjust or violent conditions, the six principles guide its adherents with the tools for nonphysical, civil reactions; while the six steps are the blueprint for achieving a given goal. The values spelled out in KNV are culled from traditions and tenets, from all the major religions in the world, to better represent and apply to the planet’s entire population, not just the United States. (A more comprehensive understanding of Dr. King’s philosophical legacy can be attained

by contacting the main office of the SCLC, at (404)522-1420, about their certified leadership training sessions.)

The change in our social conditions are dependent on the party in power. Will the election of a conservative president and legislature permanently affect today’s society? Every time there is a change of administration, a society exposes all of its legislation to examination; for example, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is voted upon for renewal every few years. On a macro level, this is what social change is all about—temporary changes when certain people are elected as president and legislators. Many times the change is for the good of the people, but, like the Reconstruction Era after the Civil War, social reordering can be for the worse.



As we observe citizens’ participation in social issues, there has been an increase of people involved in social action. In recent memory there are numerous presentations of civil disobedience, worldwide and domestic, that give credence to this observation—this year’s Women’s Marches; the Million Man March; big-oil and pipeline protests; climate-change rallies; and, the March for Science, just to cite a few. So, while we’ve seen an increase, the question is of sustainability and commitment in terms of focus and resolve to achieve change.

Although these efforts should be applauded, it is not enough to simply protest and express discontent. We have to lobby and sustain the picket-lines until we attain the objectives, and the way you persevere is through leadership training.

One of the strategies is the need for a coalition of these leaders. Without building alliances on a national level, as well as on the local front, we will not be able to address the issues of today that are setting us back unless we are able to identify and address the commonalities that affect the whole, regardless of race, gender, nationality or persuasion.

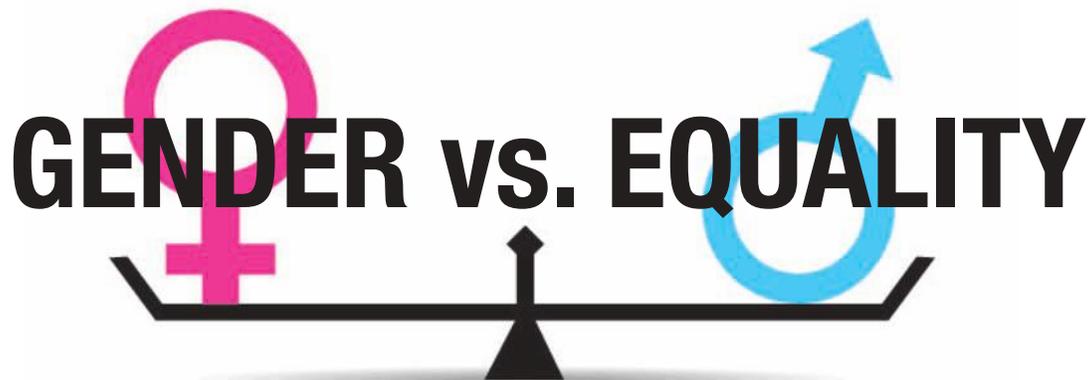
As we analyze the present state of affairs, we have to evaluate to what extent have these major social changes created our current social and political climates.

Some question whether KNV can be a practical, impactful tool in the present days...

If a successful track record provides future insight, it most certainly can. sclc

first lady's corner

GENDER vs. EQUALITY



BY CATHELEAN STEELE, Special Programs Director

Equal pay for equal work and sexual harassment in the workplace... when will we solve these looming issues? It is evident that the writers of the *U.S. Declaration of Independence* did not include women when they penned these words, “all men are created equal.”

Research shows that more than fifty years ago President Kennedy signed the *Equal Pay Act* (EPA) into law. The EPA made it illegal for employers to pay unequal wages to men and women who perform equal work. Civil rights laws have also played a part in narrowing the wage gap. However, significant disparities remain in the wage gap between men and women.

To further close this gap President Obama signed into law the *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act*. Before signing the act President Obama wrote these words. “It is fitting that with the very first bill I sign... we are upholding one of this nation’s first principles: that we are all created equal and each deserve a chance to pursue our vision of happiness.” This act amends the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*. The *Fair Pay Act* was designed to accomplish paycheck transparency to ensure companies were paying women the same pay as their male counterparts. This act also established a ban on forced arbitration clauses for sexual harassment, sexual assault or discrimination claims.

Unfortunately, on March 27, 2017 President Donald Trump signed an executive order that revoked President Obama’s *Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces* order of 2014. The action taken by President Trump has once again made it possible for businesses with federal contracts to hide sexual discrimination claims from the public.

Thanks to the bravery of women like number one ranked female tennis player Sabrina Williams, for exposing



Photo/John Glenn

the looming pay gap between women and men players. *The New York Times* recently reported the Roger Federer is paid \$731,000 compared to \$495,000 paid to Serena. As a result of ongoing wage disparities in soccer, the United States women’s soccer team filed a wage discrimination law suit against the U. S. Soccer Federation. The women soccer players have won four gold medals and three World Cup honors in the last few years, which outperformed their male counterparts. It has been brought to the public’s attention that in spite of the success of the women’s team, they earned roughly a quarter less than the men’s team.

Despite Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964* and the *Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act*, we are seeing a visible rise in sexual harassment cases in the workplace. To my surprise during this research, I found data that claims two-thirds of young women and half of all women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the past twelve months, according to a report published in September of 2016.

On Dec. 1, 2016, *Good Morning America* hosted a segment titled *Real Women on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*. The show interviewed ten women from ten different industries. All ten women reported to have been sexually harassed, and some more than twice. One of the young ladies who had worked in politics admitted that she had considered wearing an engagement to see if that would make a difference.

Two of the largest lawsuits recently filed were against the giant Fox News CEO Roger Ailes and Bill O’Reilly of *The O’Reilly Factor*. If we look deeper into the American fabric of sexual harassment we will see lawsuits filed in many of our large corporations and franchises. Let us not forget, our federal, state and local governments consistently see numerous sexual harassment claims annually.

Maybe, one day our laws will make a difference in gender equality. Just maybe one day all men are created equal will include women. JUST MAYBE! sclc

SCLC

60 Years of service to humanity.

BY HAROLD MICHAEL HARVEY

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This conference of Christian brothers and sisters grew out of a profound need to remove the political, social and economic shackles from descendants of people who had been forcibly removed from their home in Africa in the 15th, 16th and especially the 17th century; and brought to what would become the United States of America.

As the Southern Christian Leadership Conference commemorates 60 years of service to humankind, we must not forget what America looked like prior to February 15, 1957.

Following a period of enslavement, a cast system was put in place, an American system of apartheid that relegated her Black citizens to a second-class tier of citizenship. Throughout the southern states in America, the darker races of men and women lived separated from their lighter brothers and sisters. The rules which separated the white and black communities in the south, while less talked about were subtly present in the north, east and the west.

In 1857, just 100 years and 34 days before the Southern Christian Leadership Conference was organized under the name of the Southern Negro Leadership Conference for Integration, the nation's Supreme Court issued a devastating blow to equality in the Dred Scott v. Sandford case.

Chief Justice Roger B. Taney essentially ruled, since black people were not considered persons in 1787 (200 years before the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference) when the country's governing document was being debated, "A Black man had no rights that a white man was bound to respect."

In 1895, the nation's Supreme Court buttressed the dictum enunciated in the Dred Scott case in an equally

devastating decree in the landmark Plessy v. Ferguson case, which made segregation the law of the land. It was difficult for people of color to advance in America under a legal scheme built upon precedent after precedent of unequal treatment of Black people under the law.

Although, by the sheer force of will there had been minuscule advancements, the Tuskegee scientist, George Washington Carver had saved the agriculture of the south; Negroes had flown fighter planes during World War II; the Montford Point Marines proved that Black men could be successful in the U. S. Marine Corp. Jackie Robinson had stolen home plate in the white major league World Series, and Jack Johnson and Joe Louis had knocked out white fighters in the boxing ring.

And while the Harlem Renaissance bristled with success and "Sweet Auburn" Avenue in Atlanta featured a Black lawyer (A. T. Austin) who had his own high rise office building, much of the Black community lived well below the poverty line and was not shown the simplest of courtesies in discourse with white merchants and others.

Such are the historical foundations that birthed not only the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, but what history records as the "civil rights movement."

You know the story, our dear leader, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., coming off a successful boycott of the segregated Montgomery, Alabama bus system, called a group of 60 ministers together. They met in Atlanta, Georgia in January 1957.

Bayard Rustin, the political architect of the movement for civil justice, posited that what was missing was an organization that could mobilize preexisting organizations in black communities throughout the south to fight for integration of all public accommodations. It was agreed that the



Dr. King in front of the first SCLC HQ at 334 Auburn Ave. in Atlanta.

“(Blacks have) for more than a century... been regarded as beings of an inferior order... and so far unfit that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.”

– U.S. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, *Scott v. Sanford*, 1857

group would reconvene in New Orleans in a couple of weeks to finalize the details of this new organization.

During the interval between the initial meeting and the organizational meeting, Dr. King pondered how he could expand the reach of this new organization. He envisioned a broader reach for this movement, one that could attract support throughout the country and globally. Thus Christian was substituted for the word Negro and the goal of integration was removed from the organization’s name. This name change was a precursor of where Dr. King was heading before his assassination. He believed that a true campaign for social justice had to be ready to fight injustice anywhere it was found.

If Rustin was the organizational genius who brought these diverse communities together, King was the general who could move this battalion in the war for peace. He knew it was important to expose the brutality of the American system of segregation to the world in order to get America to change.

As people around the world began to express shock at the treatment of Negroes in their fight for equality, they started to question America about its foreign policies in their country. Additionally, the grass roots in these countries began to look to the American Negro as a source of inspiration in overthrowing the shackles of colonialism and oppression in their own countries.

Dr. King realized that a child with a hungry stomach in an American ghetto was no different than a child with a hungry stomach in Brazil or the British Isles. Just hours before his death, he instructed his aide, Dr. Bernard LaFayette from Selma, Alabama to begin plans to take the mission of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference internationally.

Dr. LaFayette has been traveling the world holding workshops where he teaches the Kingian Theory of Civil Disobedience. So too has Dr. Charles Steele, Jr., the current President and Chief Executive Officer of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Dr. Steele has built an international headquarters less than 100 steps from the offices where Dr. King shook the conscience of America regarding her treatment of Black people. This facility serves as an anchor that bridges the first 50 years and the 50 years to come.

While building that bridge to 2057, Steele often reminds us that as hard as it was to obtain a semblance of civil rights in America, those hardships pale in comparison to the difficulties that lie ahead in maintaining the gains of the past 60 years, and of the need to globalize the struggle for human and civil rights all over the world.

Sixty years after the birth of this noble organization, Steele is on the case to maintain the legacy of SCLC’s first and perhaps greatest president, along with honoring the sacrifices made by people like Ralph David Abernathy, Ella Baker, Dr. Joseph Lowery, C. T. Vivian, Rev. Howard Crecy and countless others who toiled without recognition or reward. “I am honored to sit in the seat that Dr. King sat in and to have this awesome opportunity to spread his message of non-violent reconciliation around the world,” Steele said.

May God bless his mission and bless the legacy of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. sclc

HAROLD MICHAEL HARVEY is an American novelist and essayist, the author of Paper Puzzle and Justice in the Round, Easier to obtain Than to Maintain: The Globalization of Civil Rights by Charles Steele, Jr.; and the host of Beyond the Law with Harold Michael Harvey. He can be contacted at haroldmichaelharvey.com.



The Dred Scott case was first brought to trial in 1847 in the first floor, west wing courtroom of St. Louis’ Old Courthouse. The Scotts lost their first trial because of hearsay evidence, but were granted a second in 1850. In the second trial, a jury heard the evidence and decided that Dred Scott and his family should be free. Slaves were valuable property, and Mrs. Emerson did not want to lose the Scotts, so she appealed her case to the Missouri State Supreme Court, which in 1852 reversed the ruling made at the Old Courthouse, stating that “times now are not as they were when the previous decisions on this subject were made.” The slavery issue was becoming more divisive nationwide, and provided the court with political reasons to return Dred Scott to slavery. The court was saying that Missouri law allowed slavery, and it would uphold the rights of slave-owners in the state at all costs.

1857, newspaper article that represents Dred Scott and his family fighting for freedom.

SELMA

THEN & NOW

BY MAYNARD EATON, Managing Editor

Selma, Alabama is known as the birthplace of the Voting Rights Movement. Perhaps that's why, Selma has a very complicated and conflicted history; a history of civil war and civil rights.

"We are Selma, from the blood-stained fields of the Civil War, to the blood-stained bridge," said 38-year-old Selma Mayor Darrio Melton, during the 52nd Anniversary of the infamous Edmund Pettis Bridge Crossing Jubilee at the iconic Browns Chapel AME church. "We are the birthplace of democracy. We believe that so goes Selma, so goes the nation. We are not the country we aim to be, but we are much better than we used to be."

On March 7, 1965, African-Americans seeking voting rights launched a march across the bridge in route to Montgomery but were viciously attacked by police and forced to retreat because of the onslaught. That violent episode, which was captured on national TV and shown around the world, became known as "Bloody Sunday."

The march is credited with helping build momentum for passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1966, according to the Associated Press.

"Selma, was once, the Capitol of the Confederacy; buried here in Selma, Alabama are several very famous Confederate generals," said Congresswoman Terri Sewell, a Selma native and Democrat, who represents Alabama's 7th District. "It is where the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement meet. In many ways it defines Alabama, and the complicated nature of our state—that we could have the fight for independence of southern states right here, and the fight for civil rights and civil liberties here."

Rep. Sewell is a star political product of the modern-day Selma, and the South. She is a third-generation leader of this iconic southern Black Belt rural city. The personable political dynamo is also a rising influencer within the Congressional Black Caucus, and as a ranking member of the House Committee on Ways and Means, and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

"I'm a member of Congress because of the nurturing that I received from the folks right here in Selma," she told her constituents and Congressional colleagues attending the "Jubilee" service at Brown's Chapel AME. "It is a credit to blacks and whites in Selma; that out of the painfulness of the '60's, that there was a galvanizing effort to really bring white and black Selma together. I am the by-product of that."

Selma has come through a lot of trials and tribulations. It is also a town undergoing a tough transition. It once had a thriving

population of 40,000 when Rep. Sewell was growing up. There was a very interesting and eclectic mix of people living there because of the nearby Craig Air Force Base, which was a bustling U.S. Air Force Pilot Training facility. It closed in 1977. Now, Selma is a struggling city of 19,000 folks.

"I am honored to have been a member of Congress representing Selma during the 50th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March," Rep Sewell proudly recalled. "Two years ago, we *Faith and Politics* [members], gathered on the bridge with some 100 members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, and two Presidents—President Barack Obama and President Bush. President Bush was here because it was on his watch that the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in 2006, and it passed

**"We still have a long way to go to insure
equal rights to vote in America.
Old battles have become new again"**

— Selma Congresswoman Terri Sewell (D-AL)



U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL) (center, in red) and U.S. Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) pose for photos with supporters celebrating the 52nd Anniversary of “Bloody Sunday” on Selma’s Edmund Pettis Bridge. Photo/Erica Fox Washington/ WJAB-FM

overwhelmingly by both Houses of Congress. Boy, have we come a long way we thought.”

Rep. Sewell continued ruefully, “Old battles have become new again. I never thought we would be fighting in Congress again for women’s reproductive rights. I thought we had won that battle. It just goes to show you that we must be ever vigilant in our fight for human rights, civil rights and civil liberties and voting rights. Every generation has to fight for the gains of the past and press forward,” she preached passionately to the Brown Chapel’s packed and attentive audience.

Congresswoman Sewell has emerged as a vibrant and visionary new voice and political activist, echoing the spunky soul of Selma icons such as the late Amelia Boynton Robinson and attorney J.L. Chestnut.

Amelia Boynton Robinson was a civil rights pioneer from Selma who championed voting rights for African Americans and was also brutally beaten on “Bloody Sunday”. She was also the first black woman to run for Congress in Alabama.

Chestnut was a charismatic author, attorney, and a forceful figure in the Civil Rights Movement. He was the first African-American attorney in Selma, and the author of the autobiographical book, *Black in Selma*, which chronicles the history of the Selma Voting Rights Movement.

“We still have a long way to go to insure equal rights to vote in America,” Rep. Sewell continued emotionally and emphatically. “We have to stand firmly on our own two feet to make sure we are doing the work to make sure we are paying forward. Who are we of the *Joshua*’ generation

going to do to honor the courage, the vigilance of the ‘Moses’ generation? Each year we have a ‘Kumbaya’ moment on that Pettis Bridge, and then go back to the United States Congress, and do nothing.”

Since the election of President Donald Trump, Atlanta Congressman John Lewis—who was brutally beaten and bloodied in 1965 on the Edmund Pettis Bridge along with the late SCLC firebrand, Hosea Williams, and others—has been the target of derisive and demeaning Tweets and verbal assaults and accusations by the President.

“I’m not going to talk about that,” Rep. Lewis told this reporter in an exclusive interview. “I have not changed. I’m inspired more than ever before to go out and do my very best every day. To come back to Alabama—to go to Birmingham, to Montgomery, to Selma—it makes me more than grateful to witness the changes that I’ve seen. To see all these young people, one was 15, to march across the Bridge today. To see this young African American man as mayor of Selma. We had people during the time I was here that were so vicious and so mean, but now to have and witness three people of color elected as mayor [of Selma], and to have a Terri Sewell in Congress.”

Rep. John Lewis said he believes the racial climate and circumstances have progressed in Selma and throughout the South.

“There is a greater sense of hope and optimism more than anything else all across the South,” he told this newsman. “It is the result of people getting the right to vote, people not giving up, and people being inspired by the election of President Obama. It makes me more than happy.” sclc



Cautionary Tales and Complicated Legacies of Historically HBCUs

BY ZINE MAGUBANE

W.E.B. Du Bois, whose name the U.S. Department of Education mangled in a tweet purportedly celebrating Black History month, was forever on the lookout for “sinister signs in educational movements.” Such vigilance is still warranted, given Education Secretary Betsy DeVos’s cynical use of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to support school choice, a policy that has been shown to exacerbate school segregation at home and abroad. Evidence shows that, all good intentions aside, schools cannot fix economic inequality, and venture philanthropy cannot address educational inequality. That was the case in Du Bois’s time, and it remains true now.

Du Bois, born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, was particularly incensed by New England philanthropists using HBCUs not only to enforce segregation at home, but also to spread the American system of segregation and sharecropping to Africa. From the 1890s through the 1940s, HBCUs were harnessed, sometimes willingly and sometimes not, to a colonial project that transformed Africans from relatively independent and equal participants in global trade networks into poorly paid and politically subjugated producers of cotton for the world market.

Although HBCUs have produced a great many black doctors, PhDs and engineers, they were not initially designed to do so. Nor were they intended to provide blacks with enhanced educational choice. Rather, they specialized in “industrial education,” which meant simple handicrafts and manual labor for men and domestic arts, like childcare and laundering, for women. These were also engineered to produce politically docile citizens. The demands of the newly freed for land and independence, *The New York Times* reported in 1866, “concerned Massachusetts quite as much as Mississippi.” Indeed, Bay State industrialists invested heavily in the South’s iron ore and timber industries, as well as in developing southern transportation systems.

The cotton industry, and its demand for cheap and compliant labor, spurred the most philanthropic interest in HBCUs. The United States’ South produced two-thirds of the world’s cotton, the world’s most valuable agricultural commodity. Boston’s textile manufacturers generously supported Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute, one of the oldest HBCUs. In “Up From Slavery,” his autobiography, he remarked: “In the city of Boston I have rarely called upon an individual for funds [and] not been thanked for calling, usually before I could...thank the donor for the money.” He recalled receiving a letter that said, “We



President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (second from right) talks with 93-year-old American scholar Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois shortly before opening the World Peace Conference in Accra, Ghana, June 21, 1962. Photo/AP

in Boston are constantly indebted to you for doing our work.” Re-branding segregation as a mutually beneficial choice even earned him a trip to the White House. He and Du Bois had a lifelong feud.

Washington is best known for his “Atlanta Compromise” address, delivered at the Cotton States and International Exposition in 1894, wherein he said blacks and whites should remain “separate as the fingers on a hand” socially, while uniting in industrial pursuits. By industrial pursuits, he primarily meant the cotton industry.

While Washington was giving the Atlanta address, his good friend and white benefactor, William H. Baldwin, a Boston businessman, “paced nervously” outside. Baldwin’s enormous wealth bought him space on the Tuskegee board of trustees, among others, and his interests in the education of African Americans and the cotton industry were intertwined. “The Negro and the mule is the only combination so far to grow cotton,” he once said. He speculated that if, “properly educated,” blacks would “willingly fill the more menial positions and do the heavy work, at less wages, than the American white man.”

1909, Visionary sociologist and civil rights activist W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) in his Atlanta University office. Du Bois was among the first to note that the health disparities of American blacks stemmed from social conditions and not from inherent racial traits. He provided empirical evidence that linked the legacy of slavery and the inherent racism of American society to the poor health of blacks. Photo/University of Massachusetts



Du Bois and Washington’s mutual enmity escalated when they became interested in Africa. At the same time that Du Bois was hosting pan-African congresses to protest European colonialism, British colonial officials were seeking Washington’s advice as well as Tuskegee graduates to work in colonial administration. The aspirations of Africans and African Americans for political and economic independence were seen as interdependent problems, which could be managed by the transfer of America’s Jim Crow education system to West, South and East Africa.

On January 1, 1900, three Tuskegee graduates and one faculty member were sent to Togo, a German colony, to forcefully train West Africans in growing cotton. Over the next three decades, Tuskegee graduates were instrumental in the development of colonialist cotton schemes in the Sudan, Nigeria and the Belgian Congo. British colonialists in South Africa meanwhile, adopted industrial education, which eventually formed the cornerstone of the Bantu Education system, later rejected in the Sowetan youth rebellion of 1976.

Du Bois insisted that educational reforms should be scrutinized for their underlying political implications. He was ever on the lookout for politicians and their wealthy benefactors who used educational theory as a cover for racial discrimination. In an era when millionaires are not only driving education reform, but are being appointed to powerful positions, we would do well to heed his warning. sclc

ZINE MAGUBANE is associate professor of Sociology and African and African Diaspora Studies at Boston College.

DIGNITY IN BELONGING

“Dignity is to a person what a foundation is for a house. Without dignity, there is nothing to build upon.”

BY TERENCE LESTER

Dignity means knowing that you have worth, purpose, and belong in the world. Dignity strips away any notion or erroneous idea that you are an outcast and have no voice.

Two weeks ago, I met a gentleman named Mark digging in the trash can behind our building. He’s a sixty-year-old man, and instead of asking him to leave, I was interested in knowing him and his story. I asked, “Do you mind telling me your story and how you got here?”

Not only, have we given Mark a community and somewhere to belong. We have given him the dignity he needs to build upon. Dignity is to a person what a foundation is for a house. Without dignity, there is nothing to build upon.

I personally find dignity in the work that we do with Love Beyond Walls because we get a chance to restore dignity to those who feel outcast through authentic relationships. It’s probably the most important part of our work—to let people

“Every single day, people who are faced with poverty and homelessness or any type of injustice feel this sense of isolation in the world. That’s why noticing people where they are is super important.”

“Well, I’m not a beggar. That’s why I eat out of trash cans. I’ve been living homeless in the Atlanta area for three years. I’ve experienced tons of loss too. First, my wife and I lost our son, then I lost my wife, then I lost my job...” Mark said.

He continued before I could ask another question, “Also, I am adopted. In fact, I have never known my family, and the person that was my caretaker abused me mentally and physically. She’s no longer living, so I have no one...or anywhere to belong.”

Could you imagine being faced with poverty, homelessness, experiencing loss, not having a voice in society, and being stripped of the idea that you belong anywhere?

Every single day, people who are faced with poverty and homelessness or any type of injustice feel this sense of isolation in the world. That’s why noticing people where they are is super important.

Noticing people gives persons carrying burdens—dignity, and reveals to them that their very essence matters. After getting to know Mark, our organization has been able to provide temporary housing for him and is now walking along side him to assist him in recovering vital documents needed for him to take steps forward in life.

know that their stories matter and they belong in the world.

In fact, I personally find dignity in the same manner. For me, I constantly rely on my faith in God to assure me that my very existence has meaning and purpose. As I am affirmed in that thought, it pushes me to live a life that affirms others in the same way.

Do I have it all together? No. But that’s the beautiful thing about dignity. Dignity has a built in grace component that suggests it’s okay to be perfectly imperfect. sclc



TERENCE LESTER is a minister, speaker, community activist and author who co-leads Love Beyond Walls, a not-for-profit organization focused on raising poverty awareness and community mobilization.

He and his wife, Cecilia, founded the community-based center in College Park in 2013. Since that time they have led a couple hundred creative service projects designed to display the skills and gifts of those living in poverty; led homeless and poverty awareness campaigns in schools and throughout the metro Atlanta area; and mobilized over 5000 volunteers through church and business partnerships.

Trump Wants to Rid the World of White Folks

BY HEATHER GRAY

So Trump wants to rid the world of white folks? That appears to be the case. I am sure that seems a nonsensical statement to many of you given Trump's politics and sentiments. And yes, this has to do with Trump and his alienation toward "climate change" and the impact this will likely have on whites folks throughout the world now and in the future.

Think for a moment of "white" history, and maybe Trump has done this as well, although I doubt it. Could it be that he wants to get rid of whites because of our sad and tragic behavior throughout history?

In fact, more than any other group in the world, it is those of us who are of white European descent that have been responsible for massive genocide throughout the world; slavery and the arrogance of colonialism coupled with huge exploitation of resources; of the Christian/Catholic devastation through the likes of 1493 "Doctrine of Discovery" that justified genocide and expropriation of land and continues to resonate; the use of nuclear weapons; unnecessary and tragic wars; etc., etc.

And now Trump is continuing this "white" disrespectful and dangerous legacy by attempting to trash all countless regulations and protections of the environment that we in America have tried for years to implement.

I am also of white European descent and admit forthrightly that there is no other group in the world that has been as violent and destructive as us! Thankfully, historically there have always been those "whites" who have been appalled at our behavior but today there are considerably more whites who recognize this fact and openly acknowledge it. That's a good thing.

In fact, there are many who say that the organizing against Trump in America is largely a "white against white" struggle and they are probably right.

To add to this, given changing demographics, birth rates and the like, it is also estimated that by 2050, whites in America will be in the minority (Bloomberg). I am prematurely speculating that it is possible that climate change could very well accelerate this trend.

What Trump espouses in his policies will, in fact, ultimately and dramatically impact whites, in particular, throughout the entire world. This includes as well the harm of everyone regardless of color who will also suffer due to the likely impact of his misguided and ill-informed climate and other policies.

Why is this the case?

Trump and his cabinet along with many of his buddies in Congress state, for one, that they don't believe scientists who report consistently that climate change is largely caused by human activity. As a result, we are hearing that Trump

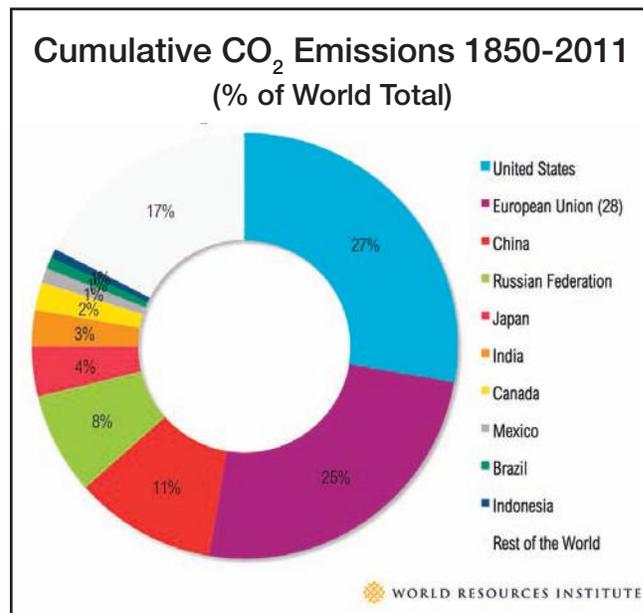
wants to rid the government of regulations against pollution and protection of our Mother Earth. This would include loss of protection of waterways, the air we breathe, the loss and exploitation of what are already limited resources, etc.

Plus, Trump prefers to NOT participate in international climate protection initiatives.

Yet, we are also learning that the world's climate is interconnected. So that what happens in the United States, in terms of air pollution, will spread eastward toward Europe. What happens in China will spread eastward toward the U.S. that blends with an already excessively polluted United States.

The international initiatives on climate change and earth protection are incredibly important and necessary.

As "Living on Earth" reports in the interview with Oregon State Chemistry Professor Staci Simonich, we are now seeing the impact of Chinese air pollution in California. Simonich states further that, "But I always like to say, 'What goes around comes around,' so it drives home that idea that we're a connected atmosphere, right? And that what happens in one part of the world impacts other parts of the world. We're all united in one atmosphere."



And because the United States is considered, as noted by the Washington Post, the world's worst polluter, this is disastrous, not only for Americans, but for the world overall, if we don't take action to prevent more pollution.

Understanding white skin and why are there "white" people in the world

Why we humans are of different colors throughout the entire world? You would be right to think that the actual color of our human skin has to do with climate.

There is also nothing in the contemporary debate about climate issues regarding the history of our skin color. Most probably think these two issues—climate and skin color—are not connected and they are wrong. sclc

HEATHER GRAY produces "Just Peace" on WRFG-Atlanta 89.3 FM covering local, regional, national and international news. She can be reached at hmcgray@earthlink.net.



Photo/Sean Gallup/Getty Images

HOW GENTRIFICATION DESTROYS BLACK VOTING POWER

BY MICHAEL HARRIOT

Remember when the nation's capital was so black that Parliament Funkadelic nicknamed Washington, D.C., "Chocolate City"? Maybe you're old enough to remember when California's Bay Area was so black that it birthed the Black Panthers and everyone knew what Sir Mix-a-Lot meant when he rapped about an "Oakland booty." If you're too young for that, you definitely remember when Jay Z and the Notorious B.I.G. were "Brooklyn's Finest."

These days, D.C. is more of a caramel-latte-colored city. While the black population reached as high as 71% in the 1970 census, it now stands at 47%. Blacks are no longer the largest ethnic group in Oakland, and the New York City home of Biggie, Jay Z and Spike Lee is now the poster child for large-scale, sweeping gentrification.

Gentrification is changing the nation, and with it, the face of the American political landscape is slowly shifting. Areas that were once no-brainer Democratic strongholds are slowly transforming into whiter, more affluent regions where party lines have been blurred in the last decade. As cities across the country become more diverse, their black populations have decreased significantly, leaving the traditional base

of the Democratic Party struggling for a foothold in national politics and diminishing the power of the black vote.

What is gentrification?

Have you passed by the new artisanal peanut butter and jelly "sandwichery" that popped up in place of the corner deli that sold the greasy Philly subs? Have you noticed that fewer of your neighbors have pit bulls, and more of them have teacup poodles? Has there been a curious increase in the number of white guys wearing flannel shirts and ironic glasses on your block? Then your neighborhood is probably gentrifying.

Merriam-Webster defines "gentrification" this way: *the process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces poorer residents.*

Simply put, it is the slow transformation of a poor or lower-middle-class neighborhood into a haven for upscale business and homes. Gentrification usually results in the ousting of the area's longtime residents—by either legal force or economic displacement.

Why does gentrification happen?

Have you ever studied the universal laws of humanity? For instance, when you were a teenager and called “shotgun,” everyone agreed that you got to ride in the front seat. If you visited your grandparents and sat down in the large, overstuffed comfortable recliner, you got your butt up when your grandmother entered the room, because the entire family agreed that was “Grandma’s chair.”

Well, America doesn’t play that.

Gentrification is as old as the United States itself. When Europeans landed on American soil and wiped out the people of the First Nations, they called it “settling.” Over the course of U.S. history, it would go by many names, including “manifest destiny,” “migration,” “westward expansion” and many other euphemisms. At the heart of the “American dream” and the idea of capitalism lies the barbaric, Darwinian precept of taking land from the weak for the benefit of the strong. America has one golden rule:

He who has the gold gets to pack people in reservations, send them on the Trail of Tears, make them sharecroppers or force them out of their apartments to build high-rise condominiums.

How will gentrification change American politics?

To understand the implications of gentrification for American politics, there are two factors that must be considered:

1. The demographic makeup of the 2 major political parties.
2. The demographic makeup of American cities.

When it comes to the Republican Party, the No. 1 distinguishing characteristic for a GOP voter is whiteness. Apart from the category of religion (70% of Mormons vote Republican), every other ethnicity and demographic group leans Democratic. According to Pew Research, Democrats hold an edge among women (52% to 36%), blacks (80% to 11%), Asians (65% to 23%), Hispanics (56% to 26%), Jewish voters (61% to 31%) and younger voters (51% to 35%) and at every level of education.

It is a long-held presupposition that urban areas are the heart of the Democratic Party because they traditionally hold more minority votes, but a number of historical and economic trends are upending this political assumption. Since 1984 America’s biggest cities have voted increasingly

Democratic in each election, culminating in 2012, when 27 of the 30 most populous U.S. cities voted for Barack Obama. Everyone assumed that Hillary Clinton was a shoo-in in the cities, so she concentrated on gathering electoral votes in rural and suburban areas. Then, on Election Day, something funny happened:

For the first time in 30 years, Democratic votes declined in the biggest cities.

Maybe it was the post-Obama effect of a decrease in minority voters. Perhaps it was Clinton’s unpopularity among large swaths of people. But her narrow loss may have occurred because cities are getting whiter. Maybe gentrification did this.

According to 2015 U.S. census data, the 50 most populated American cities are slowly getting whiter. In 2015, *Governing* magazine published a study that divided the census tracts of the 50 biggest cities to determine which ones were “gentrification eligible.” It concluded that “gentrification greatly accelerated in several cities. Nearly 20% of neighborhoods with lower incomes and home values have experienced gentrification since 2000, compared to only 9% during the 1990s.”

But I thought America was getting browner?

It is. More white people are dying than are being born in one-third of U.S. states, and in 2015, the number of white births fell below 50%.

So where have the brown own people gone?

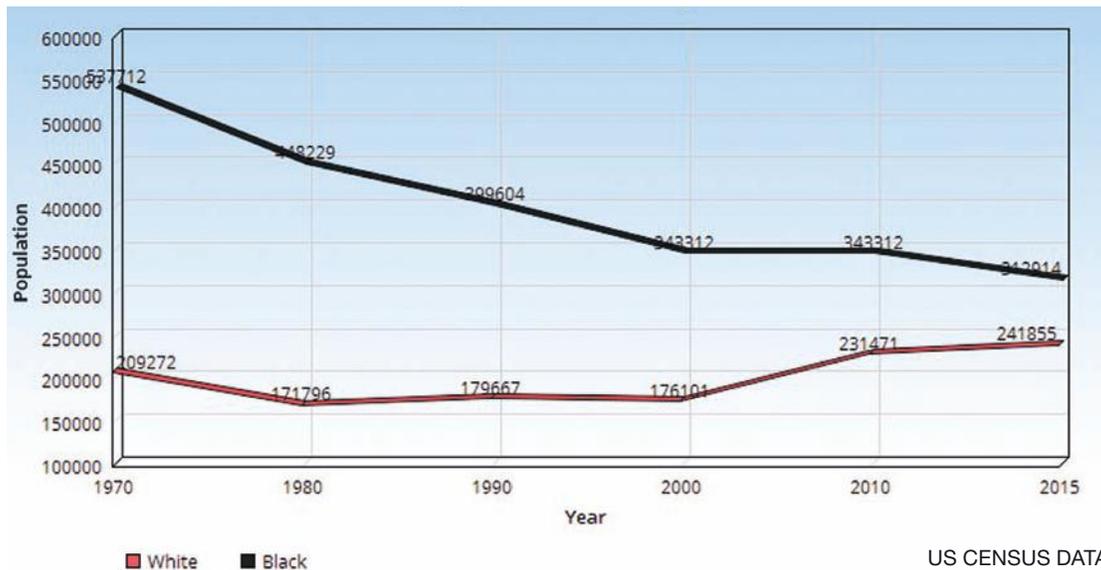
To the suburbs. To rural areas. In 2010, for the first time in American history, the U.S. census showed that a majority of blacks, Hispanics and Asians lived in the suburbs. For most of America’s history, segregation, redlining and poverty confined minorities to centralized, usually urban, areas.

But now cities are having a resurgence, and white people are moving back to urban areas—making cities more expensive to live in. Because of this, there has been a slow migration into the once lily-white suburbs that were historically off-limits to people of color. Simply put: Affluent white people like living in cities now, so minorities can no longer afford to.

When minorities are displaced or relocated by gentrification into suburbs and rural areas, the black vote becomes far less concentrated, which means that black voting power is dissolving into a sea of suburban whiteness.

Merriam-Webster defines “gentrification” this way: *the process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces poorer residents.*

Black and White Population of Washington D.C. Residents



But if the black and Hispanic population is growing nationwide, how does that hurt the Democratic Party or the black vote?

Have you ever been the only black guy at a party filled with white people? The band never plays your music, the potato salad sucks, and before the night is over, someone will say something slightly racist to you, like, “Let me get you a drink, buddy. Let me guess what you’re drinking: Hennessy? Crown Royal?”

Political power is a lot like a country club soirée. In most urban areas, minorities traditionally had political input because they were a large share of the population. Even if they couldn’t choose the DJ, the music was diverse enough to keep them dancing. Now, instead of having centralized areas of political power that elect black mayors, senators and congresspeople, blacks are sprinkled throughout the country and must dance to conservative, “alt-right,” small-government legislative melodies while pretending to like pro-life potato salad.

Let’s forget the glitz and glamour of national politics for a second. The laws and policies that affect the lives of everyday Americans happen on a local level. As the Republican Party’s demographics dwindle, the increasing numbers of whites in cities, combined with the scattering of minority voters, have resulted in GOP control of state legislatures and governorships in 25 states, and partial control of 20 more. Thirty-three state governors are members of the Republican Party—more than any other time in the past 94 years.

So what are the real political implications of gentrification?

Remember Chocolate City? A majority of D.C.’s City Council is now white. Most of Brooklyn, N.Y.’s state and local officials are, too, and only three of Oakland’s eight City Council members are African American. Nationally, the 115th Congress is the most diverse ever, but it is still dominated by lawmakers who are largely white and Republican. Only 8.9% of Congress is black, compared with 13% of the population, and while every statistic shows that the country’s demographic makeup favors the Democratic Party, the Republican Party’s advantage keeps growing.

State legislatures are no different. In fact, 80% of America’s population lives in states controlled at least partially by Republicans. Blacks make up less than 9% of state legislatures and hold a whopping zero%age of governorships. If you wonder how states like Georgia—which was on the verge of turning blue in 2008—remain solidly Republican, all you have to do is read how Atlanta’s white population—the only threat to GOP control in the state—is growing faster than any other American city.

Aside from its dispersal of voting power, think about the practical implications of gentrification. National and statewide candidates whose elections depend on black support won’t be able to canvass black neighborhoods, visit black places of worship, or walk into barber shops and beauty salons. People won’t meet at black churches and community centers to get a ride to the polls. Gourmet chocolatiers don’t usually hold voter-registration drives.

How do you reverse this trend?

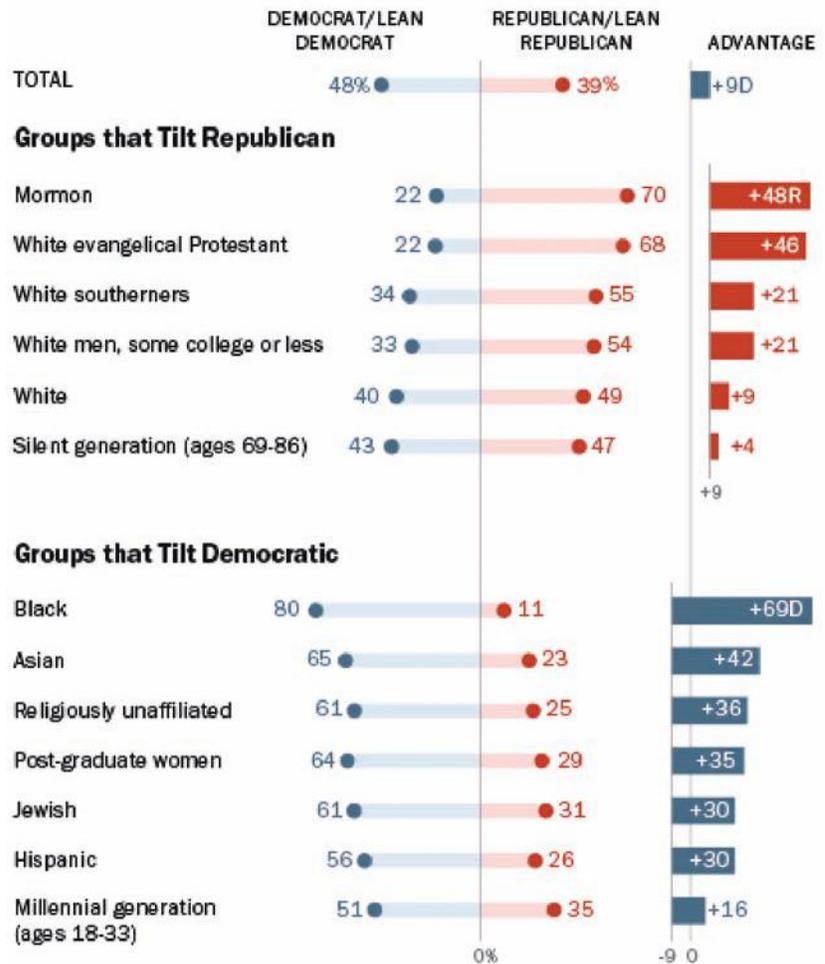
1. **Realize that every neighborhood is your neighborhood.** Even if you don't live there, if the black vote is weakened in a city or state where you live, it weakens your voice, too. Fight rezoning laws that target minority neighborhoods. Create tenant unions that inform people of the local landlord laws.
2. **Vote in every way.** This seemingly goes without saying, but voting doesn't just mean showing up at the ballot box on Election Day. Go to primaries for local and state elections. You should have the phone number and email stored in your phone of every single person who represents you. Show up at City Council meetings or stream them online. Patronize local and neighborhood businesses. Shop in your neighborhood first.
3. **Take the fight outside the neighborhood.** If a city wants to create zones for developers and commercial businesses in poor neighborhoods, require that the same rules be enacted in the more affluent neighborhoods.
4. **Fight all gerrymandering and redistricting plans that follow unnatural boundaries.** The ones that lump all minorities into one district weaken the voices outside those boundaries, and the ones that divide a single minority neighborhood into smaller pieces are usually attempts to fragment a voting majority.

There is an old African proverb that beautifully encompasses the perils of gentrification. Its meaning has morphed over time. It was once a rallying cry to the beautiful black and brown people who shared homes, streets and a culture, but it has transformed into a warning for everyone who fears having the soul sucked from their neighborhood. It was made famous by the famous orator Christopher Wallace, but if you stand near the bike-share station in front of the high-end boutique where the corner bodega used to be, you might hear it uttered by a passerby, or feel it blowing in the wind:

"Where Brooklyn at?" sclc

Strong Groups for the Democratic and Republican Parties

% of each group that identifies as...



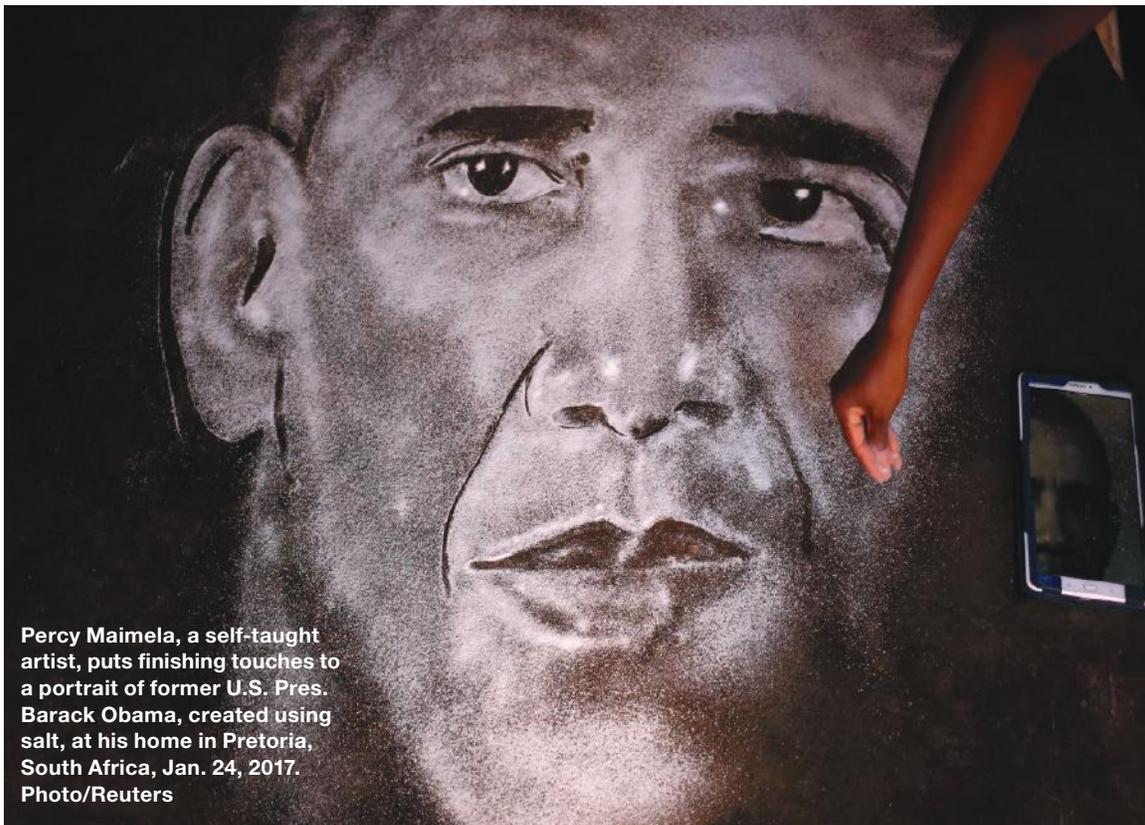
Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Asians are non-Hispanic and English-speaking only.

Source: All Pew Research Center political surveys from 2014. Based on the general public.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



MICHAEL HARRIOT is a staff writer at The Root, host of "The Black One" podcast and editor-in-chief of the daily digital magazine NegusWhoRead. For more info on visit Michael's website www.michaelharriot.com.



Percy Maimela, a self-taught artist, puts finishing touches to a portrait of former U.S. Pres. Barack Obama, created using salt, at his home in Pretoria, South Africa, Jan. 24, 2017. Photo/Reuters

OBAMA & RACE

Color-Blind Rhetoric Helped Forge Winning Coalition

BY EVELYN M. SIMIEN

The relationship between black presidential candidates and potential voters is more complex than it is for their white opponents. My research on historic “firsts” shows that white voters tend to ascribe characteristics to black candidates that place them at a disadvantage.

That’s why Barack Obama’s presidency became synonymous with an end goal of the civil rights movement and a source of pride for so many Americans. His campaign experience, like that of predecessors Shirley Chisholm and Jesse Jackson, suggests something about the extent to which African-Americans have gained acceptance as legitimate political actors.

Obama more easily mobilized white voters because he was less interested in challenging “the system,” and more ideologically liberal than his predecessors. He also adapted to the political environment, recognizing key voting constituencies. Obama pulled together the type of coalition that Chisholm and Jackson had aspired to lead, composed of college students, hard-core progressives, organized labor and independents.

His departure from office is a time to look back and recall the historic impact of his candidacy and victory.

Undeniably black

Presidential campaigns launched by Shirley Chisholm in 1972 and Jesse Jackson in 1984 were aimed at forging interracial alliances. However, each of these candidates failed to build a coalition of historically marginalized groups. Instead, their rhetoric primarily appealed to African-American voters in locales where they comprised a majority, or near majority, of the population.

As a result, they drew limited support from white voters. For example, by large margins, white voters viewed Jackson as less knowledgeable, less fair, less likely to care about people like them and more prejudiced than his white opponents Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis.

Like Chisholm and Jackson, Obama’s candidacy in 2008 aroused fears, resentments and prejudices.

He was falsely accused of being a Muslim. Stereotypes

were reinvented and popular images reanimated and parodied in blogs, email, tweets and other social media outlets. T-shirts were printed with an image of Curious George, a monkey from a well-known children's book, inscribed with the words "Obama '08," comparing African-Americans to apes.

The Tea Party Movement, a conservative wing of the Republican Party, also orchestrated a number of attacks on Obama's patriotism, religious beliefs and citizenship status through protest rallies and social media. Obama's racial identity and other personal traits remained a matter of public debate long after the general election.

Like his predecessors, Obama was perceived as lacking leadership experience. He was viewed as less competent, less knowledgeable of foreign affairs and more concerned with racial issues like affirmative action and immigration reform.

Because he was undeniably black, he was seen as an "authentic" representative of the African-American electorate, not the entire American electorate. His campaign had to overcome this notion.

Overcoming race

Obama employed a race-neutral approach during his first presidential campaign. In his hallmark speech at the 2004 DNC he said:

"There's not a liberal America and a conservative America, there is the United States of America. There is not a black America and a white America and Latino America and Asian America, there is the United States of America."



Time Cover, Aug. 23, 1983: Jesse Jackson spearheads a new black drive for political power. On November 3, 1983, he announced his campaign for President of the United States in the 1984 election, becoming the second African American (after Shirley Chisholm) to mount a nationwide campaign for president.



U.S. Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (D-NY) announcing her candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination, Jan. 25, 1972. Photo/Thomas J. O'Halloran/US Library of Congress

His rhetoric aimed to satisfy diverse constituents across racial and ethnic groups. Obama used universal, color-blind language that appealed to most Americans.

He focused on quality-of-life issues, such as universal health care, equal educational opportunities and full employment for the lower and middle classes. Doing so increased the likelihood that more Americans would support his campaign. He was less interested in race-specific overtures that directly appealed to African-American voters.

As I argue in my book, "Historic Firsts: How Symbolic Empowerment Changes U.S. Politics," Obama unified liberal white voters.

Still, pundits pondered whether a black man, elected by a white majority with support of African-American voters, represented a psychological, but not necessarily a substantive, triumph over race.

His predecessors Chisholm and Jackson had heavily relied on racial bloc voting and the stylistic influence of a Black Power tradition—"speaking truth to power," dramatic confrontation and public spectacle—for electoral success. Obama was a successful candidate because he was neither righteous nor indignant. He ran a campaign that was racially and culturally inclusive.

Today, there is little question as to whether a black male politician at the top of a major party's presidential ticket can transform beliefs about African-American men in politics. The outcome of the 2008 American presidential election shows that the majority of American voters are willing to vote for a black Democratic presidential candidate.

However, it is a certain type of black presidential candidate who will find it easier, and others more difficult, to gain white support. sclc

EVELYN M. SIMIEN is Associate Professor of Political Science and Africana Studies at the University of Connecticut.



Congressman Keith Ellison
and Maynard Eaton

ONE ON ONE with Keith Ellison

INTERVIEW BY MAYNARD EATON, Managing Editor

Rep. Keith Ellison, the progressive Minnesota Democrat who just won his sixth term, was recently elected the Deputy Chairman of the Democrat National Committee. He should have won the fierce election for the top job, but was vigorously opposed, he says, by President Obama, Joe Biden and the Clinton's who all rallied around the eventual winner, former Labor Secretary Tom Perez.

Perhaps it was because the 53-year-old Ellison, a Muslim, African American co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, was poised to hold a position of influence in the party during one of the darkest moments in the DNC's history. Democrats are out of the White House and in the minority in Congress, and they've lost their window to reshape the Supreme Court. They control both the governor's mansion and legislature in just six states; with another round of redistricting looming, the electoral map is only poised to get worse.

The role of the DNC chairman is to run a political machine that helps to elect Democrats throughout the country, not to dictate the party's policy priorities. But Ellison's blueprint for defeating Trumpism is nonetheless rooted in the anti-establishment politics of Sanders, as was reported by Tim Murphy for "Mother Jones".

"As Americans worry about everything from health care to walls to bans, the Democratic Party is stepping up to address their concerns with its all-new Democratic Party live stream," said Ellison, who used live streams during his DNC bid to showcase rallies.

I interviewed the personable Congressman in Selma, Alabama where he joined Congressman John Lewis and others to observe the 52nd Anniversary of "Bloody Sunday." He is as cool as the other side of the pillow.

MAYNARD EATON: Seemingly it has been a robust and revealing roller coaster ride for you politically, given the contentious results of the Democratic National Committee [DNC] election for chairman of the party that you eventually lost to former Labor Secretary Thomas Perez. You are now the Deputy DNC Chair, has that catapulted your cache and political clout?

KEITH ELLISON: I'm not looking to be catapulted. I got into the DNC race, not because we lost one election, but because we lost a thousand races since 2008. All these states out here passing photo ID laws, pushing the right to work for less laws, taking away the right to collective bargaining and undermining unions; cutting into women's rights and a whole lot of horrible [political] stuff nationally.

My district in Minnesota is 63 percent white, and they elect me year after year. I'm black and I'm proud and they know it. And, I'm Muslim. And, my opponents let everybody know that I'm Muslim. So, why did I get into this? Somehow, given my district, I've been able to increase voter turnout at least by 40,000 votes every year.

My first presidential election was 2008. We got 220 thousand votes. The last one we got 250 thousand. And, if I had not increased turnout, Minnesota would have went red just like just like Michigan and Wisconsin.

ME: It seems like an uphill battle, but can you replicate that across the country?

KE: We have too. We have no other chance. You look at a state like Arizona or Alabama voter turnout is low. We don't have to convert "T" partiers' to progressive Democrats, we've just got to get progressive Democrats to show up. And the way to make them show up is to make the Democratic Party really represent them. Let's be perfectly candid. Here's the problem. You've got two thirds of the Democratic Party that is always with the workers, always on the side of racial justice, always on women's rights, always trying to fight for better, cleaner air and water. Then you have another third of them mixed up with the big money interests—coal, finance. You've got some Democrats who don't like the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau [CFPB]. They don't like Connecticut Sen. Elizabeth Warren. They think Bernie Sanders is a bigger problem than Donald Trump! You got that [divide and dissension].

ME: So what do you do?

KE: We've got to organize my man, there's no other way about it.

The many can overcome the money, but you've got to organize the many. How do you organize the many? You've got to talk to them. When is the last time the Democrat Party walked through a low income housing development and talked to everybody and asked, "What's going on with you. Would you come to engage us, would you come to meet with us? We are organizing around better pay for you." That's what's got to happen.

ME: *Can you do it? Is that going to be your charge and cause as the DNC Deputy Chairman?*

KE: *Yeah, we can do it. We're going to do it. It's absolutely necessary.*

ME: *We are here in Selma for the 52nd Anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Has President Trump helped to rekindle the racial discord that permeated the South back the*

KE: *I've always believed that Trump was simply Republican philosophy on steroids. He wasn't materially different from them. He was just more blatant than them. What did it mean when he said don't be so politically correct? What he really meant is—you all over here talking about "those people", why not just say it. You got all this low level anti-Muslim hate, he would just say ban them. You got this stuff about Latino's taking our jobs, he just said wall um. Trump is not going straight at African Americans. He does use a lot of racial code every time he talks about Chicago and being tough on crime. What he's really saying is lock them up. sclc*

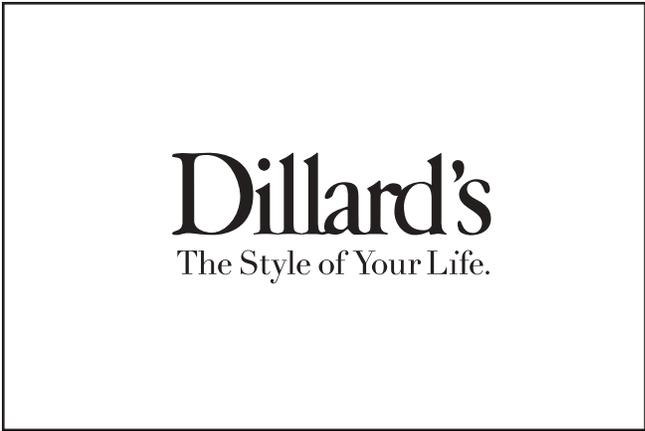


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How the Democratic Establishment Beat Back Keith Ellison's DNC Bid

Despite the setback, progressives remain determined to democratize the party and empower the left wing.

BY COLE STANGLER

New Democratic National Committee (DNC) Chair Tom Perez will need to confront the very forces that put him in charge.

Under normal circumstances, the accession of someone like former Labor Secretary Tom Perez to chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) might be cheered by the U.S. Left. But not in 2017—and not like this. In the aftermath of the catastrophic 2016 elections, progressives rallied behind the candidacy of Rep. Keith Ellison (Minn.), a Bernie Sanders ally and former civil rights lawyer who vowed to shake up the Democratic Party. The DNC balked: At its meeting in Atlanta in February, members opted for Perez over Ellison 235–200 in a second vote after neither secured a first-round majority.

In his victory speech, Perez named Ellison as his deputy chair, though the newly created position remains undefined. The outcome has progressives feeling uneasy at best and downright disgusted at worst. By all accounts, Perez appears both capable and politically palatable—and yet, the dynamics that propelled him to victory seems to reveal hostility from the Democratic Party establishment toward its growing left wing faction. That tension looms large at the very moment the Democrats must reckon with the most dangerous GOP in history.

'A very strong progressive'

DNC member Joshua Boschee, for one, is optimistic about Perez. "I think he's gonna be great," says Boschee, a state representative from North Dakota. He voted for Idaho Democratic Party Executive Director Sally Boynton Brown on the first ballot and Ellison on the second, after Boynton Brown withdrew.

"When we look at the specific things that Tom Perez has done, whether it was as labor secretary or in the office of civil rights in the Department of Justice, he is a very strong progressive." Many share that assessment of Perez's record. As labor secretary, for example, Perez oversaw the implementation of a rule extending overtime pay protections to 4 million workers (though a federal judge later blocked it) and crafted the fiduciary rule requiring investment advisors

to prioritize their clients' interests over their own profit (though Trump is trying to kill it).

The department also raised the minimum wage for federal contractors to \$10.20 and improved regulations to protect workers from cancer-causing silica dust. His new gig will be far more political. As DNC chair, Perez's primary task is building the DNC's war chest (\$372 million in 2016 and \$168 million in the 2014 midterms) and dispensing it to national campaigns and state party apparatuses. With that comes the power to dictate strategy, including how closely to coordinate with progressive groups and which candidates and races to invest in.

Going into the midterms, the Democrats face intimidating Republican majorities in both chambers of Congress and more than two-thirds of state legislatures, but Trump's record-low approval ratings seem to offer a chance for Democratic gains. Perez supporters believe he's up to the task. In pitches to DNC members, Perez framed himself as an adept manager with experience retooling complex bureaucracies and directing them toward progressive ends.

Given the stakes, Ellison has called on his supporters to embrace party unity. As he put it shortly after his defeat, "The very fate of our nation, I believe, is in the balance." Joshua Boschee agrees. "We all need to stand together and move forward because we are not the enemy," he tells *In These Times*. "Republicans are in charge."

How the race went down

For all of Tom Perez's progressive chops and the well-founded logic of pleas for unity, there is an uncomfortable story behind his victory. Perez was handpicked by forces within the Democratic Party that could not tolerate Keith Ellison as chair. Ellison announced his candidacy less than a week after Election Day and rapidly picked up endorsements from such progressives as Bernie Sanders and Rep. Raúl Grijalva (Ariz.), as well as centrist Democrats like Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer.

He also won nods from the heads of powerful unions that backed Hillary Clinton in the 2016 primary, including the American Federation of Teachers; the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and two major Service Employees International Union locals. With this broad support, Ellison emerged as the clear front-runner. Then, in December, after nudging from President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden, Perez stepped in.

In the eyes of his critics, the former labor secretary has not yet provided a convincing explanation of his decision to run. As many have pointed out, his politics are similar to Ellison's and he, too, campaigned on the need to improve the party's state and local infrastructure. (He declined to be interviewed for this story.) If Ellison's main advantage was enthusiastic support from the grassroots, Perez's appears to have been his well connected backers: Obama, Biden and key party money-raisers. As CNN reported, in the final days of the campaign, while Sanders and New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio were calling undecided DNC electors to make the case for Ellison, Obama aides and

Joe Biden himself were doing the same for Perez. (“I’ll let the president know you’re with Tom,” key Obama adviser Valerie Jarrett allegedly told DNC electors as she whipped votes.) Some in the congressman’s camp maintain it was this bunch of Perez allies—big name politicians and lobbyists—who tipped the balance in favor of the former labor secretary.

“When elected officials are reliant on fellow DNC members that help raise money for them, and [the money-raisers] are on one side of the campaign, [the elected officials] will be very responsive to that,” says DNC member Héctor Figueroa, president of the 163,000-member SEIU Local 32BJ and an Ellison supporter. Figueroa believes that powerful DNC members were “incredibly worried about the progressive wing of the party having access through the chair.”

“It was a very reactionary, very reactive opposition,” Figueroa says. “And I feel that the role Obama, Bill Clinton and Biden played was very heavy handed. It seemed to us that there was an effort to block Keith and deny him the leadership of the party.”

Ellison, who is Muslim, also faced a smear campaign from both the Right and pro-Israel liberals, each of which dredged up columns from the 1990s in which he defended anti-Semitic Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. (Ellison renounced the Nation of Islam in 2006.) Israeli-American billionaire Haim Saban, the top donor to the Hillary Clinton super PAC, publicly attacked Ellison as “anti-Semitic.” The day before the vote, the American Jewish Congress lobbying group instructed members to call the DNC and voice opposition to Ellison, saying he would “threaten the relationship” between the U.S. and Israel. Figueroa says the nature of the election has made the result more difficult to accept, although he praises Perez as a “progressive” with an “incredible track record.”

“President Obama, in all the eight years that he was in the White House, did not show this level of interest in the Democratic National Committee chair,” Figueroa continues. “Bernie Sanders has been criticized for being an outsider trying to [influence] the DNC. Well, Obama had eight years. We lost 1,000 local and state positions in the Democratic Party [between 2009 and 2017] and he showed very little interest in building the organizational structure that could have perhaps led to different results.”

For progressives hoping to wrest control of the Democratic Party, Ellison’s defeat is a sobering reminder: There is a long way to go.

Moving forward

Larry Cohen, chair of Our Revolution, a political action organization spun out of the Sanders presidential campaign, was a major backer of Ellison’s bid. Though disappointed by the outcome, Cohen, the former president of the Communications Workers of America union, says the close vote demonstrated the growing clout of progressives within the party. As someone who sits on the Democratic Party’s unity reform caucus—a group formed by a resolution at the 2016 convention to democratize party structures—Cohen is

committed to making the party less dependent on big money.

“The most significant outcome of the actual election was Tom Perez recognizing the grassroots and the all-but-tied vote and [appointing Keith Ellison] deputy chair of the party,” Cohen says. “And now the question is—not just for Tom Perez, but for all of us—what will that mean? Can there be a genuine partnership with the grassroots rather than a symbolic gesture?” A more definitive answer may emerge in the run-up to the 2018 and 2020 elections.

Party authorities could, for instance, pour efforts into seats previously abandoned to Republicans and favor candidates outside the traditional mold—or they could remain risk averse and prioritize centrist Democrats and “winnable” seats. In the meantime, local 2017 races offer progressives and Berniecrats opportunities to win office, with or without the support of the DNC. Indeed, for David Duhalde, deputy director of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), Ellison’s bid underlined that the party’s centrist forces are on the defensive.

“It took President Obama and many incumbent party operatives a lot of effort just to barely squeak by against Ellison,” says Duhalde, whose organization has more than doubled in membership since the presidential election, to 18,000 members—and received an up tick in online sign-ups after Ellison lost.

“They’re not always going to have President Obama making calls, nor will they be as interested in some of these more local and state apparatuses,” he says. “I think with some earlier organizing and building coalitions, it’s going to be very possible for [progressives to win]. People should feel heartened that Ellison gave them a real run for their money.” Duhalde points to the example of Mike Sylvester, a DSA member and former union organizer elected to the Maine State House as a Democrat last November. He also referenced the case of Khalid Kamau, a Black Lives Matter and DSA activist running for city council in South Fulton, Ga., with an endorsement from Our Revolution.

What’s clear, in any case, is that the battle over the future of the Democratic Party is far from over. Successfully taking on Trump will require the DNC to strengthen ties with progressive groups and energize young voters, says Figueroa of Local 32BJ. But many Democratic loyalists don’t believe the party is in need of a major strategic overhaul. In other words, Perez will need to confront the very forces that put him in charge.

“Tom is going to need to seek alliances with the people who supported Keith to overcome some of the forces that elected him,” Figueroa says. “He could do it. But when you arrive in a position in that way, it’s very challenging to convince your side to change.”

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COLE STANGLER writes about labor and the environment. His reporting has also appeared in The Nation, VICE, The New Republic and International Business Times. He lives in Paris, France. He can be reached at cole@inthesetimes.com.

CHUCK BERRY

Wild man of rock who helped define its rebellious spirit, dies at 90.

BY TERENCE McARDLE

Chuck Berry, the perpetual wild man of rock music who helped define its rebellious spirit in the 1950s and was the sly poet laureate of songs about girls, cars, school and even the “any old way you choose it” vitality of the music itself, died March 18 at his home in St. Charles County, Mo. He was 90.

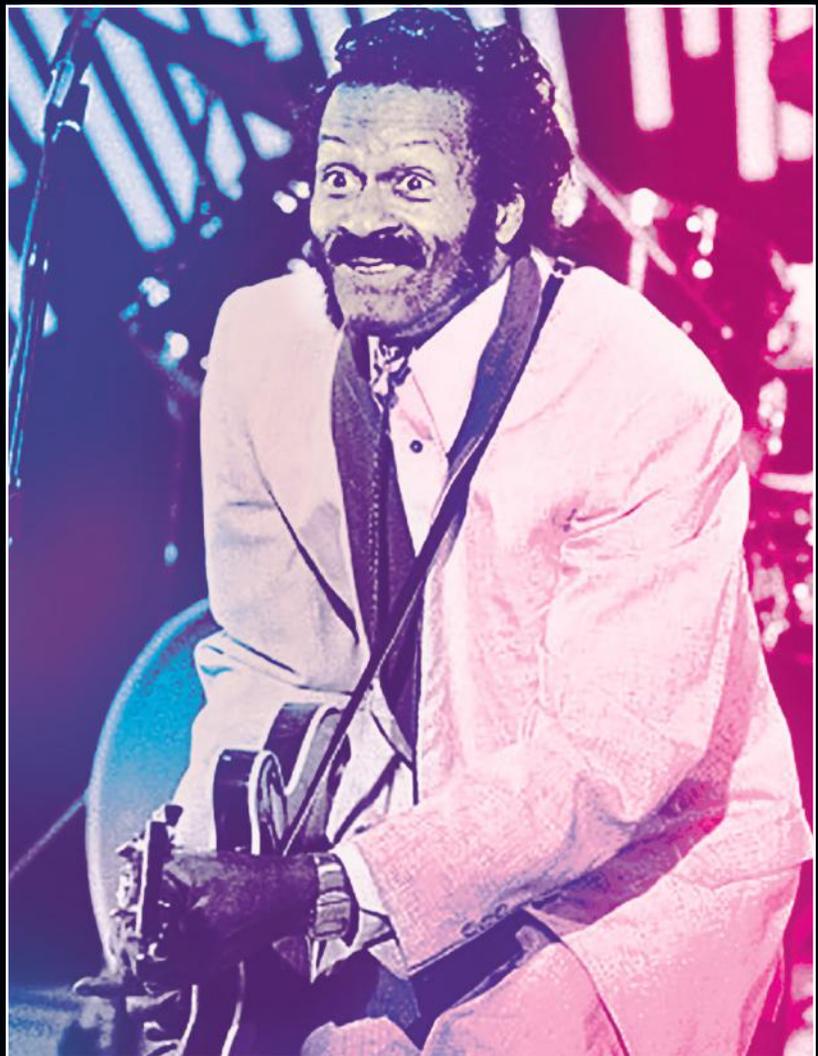
St. Charles County police announced the death in a Facebook post on its Website, saying officers responded to a medical emergency at Mr. Berry’s home and administered lifesaving techniques but could not revive him. No further information was available.

“While no individual can be said to have invented rock and roll, Chuck Berry comes the closest of any single figure to being the one who put all the essential pieces together,” reads Mr. Berry’s induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986.

A seminal figure in early rock music, he was all the rarer still for writing, singing and playing his own music. His songs and the boisterous performance standards he set directly influenced the Beatles and the Rolling Stones and later Bruce Springsteen and Bob Seger.

Mr. Berry so embodied the American rock tradition that his recording of “Johnny B. Goode” was included on a disc launched into space on the Voyager 1 spacecraft in 1977.

Besides Mr. Berry, members of the rock hall of fame’s inaugural class included Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, James Brown, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard, Ray Charles, Sam Cooke, Fats Domino and the Everly



Chuck Berry, a charismatic singer, songwriter and one of the greatest guitarists of all time, died March 18 at his home in St. Charles County, Missouri. He was 90.

Brothers. Of those he survived, Mr. Berry remained among the most indefatigable and acclaimed performers, playing concerts all over the world well into his 80s.

Despite John Lennon's oft-quoted quip—"If you tried to give rock-and-roll another name, you might call it 'Chuck Berry'"—Mr. Berry was an unlikely idol for a burgeoning teen subculture that he sang about at the dawn of the rock era.

He was 30, married and the father of two when he made his first recording, "Maybelene" in 1955. The song—a story of a man in a Ford V8 chasing his unfaithful girlfriend in a Cadillac Coupe de Ville—charted No. 1 on Billboard's rhythm-and-blues chart and No. 5 on the pop music charts.

It was soon followed by "Rock and Roll Music" ("it's got a backbeat, you can't lose it") and "Sweet Little Sixteen," whose astute reference to the teen-oriented TV show "American Bandstand" ("Well, they'll be rockin' on Bandstand, Philadelphia, P.A.") helped him connect to adolescent record-buyers.

With his lithe, athletic body, high cheekbones and perfectly pomaded hair, Mr. Berry personified the dangerous appeal of rock. He'd grin salaciously and telegraph the lyrics with a wide-eyed, almost childlike exuberance and then shoot across the stage, unleashing a staccato burst of bright, blaring guitar notes.

When he went into his signature "duck walk," his legs seemed to be made of rubber, and his whole body moved with clocklike precision—the visual statement of his music's kinetic energy. His charisma was the gold standard for all the rock-and-roll extroverts who followed.

He once told *The Washington Post* that he initiated the duck walk at the Brooklyn Paramount theater in 1956, based on a pose he sometimes struck as a child. "I had nothing else to do during the instrumental part of the song," he said. "I did it, and here comes the applause. Well, I knew to coin anything that was that entertaining, so I kept it up."

Rooted in blues

Mr. Berry was credited with penning more than 100 songs, the best known of which used carefully crafted rhymes and offered tightly written vignettes about American life. They became an influential part of the national soundtrack for generations of listeners and practitioners.

"Back in the U.S.A." (1959), later covered by Linda Ronstadt, delighted in an America where "hamburgers sizzle on an open grill night and day." And "School Day (Ring! Ring! Goes the Bell)" (1957), written about the overcrowded St. Louis schools of Mr. Berry's youth, became an anthem for bored, restless kids everywhere.

The Beach Boys had a hit record with "Surfin' USA" (1963), its melody borrowed without credit from "Sweet



Keith Richards of *The Rolling Stones*, left, Neil Young, center, and Chuck Berry perform together at the finale of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Awards in New York City, in 1986. Photo/Frankie Ziths/AP

Little Sixteen." The Beatles began their first U.S. concert, at the Washington Coliseum, with Mr. Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven" (1956).

And when Bob Dylan turned toward electric rock-and-roll, he acknowledged that his "Subterranean Homesick Blues" (1965) borrowed its meter almost directly from Mr. Berry's "Too Much Monkey Business" (1956).

Perhaps the most performed of his songs—indeed, one of the most performed of all rock songs—was "Johnny B. Goode" (1957). Its storyline embodied Mr. Berry's own experience as a black man born into segregation who lived to see "his name in lights":

Deep down Louisiana close to New Orleans.
Way back up in the woods among the evergreens.
There stood a log cabin made of earth and wood.
Where lived a country boy named Johnny B. Goode.
Who never ever learned to read or write so well.
But he could play the guitar just like a ringin' a bell.

"The gateway from freedom, I was told, was somewhere near New Orleans where most Africans were sorted through and sold" into slavery, Mr. Berry wrote in his self-titled 1987 memoir. "I'd been told my grandfather lived 'back up in the woods among the evergreens' in a log cabin. I revived the era with a story about a 'colored boy named Johnny B. Goode.'?"

Mr. Berry said he knew the song could have a wider appeal. "I thought it would seem biased to my white fans to say 'colored boy' so I changed it to 'country boy,'" he added.

In an interview with *The Washington Post* this year, rock historian Albin Zak called Mr. Berry a "very literate" wordsmith but that more important was the "durability" of his songs.

"In early rock-and-roll, there were so many one-hit wonders, but Chuck had so many hits that he was one of the most recognizable stars in the business," Zak said. "When rock became solidified in 1964 and the British invasion comes along with bands like the Beatles and Rolling Stones performing Chuck Berry songs, it seals the deal on the vitality of that repertoire. His music became tradition at that point."

Despite Mr. Berry's charisma, race played a factor in preventing him from achieving Elvis-like levels of commercial success in Hollywood and Las Vegas. He had hits including "No Particular Place to Go" (1964) and "Dear Dad" (1965) and appeared in "The T.A.M.I. Show," a 1965 concert film with James Brown, the Rolling Stones, the Beach Boys and Marvin Gaye. But Mr. Berry was relegated to the oldies circuit by the end of the decade.

In 1987, in the wake of his induction into the rock hall of fame, Mr. Berry released his memoir and was the subject of "Chuck Berry: Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll," a documentary and concert film featuring guest performers including Keith Richards and Eric Clapton.

At the time, Mr. Berry said he was wary of accepting a crown—bestowed by critics or peers—as a "king" of rock music.

"It's not me to toot my horn," he told *The Washington Post*. "The minute you toot your horn, it seems like society will try and disconnect your battery. And if you do not toot your horn, they'll try their darnedest to give you a horn to toot, or say that you should have a horn. It's them that creates the demand, so let them toot the horn."

Rising to the top

Charles Edward Anderson Berry was born in St. Louis on Oct. 18, 1926. His father was a carpenter and handyman.

He was 14 when he began playing guitar and performing at parties, but that was interrupted by a three-year stint in reform school for his role in a bungled armed robbery. After his release, he worked on an automobile assembly line while studying for a career in hairdressing.

On weekends, he sang at the Cosmopolitan Club in East St. Louis, Ill., with a group led by pianist Johnnie Johnson, who later played on many of Mr. Berry's records.

At the urging of Muddy Waters, Mr. Berry took his demo tapes to Chess Records, the Chicago label that specialized in blues and urban rhythm-and-blues. Label owner Leonard Chess was impressed by "Ida May," a country-and-western-styled tune, and said he would allow Mr. Berry to record it if he would change the name to "Maybellene."

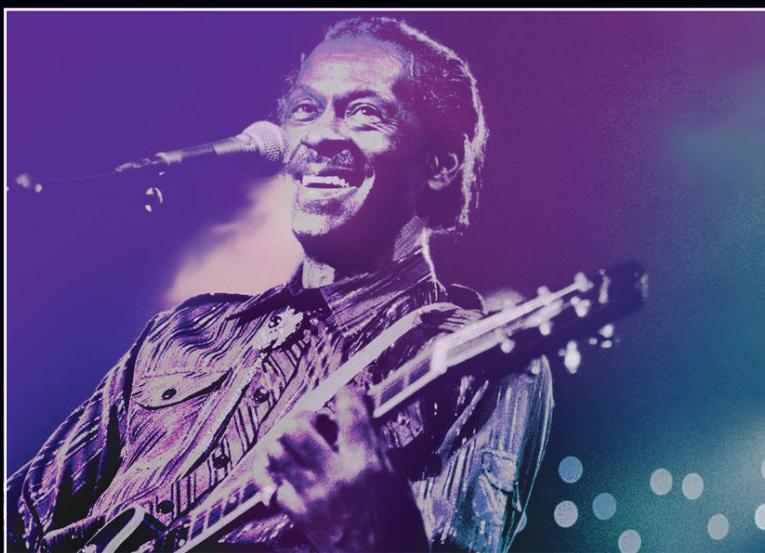
The song's countrified style and Mr. Berry's non-bluesy intonation reportedly led many disc jockeys to assume that he was white, and the song's popularity with white record-buyers helped spur his quick rise in the music industry.

His savvy about the unsavory business practices of the day—giving co-writing credits to deejays, such as Alan Freed, in exchange for frequent airplay—also propelled his career.

String of legal woes

His career was nearly derailed in 1959, when he was arrested on a federal charge of taking a 14-year-old girl across state lines for immoral purposes. Mr. Berry was convicted but granted an appeal on the basis of racist remarks made by the judge. A second trial also ended in a conviction. Mr. Berry eventually served 18 months of a three-year sentence and paid a \$10,000 fine.

He was released in 1963, soon to find his career overtaken by a second wave of rockers and the so-called British invasion of bands, such as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. He continued to be drawn into the headlines by legal troubles. In 1979, he served four months in Lompoc Federal Prison in California for tax evasion.



In 1989, Hosana Huck, a cook in Mr. Berry's St. Louis restaurant, the Southern Air, sued him, claiming that he secretly videotaped her and other women in the establishment's restroom. Huck's suit was followed by a class-action suit by other unnamed women. Mr. Berry denied any wrongdoing but settled out of court in 1995 for \$1.5 million.

In 1948, Mr. Berry married Themetta Suggs, known as Toddy. Information on survivors was not immediately available.

Mr. Berry received a Grammy Award for lifetime achievement in 1984 and the Kennedy Center Honors in 2000.

In later years, when Mr. Berry reflected on his age, he always made it clear that he intended to keep rocking as long as he lived.

"Elvis's songs will always be there, and I hope mine will be after I'm gone," he told the *Los Angeles Times* in 2002. "But you can't compare that, because he's gone and I'm not!" sclc

TERENCE McARDLE is a news aide/writer at 'The Washington Post'; and a contracting musician/bandleader.

THOUGHTS ON CHUCK BERRY

BY GEOFFREY JACQUES

Much commentary on the late Chuck Berry will focus on how his songs expressed fun and teenage angst. This is the right thing to do. Yet there's more. For example, Berry's obsession with the comparative qualities of fast cars—most brilliantly displayed in his song "Maybellene"—did not just reflect the rise of post-WW II consumerist culture...He preferred V-8 Fords over Cadillacs because he spent several years in the late 1940s and early 1950s helping make Ford cars.

The silence of pro-working class political organizations of the Left, and of the unions, regarding early rock and roll is striking. This is more surprising in retrospect than it was at the time (the McCarthy era constraints operating here deserve a separate treatment all their own), yet the fact remains that early rock and roll was the most thoroughly working class intervention into mainstream culture that our society had yet seen. The music troubled custodians of working class interests because it was essentially non-ideological and amoral. If radicals, Communists, Socialists, social democrats, and liberals agreed on anything, it was on the value of the Puritan-Fordist work ethic, the virtue of the ordered and disciplined life, and on the idea that all could be made right once we found the proper relationship between society's institutions and the "real" interests of the working class.

Rock and roll would have none of it, as the 1950s songs Berry wrote and recorded demonstrate. Many of his songs express opposition to alienated labor and its attendant society. "School Day," for example, portrays the school itself as the problem. It subjects the institution as such to a withering critique, exposing school as little more than a nasty training ground for the nastier world of work, which, of course, it is; but no teen in 1957 needed a sociologist to get that message. All they had to do was listen to the radio. "Brown Eyed Handsome Man," starts with the tale of a victorious encounter with the racist criminal justice system (the term of art is "vagrancy"), and proceeds with a kind of black history lesson. (Those who think the eye in this song isn't a metaphor should listen again.) "Brown Eyed" includes a nod to miscegenation and ends with a vignette about a heroic baseball player. Astute listeners would have thought of the famed, just-retired Brooklyn Dodgers second baseman whose press notices might have had the words "brown," referring to persons, and "handsome," in the same sentence. On the other hand, must I explain "rotten bill," in "Too Much Monkey Business"? Or what it means to face such a thing after a week of hard work? We don't find such references in Cole Porter songs. Nor do we find challenges to state power itself, such as that in "You Can't Catch Me," where the singer, now

driving a "Flight de Ville," mocks the state police at the New Jersey-Pennsylvania border. This is closer to the beboppers' idea of "disorder at the border" than it is to any left wing or right wing concept of "labor discipline."

People talk about how influential Berry was, but the credit he's given is often limited. Sure, he's cited as a rock and roll pioneer, but when listening to a "dream" song like "Downbound Train," I'm reminded that what's called the "Folk Revival" of the early 1960s came in Berry's wake as well. So tell me which folkster has covered this song. Or, perhaps more important, which one of them has based a song of their own on this one. I'm hearing echoes, but I won't name them. You can name them yourself.

Let me offer some final observations, having to do with rhythm and sound. There are some pop drummers who want to call attention to themselves, who think rock and roll drumming is about displaying one's emotions. I say that if you want to be an emotional drummer, look to Elvin Jones, or Max Roach, or even Chick Webb for inspiration. Yet however emotional these musicians might be, they also know a cardinal value that listeners treasure in drummers. The best drummers are felt, not heard. One could write

"I'm going to learn to dance if it takes me all night and day."

an entire essay on the emotional content of Roach's solo on Charlie Parker's 1945 recording of "Ko Ko," but what Roach does there has no place in rock and roll. On the other hand, what Ebby Hardy and the great, vastly under appreciated Fred Below do on Berry's early records only seems simple enough. They bang the hell out of the beat. You might think it sounds mechanical, and it does; but I cannot help but think this characteristic reflects the world of work. To put it another way, when listening to these records, imagine yourself in a hot, nasty, noisy factory, assaulted all day by the steady pounding of machines. Then imagine dancing your way into nirvana at night to that same pounding, only now it's in the service of guiding your body into joyous ecstasy. Imagine that this has never happened before now.

The machine-like sound in Berry's music — found in his guitar playing as well— can be understood as one way 1950s blues reflected the proletarianization of African American (and other) workers. In this sense, the similarities between early records by John Lee Hooker and Berry's efforts, in terms of both rhythm and guitar sound, are instructive.

For all that though, we need just one simple test to gauge Berry's significance. Imagine the last seven decades without him. Such a world would have been vastly unlike the one we know. Chuck Berry didn't just change a musical style. He changed what we mean when we use the word "music," and thereby he enriched human culture as such. For that, society will always gratefully remember him. sclc

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JAHI WINSTON

Atlanta Movie Star in the Making

BY MAYNARD EATON, Managing Editor

Atlanta has become recognized as a major international film making mecca, but nowadays 13-year-old Jahi Di'Allo Winston has emerged as arguably the city's youngest, hottest and most highly regarded actor.

Winston, the son of Atlanta's popular preacher Pastor Darryl Winston, jumpstarted his career with a "spectacular" 17-month stint on Broadway in the coveted role of Young Simba in the long-running theatrical classic *The Lion King*, which opened Nov. 13, 1997 on Broadway and has been seen by 50 million people worldwide. Jahi has become a highly sought-after; up-and-coming national TV and movie star ever since.

"When I got the part, instantly my life changed," the young Winston recalls about his role as Young Simba. "I'd already known that I could act and it was something I could do. The opportunity came sooner than I anticipated. I had to check within myself to see if I was ready."

Jahi beat out 900 other contestants for that coveted role. He was on Broadway for 17 months. *The Lion King* is so popular, it has been performed on Broadway for nearly 20 years. It is the Broadway Theater's third longest running show in its iconic history. It launched Jahi Winston's acting career.

A lively stage adaptation of the Academy Award-winning 1994 Disney film, *The Lion King* is the story of a young lion prince living in the flourishing African Pride Lands. Born into the Royal family, precocious cub Simba spends his days exploring the sprawling savanna grasslands and idolizing his kingly father, Mufasa, while youthfully shirking the responsibility his position in life requires. A vibrant and

exciting tale from the great creatives at Disney, *The Lion King* is a story of love and redemption.

"The experience was once in a lifetime," Jahi continues. "It will always be very special to me. I didn't realize how big it would be doing that show for the amount of time that I did it and for a show of that caliber. It is one of the longest running shows in history. I didn't realize how big a deal it was acting on Broadway. It catapulted my career. *Lion King* was a great platform, and a dream come true."

Jahi's father, Rev. Darryl Winston, has been the popular and prominent pastor of Greater Works Ministries for 20 years in Atlanta. His wife Juakena Winston, who is also a minister, has formed All The Up Entertainment that serves as Jahi's management team giving oversight to his burgeoning career.

"My youngest son is the embodiment of what we teach at our church," he says. "We believe we've been called to go into what's often referred to as the Seven Mountains of Influence—the arts, entertainment, the political arena, economics, religion, economics and business—and that the church must have influence beyond brick and mortar. Growing up in the church, Jahi has always exhibited grace and charisma. He is extremely gifted."

As a result, Winston has now become a big deal kid actor on the national stage. It's been recently announced that Jahi's latest project finds him as a lead actor in the upcoming Screen Gems' upcoming thriller *Proud Mary*, starring Taraji P. Henson as hit woman Mary Goodwin. Danny Glover (*Almost Christmas*) has also officially joined the film. It promises to be a Blockbuster! Jahi is destined to garner national exposure and acclaim.

“use this platform; take every opportunity you get to perform in the arts, to enhance and enrich, and better life for somebody else.”

— Ambassador Andrew Young advised Jahi

Adding to that growing body of on-camera TV work and notable cinematic roles, Jahi, also recently completed an ABC pilot called *Libby and Malcolm*.

“It’s a great story; it’s a political comedy” Jahi opines. “It’s not a spin-off of “Black-ish” but a similar format. I’m really excited about that, it will definitely be interesting for [viewers].

“My son, I believe, is a bright star shining in the universe, and his illuminating presence will lead many out of darkness,” prophesizes Pastor Winston. “I’m just grateful that God chose my wife and I as a vessel to bring to the earth such a gift as my son.”

Still, the humble Jahi, refuses to see himself as what he truly is—a young movie and television star talent—though others do.

“I don’t even think of myself as anybody’s movie star,” he tells this reporter in an exclusive interview. “I didn’t get into this business to be a movie star; I got into this business to do what I love. Other people can see me like that if they want to, and I’m sure some people do see me that way. I don’t really consider myself to be a movie star.”

Alveda King is a Republican activist, author, former Georgia state representative, and the niece of the revered late civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She is also a good friend of the Winston family.

“Atlanta is a place that births dreams, and this is Jahi’s destiny,” says Elder King. “The fact that he has come up in the church is not an accident. It is fascinating that he can act and sing. He is like a bright star; he has brightness in his personality. I know him quite well. I’ve watched his growth and development, and this success is very heartwarming.”

According to the Motion Picture Association of America, the Georgia film industry currently ranks third in the nation behind California and New York, with nearly 3,000 motion-picture and television industry businesses, including 1,957 production-related companies. With a direct spend of \$2.02 billion, the economic impact was more than \$7 billion in FY16—up from \$244 million just nine years ago. There are about 25,000 Georgians who are in the film and television production business and another 30,000 who are indirectly related.

Ambassador Andrew Young, a civil rights icon, reportedly gave Jahi some sagacious advice when he was tapped to go to Broadway. Winston says Young invited the young actor to his home and told him to “use this platform; take every opportunity you get to perform in the arts to enhance and enrich and better life for somebody else.”

The Baptist church and Christian values have always been central to Jahi’s life and learning. His father says he is a gifted child of God.

“My earliest recollection of his creativity was when we did an Easter play and one of the children didn’t show up,” Rev Winston recalls. “Jahi improvised and did his role and the other child’s role as well. And, extemporaneously took



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it beyond what was in the script. He shut it down, and turned in just a stellar performance. The entire church was on their feet.

“Jahi was six years old at the time,” Rev. Winston continues. Jahi was also writing songs at that tender age. That’s when Rev. Winston clearly recognized his son’s extraordinary natural talents.

“He was in a fifth grade school play and stole the show,” Rev. Winston fondly remembers. “Everybody in that diverse audience were marveling at his gift and his natural abilities to woo a crowd. “Then we got notification in 2014 that Disney was auditioning in Atlanta for Young Simba in *The Lion King*.”

What followed was a stand-out 2017 performance when he successfully scored a guest role on the highly acclaimed show *The New Edition Story*. Critics say Jahi nailed the part. It was Jahi’s first film experience and his introduction to a national audience.

“It was a fantastic opportunity,” he says. “*New Edition* means a lot to a lot of people, and being a part of something like that was really amazing. The cast and the crew were like my family. And, all the love and appreciation was really cool. It was a once in a lifetime experience. I loved it.”

That jump-started Jahi’s blossoming movie career. Now he has a feature role alongside comedian/actor Kevin Hart in the soon-to-be-released drama/comedy called *Untouchable*.

“I’m playing Kevin Hart’s son,” Jahi reveals during an exclusive March 28th interview in Atlanta with this reporter. “In the movie, it becomes one of the most important stories. It is a story about trust without redemption, and it will show a different side of Kevin, and it will be really new to me too, so I am really excited about it.”

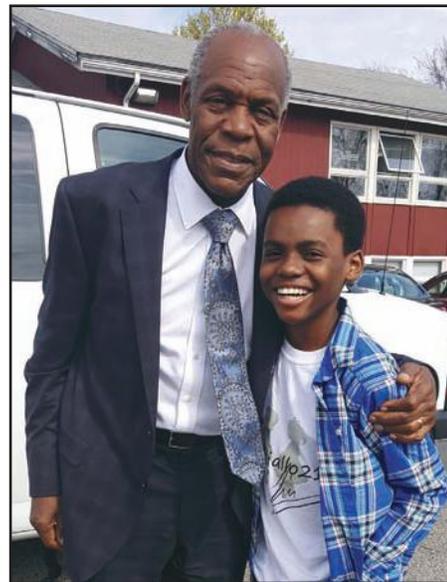
Jahi adds exuberantly, “It is about this man who gets out of prison, and his parole officer is kind of giving him the business. So, he finds this man, Philip, who was handicapped in a hang-gliding accident, and Dell, played by Kevin, takes on the role of being Phillip’s caretaker. They end up becoming best friends.”

When asked, what it is like being back in Atlanta, and how his friends and family deal with him now that he is has garnered a national spotlight, and is on track to become a major movie star, Jahi says: “I like to think people don’t see me any different than who I was before I started my career. A lot of my time is spent around my family and that really keeps me grounded. They don’t really see me as being a big-time movies star. So. It’s all good.”

Jahi is not a one-dimensional artist. He sings, he acts and he also is a talented baseball player. In fact, he has musical recordings about to be released that are receiving rave reviews.

“He has two songs,” says his father. “One song is an inspirational piece for children to chase their dreams, and another one is what we call a bubble gum, Jackson Five thing about a crush he has with a little girl who lives in 216. That’s called 216 and it is reminiscent of that era when we had that bubble gum, Pop kind of music. I think his sound transcends genre’s, but it is rooted in the church.”

Rev. Winston adds, “He is a worshiper. When he is home, Jahi is doing something in the church—ushering or



Jahi’s latest project finds him as a lead actor working with Danny Glover in the upcoming action thriller *Proud Mary*; starring Taraji P. Henson as hit woman Mary Goodwin.

singing—and he has a strong, humble trait. In the interim while he has been waiting for various roles, every Sunday he is serving in the church.”

Performing in church plays or singing in the church choir made all of us courageous and confident to be in front of people and express ourselves creatively,” says 17-year-old Jelani Winston, Jahi’s older brother. “I sing, act and dance as well.

“There is no sibling rivalry,” he says. “What’s good for one of us is good for all of us I believe. Family is family. Any opportunity for my little brother is an opportunity for us all.”

“It’s so much fun to watch him. He lights up on the stage,” adds Ava Zeigers, a 15-year-old family friend, whose dream is to work backstage on Broadway. “He’s really good and talented and inspiring.”

Lolita Walker knows talent. She is an Atlanta studio owner and an accomplished playwright. “He was awesome on Broadway; he got the biggest ovations.” Walker says of Jahi. “Atlanta has definitely changed from when I was young. If I had had the opportunities that are given to young people now, it’s no telling. Like Georgia State University has a film and theatre program now. They did not have that program when I was in college.

“It started with LaFace Records as far as opening the doors for entertainment in Atlanta all the way around,” Walker continues. “As, the years have progressed, I think Atlanta is as important as New York and Los Angeles now. Think about it, you’ve got Tyler Perry here who has made his own way, and you have a whole slew of artists that are from here like Usher and T.I. and TLC.

“Jahi is now one of Atlanta’s best talents,” Walker opines. “He’s going all the way. He’s going to be a top Hollywood artist; he is going to be ‘that’ actor 20 years from now—no doubt in my mind.”

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