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**The Continuing Impact of White Supremacy  
Worrill's World  
By Dr. Conrad W. Worrill  
BlackCommentator.com Columnist**

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How many times have you heard someone of African ancestry say that "Black people are our own worst enemy"? If you have lived among African people in this country for any length of time, I am sure you have heard this remark made many times.

Unfortunately, the system of white supremacy developed in the western world, has caused far too many African people in America to believe that the problem we face as a people is "us." We must remind ourselves, time and time again, that African people in America were captured from Africa and brought to America against our will. As the "1974 Black Capital" article asserted, "Our introduction to the West was in the form of a commodity raped from Africa to be used as labor, capital, chattel, and currency to build a nation for someone else." In the article, it explained that "...our history tells us that we were below slaves and less than human. We were things who were traded for horses, our women used as breeders and our children raised like chickens."

Finally, the "Black Capital" article pointed out that during the slavery process - "The level of our existence was based upon the skill and the will of those who owned us. They had the right to deem that which was best for their property. Therefore, the

profit motive and the skill of the slave master determined how this Black wealth would bring the highest return on his investment."

This formula is still at work today. Just examine the role of African people in the entertainment and athletic industry. White people own and control these industries and use African people to "bring the highest return off their investment."

If African people are going to ever have a serious mental breakthrough in terms of how we analyze our condition in America, we will have to resolve the question "are we our own worst enemy," or has the system of white supremacy created a set of conditions that continue to keep us in an oppressed state?

We must accept responsibility for answering this question as well as accepting responsibility for solving all the problems we face as a people. But in accepting responsibility for addressing the problems we face as an African people in America, we must have a framework out of which to properly conceptualize our problems.

In 1852, the great African thinker in America, Dr. Martin R. Delany, wrote one of the most important books that accurately described our condition at that moment in history that is still applicable to our condition today. The title of the book is [\*The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States\*](#).

Delany wrote, "Unfortunately for us a body, we have been taught that we must have some person to think for us, instead of thinking for ourselves. So accustomed are we to submission and this kind of training, that it is with difficulty, even among the most intelligent of the colored people, an audience may be elicited for any purpose whatever, if the expounder is to be colored..."

Further Delany wrote, "and the introduction of a subject is treated with indifference, if not contempt, when the originator is a colored person. Indeed, the most ordinary white person, is almost revered while the most qualified colored person is totally neglected, nothing from them is appreciated."

In resolving the question of whether "we are our own worst enemy," we should reflect that for over three hundred years white people openly discussed African people as a problem (1600 - 1900). Today they still discuss us as a problem but the language is coded differently.

As Dr. Anderson Thompson has written on the discussions that white people have had on what they have historically called "the Negro Problem," "There is a duality in the story of western white man and his culture, which, paradoxically, is thrown into sharp relief wherever the Black man appears (or is dropped) on the scene." Dr. Thompson says, "Whenever or wherever the white man exists in proximity to the Blacks the Negro Question appears."

The idea of the "Negro Question" is discussed further when Dr. Thompson writes, "The Negro Question in Western society has been a perennial subject of endless international debates, actions, decisions, wars, riots, lynchings - all of which flow out a recurring western dialogue: a conversation (for Europeans only) which for a long time took place between white men over what should be done with, about or to the Blacks they found in their captured territories."

Concluding on this point, Dr. Thompson informs us "The International Negro

Question, or Nigger Question has, for the most part, been an integral past of European Civilization. Wherever in the world there existed. Europeans in proximity to the African, inevitably the question arose as to how (not why, I nor whether) the Black man should be exploited or should be eliminated."

We are not our own worst enemy - even though some African people in this country behave in manners that are not in our best interest. What we must continue to do is to understand this negative African behavior and assume responsibility for changing it. The enemy and problem is white supremacy and its continued impact on us.


**BlackCommentator.com** Columnist, Conrad W. Worrill, PhD, is the National Chairman of the National Black United Front ([NBUF](#)). Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Worrill.

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