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## Target caught in DEI crossfire as lawsuits, boycotts and actions mount

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Target Corporation, which recently scaled back its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, is facing financial consequences, community backlash, and new legal challenges from both sides of the political spectrum. The retail giant's decision to retreat from its DEI commitments and Pride Month merchandise has drawn conservative-led lawsuits while also fueling boycotts and economic pressure from civil rights groups.

Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier and America First Legal, founded by former President Trump adviser Stephen Miller, have filed a lawsuit against Target. The suit, brought on behalf of a Florida



The retail giant's decision to retreat from its DEI commitments and Pride Month merchandise has drawn conservative-led lawsuits while also fueling boycotts and economic pressure from civil rights groups. (Photo via NNPA)

board overseeing state pensions, alleges the company failed to disclose the financial risks associated with its DEI programs and 2023 Pride Month collection. The legal action is the latest in a wave of conserva-

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### Project 2025 has become a reality

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#### People In The News ...



Alvin F. Poussaint



Joy Reid

NDG Quote of the Week: "Where there is no vision, there is no hope."

- George Washington Carver

## Alvin F. Poussaint

Alvin F. Poussaint, a psychiatrist who provided medical care to civil rights activists in 1960s Mississippi and later became a national authority on the effects of racism on Black mental health, died Monday at his home in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. He was 90. His wife, Dr. Tina Young Poussaint, confirmed his death.

Born May 15, 1934, in East Harlem, New York City, Poussaint graduated from Stuyvesant High School before earning a bachelor's degree from Columbia College in 1956 and a medical degree from Cor-



nell University in 1960. He completed his residency at the University of California, Los Angeles Neuropsychiatric Institute, where he was chief resident from 1964 to 1965.

Driven by the fight for racial equality, Poussaint

served as the southern field director for the Medical Committee for Human Rights from 1965 to 1967, providing care to civil rights workers in Mississippi and working to desegregate hospitals throughout the South. He later joined the faculty at Tufts University Medical School, where he directed a psychiatric program in a low-income housing development. In 1969, Poussaint began teaching at Harvard Medical School, ultimately serving as a professor of psychiatry and the faculty associate dean for student affairs.

Poussaint's research spanned topics such as grief, parenting, violence,

and the experiences of children from interracial families. His 1972 book, *Why Blacks Kill Blacks*, examined how systemic racism affects Black psychological development. He also co-authored *Raising Black Children and Lay My Burden Down: Suicide and the Mental Health Crisis Among African Americans*, highlighting issues often overlooked in mainstream mental health discussions.

Beyond academia, Poussaint became a prominent cultural advisor. From 1984 to 1993, he worked as a consultant for *The Cosby Show* and its spinoff, *A Different World*. His role was to ensure that the programs

portrayed Black families in a positive and realistic light, free from harmful stereotypes. While often cited as the inspiration for the character of Dr. Cliff Huxtable, Poussaint denied the claim but acknowledged his influence on the show's direction. "I don't rewrite," he told *The Philadelphia Daily News* in 1985. "But I indicate what makes sense, what's off, what's too inconsistent with reality."

His collaboration with Bill Cosby extended to co-writing the 2007 book, *Come On, People: On the Path from Victims to Victors* and contributing the introduction and afterword to Cosby's best-selling book

"Fatherhood." Although Poussaint worked closely with Cosby on various projects, there is no evidence he was aware of the allegations that later emerged against the entertainer.

A firm believer in addressing racism's profound psychological impact, Poussaint was known for challenging conventional views. In a 1999 opinion piece, he wrote, "It's time for the American Psychiatric Association to designate extreme racism as a mental health problem. Otherwise, racism will continue to fall through the cracks of the mental health system, and we can

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## Joy Reid

MSNBC has parted ways with Joy Reid, marking the departure of another prominent Black woman from the network. Reid joins Rashida Jones, the first Black woman to head a major cable news network, along with Melissa Harris-Perry and Tiffany Cross. All four women brought critical, unapologetic perspectives on race, politics, and power—voices that many believe are being systematically eliminated.

Bobby Henry, chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), called Reid's removal unacceptable and urged immediate action.

"As Chairman of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), I stand in unwavering solidarity with Joy Reid and the impactful legacy of *The ReidOut*," Henry said. "Joy's voice has been a beacon of truth, justice, and empowerment for our community, and now is the



time for us to show up for her. I urge you to join us—together, we will lift our voices, strategize, and continue to support those who champion our stories. Our collective strength is our greatest asset—let's stand united for Joy and for the future of Black journalism. The Black Press of America and Black-owned media is needed now just as we were almost 200 years ago."

Reid's departure has drawn immediate criticism from viewers, journalists, and activists. Kevin Simmons, a supporter of *The ReidOut*, wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, "The racists are rejoicing"

after MSNBC announced the show's cancellation. "The ReidOut had a great run. Joy will be okay. Crazy this announcement comes after she just won two NAACP awards last night."

Justice Correspondent Elie Mystal called Reid irreplaceable.

"I owe the television part of my career to Joy Reid, as do so many other Black voices y'all never would have heard of if not for her," Mystal wrote. "And that's why she's gone. They can treat Black folks as interchangeable, but everybody Black knows that Joy was indispensable."

Many have pointed out that while MSNBC cuts ties with Reid, the network keeps shows like *Morning Joe*, whose hosts Joe Scarborough and Mika Brzezinski reportedly visited Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago after his 2016 victory. The decision to retain programming aligned with political power while eliminating

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# Black Press, NAACP, and lawmakers warned America — now Trump's Project 2025 agenda is reality

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

The Black Press warned Americans. The NAACP warned Americans. Texas Democratic Rep. Jasmine Crockett warned Americans. Several others who paid attention to the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 sounded the alarm too. Yet, despite Donald Trump's lies and attempts to distance himself from the plan's hateful and destructive mandate, reality has set in. Less than one month into his presidency, Politico noted that Project 2025 has shown up in 37 of Trump's executive orders, placing its architects squarely in power and moving swiftly to reshape the nation's policies. Despite public denials, the fingerprints of the far-right Heritage Foundation's sweeping agenda are unmistakable.

Among the immediate actions are Trump's reinstatement of harsh immigration policies, directives rolling back civil rights protections, and a push to gut the Department of Education's diversity programs—each item aligning with the Project 2025 blueprint. Executive orders dismantling environmental safeguards, restricting reproductive rights, and granting broad powers to law enforcement have followed, echoing the proj-

ect's call for a return to what its authors describe as "traditional American values." "This is exactly what we warned about," Rep. Crockett said. "They're moving with precision, targeting the most vulnerable communities first—immigrants, Black and brown people, LGBTQ+ folks—and they're doing it under

deception. The NAACP released a statement emphasizing the stakes: "This is not about politics—this is about survival," officials at the nation's oldest civil rights organization stated. "Communities of color will bear the brunt of these policies. We told you this was coming."

Behind the scenes,



*"Among the immediate actions are Trump's reinstatement of harsh immigration policies, directives rolling back civil rights protections, and a push to gut the Department of Education's diversity programs..."*

the guise of restoring law and order."

The Black Press of America issued numerous reports before the election detailing how Project 2025 aims to strip away civil liberties and concentrate power in the executive branch. Critics say the speed at which these policies are being implemented proves that Trump's earlier denials were calculated

Trump has appointed several Heritage Foundation affiliates to top White House positions. John McEntee, one of Project 2025's key contributors, now oversees personnel decisions, ensuring federal agencies align with the agenda's hardline stance. Meanwhile, another architect of the plan, Russell Vought, plays a central role in rewriting federal

budget priorities to defund programs that benefit marginalized groups. The executive orders have included eliminating funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across government agencies, establishing federal penalties for "disruptive" protests, and reinstating the controversial "Remain in Mexico" immigration policy.

"Donald Trump can pretend he's not involved, but look at the people in his administration," said Derrick Johnson, president of the NAACP. "Look at the policies being pushed through with record speed. This is Project 2025 in action." Many of Trump's moves echo those listed in the Heritage Foundation's publicly available 920-page blueprint. The document outlines plans to overhaul the Department of Justice, weaken protections against police brutality, and limit LGBTQ+ rights, all of which have been reflected in Trump's recent directives.

Civil rights organizations are rallying to fight back, filing lawsuits, and urging Americans to mobilize. Still, the road ahead remains steep, with Republican-controlled legislatures supporting many of these initiatives. "There's no time for complacency," Rep. Crockett said. "What we are witnessing is the normalization of fascism disguised as patriotism."

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# Moves to prevent overdose deaths in Black communities

By Tracie Gardner  
and Daliah Heller

On Dec. 8, the air was crisp as Kimberly Douglas made her way to her son Bryce's gravestone in National Harmony Memorial Park in Landover. It's been nearly 18 months since she lost the 17-year-old to a fentanyl overdose. On this day each year, known as Worldwide Candle Lighting Day, families light candles honoring loved ones gone too soon, like Bryce. This day of remembrance is a stark reminder of the urgent need to prevent similar tragedies.

The pain of the day Kimberly lost her son is seared into her soul. She worked at her home office in Bowie in the early afternoon. Bryce was home early from school and napped in his bedroom, just one room away. When Kimberly found him unresponsive, she frantically searched her home for naloxone, a medi-



*Narcan is a prescription medication that is used to treat an opioid overdose. (Shevry Lassiter/The Washington Informer)*

cine that reverses an overdose and prevents death. In her panic, she couldn't find it. It wasn't until later, through tears of grief and disbelief, that she discovered the naloxone — in Bryce's pocket. He had it all along.

This country's overdose epidemic has generated a large and active ecosystem of advocacy groups, support organizations, and grieving parents. But Kimberly finds she is often the only Black parent engaged. She has started her own

Facebook group, Black Moms Against Overdose, seeking a safe place for Black families whose loved ones overdose. She prays more Black parents will step forward, join the fight, and be part of the solution.

Over the past five years, a staggering half million people overdosed in the United States. But recent reports suggest a steady upward trend over two decades is reversing. The latest data from the CDC shows a 17% decline in deaths from September

2023 through August 2024.

Over the past decade, however, deaths have skyrocketed in Black and Indigenous populations, and now overdose rates have begun to diverge by race. A recent analysis of CDC data from the O'Neill Institute shows that through 2023, in many states, while deaths were leveling off and even declining among white populations, they were still rising in Black and Indigenous populations.

Why have Black communities not experienced the same decrease in overdose deaths? Through our work nationwide, we found that critical preventive information and resources often don't reach Black communities. We see two main problems: first, information and resources are not promoted or distributed effectively in Black communities, and second, fallout from America's destructive war on drugs still

affects Black communities.

For example, access to the lifesaving medication, naloxone, can reduce overdose deaths. But efforts to expand naloxone distribution have not sufficiently reached Black and Indigenous communities. A modeling study shows overdose deaths among Blacks and Hispanics would dramatically decrease if their access to naloxone were at the same level as whites. Intentional collaboration with community leaders by local and state governments and local health providers can ensure access to naloxone is equitable and will save lives.

Despite the reality that levels of drug use are relatively uniform across racial groups, the opioid-driven overdose crisis has been widely represented as predominantly impacting white communities, leaving Blacks less informed. Drugs popularized in hip-hop culture, like Percocets

and lean (codeine), aren't cast as opioids. Many people are unaware that ingredients such as fentanyl are widespread in the drug supply, increasing risk across the board.

The legacy of the racist war on drugs, which subjected Blacks to community-level criminalization, unequal sentencing, and mass incarceration, wields a lasting influence. Services and public health messages directed at people who use drugs are less impactful for those who fear being stigmatized by a connection to drug use. Messages that can save lives are not being heard. We need to address the stigma of drug use to improve health for all communities, and especially for those historically targeted for drug-related harm.

As a visible advocate, Kimberly fights stigma by providing Black families a space to grieve and take ac-

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## TARGET, from Page 1

tive attacks on corporate diversity efforts, aligning with former President Donald Trump's push to dismantle DEI policies in both government and private sectors.

At the same time, Target's DEI retreat has provoked backlashes from civil rights groups, Democratic leaders, and even the heirs of one of Target's founders, who argue that diversity is good business and should not be abandoned under political pressure. The company's decision to reduce minority hiring targets and discontinue reports to diversity-

focused organizations led to an 8.7% drop in its stock value. Data from Placer.ai shows store traffic decreased by 4% following Trump's executive order banning federal DEI initiatives, with an additional 9% decline the following week. Walmart experienced a dip of less than 3% during the same period.

In Minneapolis—Target's headquarters and the city where George Floyd's murder sparked national protests—civil rights lawyer Nekima Levy Armstrong urged consumers to boycott the retailer. "We thought Target would stand

firm in its values," Armstrong told reporters at a news conference. "Instead, they bowed to the Trump administration. We will not step back."

Jaylani Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said the company should be held accountable for turning its back on DEI. "If you were moved by George Floyd's murder to seek justice, it's time to boycott Target," Hussein told PBS.

The boycott movement has gained traction, with local Black Lives Matter chapters participating in events where activists cut

up their Target credit cards. Organizers have encouraged consumers to shop at companies like Costco, which recently reaffirmed its DEI commitments.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), representing the Black Press of America, and civil rights organizations like the NAACP have launched campaigns to inform Black consumers about corporate retreats from diversity initiatives. "Black Americans spend \$2 trillion annually. We must reconsider supporting businesses that disregard our contributions," said NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Cha-

vis Jr. NNPA Chairman Bobby R. Henry Sr. vowed that the Black Press would hold corporations accountable. "We will not be silent while corporations reverse progress that directly affects Black communities," Henry asserted.

Rev. Jamal Bryant, pastor of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta, has called for a 40-day "economic fast" targeting Target. "Black people spend \$12 million a day at Target," Bryant stated during an appearance on Let It Be Known. "We're focusing on Target first because of their broken promises to our community." The campaign,

which coincides with Lent, has drawn over 50,000 participants within a week at [targetfast.org](http://targetfast.org).

Target now finds itself under pressure from both conservative and progressive forces. After previously positioning itself as a leader in corporate diversity, the company has been forced into a balancing act that has left it vulnerable on all sides.

"We encourage you to spend your money where you're respected, support Black-owned businesses, and demand businesses prioritize people over profit," said Keisha Bross, financial strategist at the NAACP.

# 20 million predatory loans drained over \$2.4 billion from consumers

## CRL update documents surge in online lending despite state reforms

By Charlene Crowell

New research from the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL) finds that in just one year – 2022 – cash-strapped borrowers took out over 20 million predatory loans totaling nearly \$8.6 billion. The triple-digit annual percentage rates (APRs) and high costs attached to these loans – whether payday, single-payment or installment loans – drained more than \$2.4 billion in fees from low-income borrowers.

CRL's Down the Drain, report provides an update on the effects of payday



lending, including online and app-based lending, that remains dominant in low-wealth, largely Black and Latino neighborhoods. Many of these lenders use misleading advertising to lure working people into a cycle of repeat borrowing

and growing fees that can leave them struggling for months to repay a debt that reduces each subsequent paycheck.

“Payday loans are designed to trap people in debt and this report shows the scale of the harm,” said re-

port co-author Yasmin Farahi, CRL's deputy director of state policy and senior policy counsel. “Predatory lending is a public policy choice. Congress and policymakers in states without common sense interest rate limits should enact these usury laws and the executive branch has a duty to enforce them – that is how to keep payday loan sharks at bay.”

Predatory high-cost lenders that offer loans with triple-digit APRs and high, often hidden fees, are trying to evade responsible interest rate limits that currently are in place in 20 states and

the District of Columbia.

But these consumer-oriented reforms still leave 30 states where triple-digit interests rates remain legal, including Texas (662%), California (460%), Mississippi (572%), Alabama (456%), and Wisconsin (537%).

These abusive lenders often target working households and communities of color. A 2020 poll by CRL found that Black consumers were twice as likely as white consumers to live within a mile of either a payday lender or a pawnshop. The targeting of these communities can worsen

longstanding racial economic disparities.

“Although payday loan fee volume declined early in the pandemic, the Down the Drain report shows a \$200 million rebound from 2021 to 2022, reflecting increased strain on consumers' finances,” said report co-author Lucia Constantine, senior researcher at CRL. “Especially considering changes in the market toward online and longer-term loans, storefront payday lenders in 2022 continued to drain a massive amount of wealth from peo-

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## Rose moves to exempt those with severe mental illness from death penalty

State Representative Toni Rose (Dallas) filed legislation to create an exemption from the death penalty for defendants who experienced severe mental illness at the time of their offense.

This legislation establishes clear guidelines for the courts to assess, on a case-by-case basis, whether a defendant had a severe mental illness at the time the capital offense occurred. An individual with a verified diagnosis of severe mental illness cannot be sentenced to death; however, that person will still stand trial for the alleged offense and, if found guilty, serve a sentence of life without parole.

The United States Supreme Court prohibits the execution of juveniles and individuals with intellectual disabilities, as they lack the mental capacity of fully functioning adults to discern right from wrong. However, this same protection does not extend to those with severe mental illnesses. HB 2777 addresses this critical gap in Texas' criminal justice system by acknowledging the relationship between a mentally ill defendant's functional impairment and their ability to comprehend the consequences of their actions.

“Research consistently shows that severe mental illness interferes with

a person's ability to make rational choices, control impulses, and understand consequences,” said Representative Rose. “HB 2777 is an opportunity to save Texas taxpayers millions, streamline court proceedings, spare victims' families the pain of an extended appeals process, and prevent defendants from spending unnecessary years on death row by addressing the question of mental competency at the start of the process.”

Medical research demonstrates that severe mental illness fundamentally impairs brain function in ways that affect decision-making and behavior. Studies show that conditions like schizo-

phrenia and schizoaffective disorder create a significant disconnect between a person's actions and their ability to comprehend the moral and legal implications of those actions – the very basis for determining

criminal responsibility.

Representative Rose first offered this bipartisan legislation in 2017 and passed it out of the Texas House of Representatives in 2019, 2021, and 2023. Both Ohio (2021) and Kentucky

(2022) passed laws that bar the execution of people who experienced serious mental illness at the time of the offense and similar legislation has been filed in Florida, South Dakota, and Tennessee.

## POUSSAINT, from Page 2

expect more of them to act out their deadly delusions.”

Poussaint's influence extended into politics, serving as Massachusetts co-chairman for Reverend Jesse Jackson's 1984 presidential campaign. Over his

career, he received numerous awards and honorary degrees, including a New England Emmy for Outstanding Children's Special in 1997 for his work on Willoughby's Wonders. He was a member of several

organizations, including the American Psychiatric Association, the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, and Sigma Pi Phi fraternity.

Poussaint is survived by his wife, Dr. Tina Young Poussaint, and their children.

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# Campus Teacher of the Year continues legacy of leadership

By Jirah Fleming  
Dallas ISD

(Dallas ISD) Beverly Tillmon, elementary math teacher at Personalized Learning Preparatory at Highland Meadows, represents the best of what it means to be an educator.

Recently selected as the school's 2024-2025 Campus Teacher of the Year, her leadership, guidance and 55 years of experience have rewarded Tillmon with the unofficial title of matriarch at the campus.

Tillmon stepped into this school year confidently after spending time out of the classroom to provide guidance as a math instructional coach.

The key to being a great math teacher, Tillmon says, is to "stay ahead of



Dallas ISD

the game, always prepared for what is to come well before bumps in the road appear for students."

While teaching math can feel like teaching a new language, Tillmon says it is fun and rewarding. She credits her longevity to her ability to anticipate what her students will need.

Tillmon believes in preparing her students to be

self-sufficient academically and socially, and said, "students will do what you ask them to do if they know what you are talking about."

Tillmon's impact on not only her students but also other teachers at her school is evident. Highland Meadows is also home to two Teachers of Promise, a recognition reserved for

exceptional teachers within their first three years of teaching. When asked to give advice to the next generation of educators in the district, Tillmon was quick to answer that "she hopes to encourage them."

"Your classroom isn't built in a day or a year," she said. "It takes time to learn yourself, to learn your craft, to learn your

classroom, and to learn how to manage your time and outside tasks. It takes time to filter through the information and duties of being a teacher and to find what works for you."

Tillmon spoke highly of her school and teachers, including 2022-2023 Teacher of Promise, Nazira Sahial, a third-year kindergarten teacher who Tillmon took under her wing, commending her for the way she stays attuned to students and her ability to keep a calm and efficient classroom.

Sahial, for her part, credits her success as a teacher to Tillmon and spoke of her admiration for the Campus Teacher of the Year, who she described as her rock.

"She made space for

me," Sahial said. "She was there for me to keep my head up and keep going."

Tillmon said she loves to work hard and finds solace in committing to her passion for education but also believes in rest and wellness. Despite her continued dedication to the craft, she finds comfort in her family and her faith, finding daily relief in these personal commitments. She credits her success to preparation, which allows her to remain grounded throughout the day, always keen to filter through what is most important for the success of her classroom.

Tillmon said that when her husband asks her, "How was your day?" she quickly replies, "It was a good day. That's all I have are good days."

## LOANS, from Page 5

ple and communities with very little wealth."

Among the report's notable findings:

- Between 2021 and 2022, payday loan fee volume increased in California by 20%, Texas by 22%, and Florida by 17%. All are bigger percent increases than

the national fee volume experienced;

- States where payday lenders took in the highest fee volumes are: Texas at over \$1.3 billion, Florida at over \$252 million, California at over \$224 million, Mississippi at over \$149 million, and Michigan at

over \$78 million. Mississippi's payday fee total, the fourth highest, is far out of proportion to its population size, which is the 35th largest; and

- In the only two states that collect and report statistics on online lending, the share of online payday lending increased from 2019 to 2022: in Alaska from 55%

to 57% and in California from 25% to 49%.

"As national payday lenders have continued to close storefronts across the country, the market share of online payday lending has increased. By 2019, online lending accounted for 41% of single-payment payday loan volume nationally," states the report.

"Beyond the impacts of the pandemic, the alternative financial services market has shifted online and expanded to include underregulated products like installment loans, earned wage advance, and buy now pay later", the report continues. "Rent-a-bank" schemes, in which a non-bank company uses an out-

of-state bank to offer loans that evade state usury caps, have also made payday lending more readily available, even in states with legal protections."

*Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at [Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org](mailto:Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org).*

## PREVENT, from Page 4

tion. Rallying Black voices into this work is crucial to turning back the tide on overdoses and pushing against calls for harsher penalties. The misguided drug policies of decades past have created lingering damage that Black communities still struggle to over-

come.

The time for action is now, and community leaders play a vital role. Local governments should establish and support partnerships with Black community leaders to share overdose prevention information and naloxone resources with lo-

cal communities. Engagement is especially critical now, to ensure equitable access to naloxone and reduce disparities and overdose deaths for everyone.

Naloxone is easy to use and available for free from most local health departments and from a growing number of community partners in cities and towns

across the country. It is also available for purchase over the counter at any pharmacy.

The key to saving a life with naloxone is administering it as soon as you recognize any sign of an overdose. Anyone who is in community with someone who uses drugs — family, friends, local businesses,

neighbors, and associates — can be activated and prepared to help.

With community partners, we are launching a seven-city "Naloxone in Black" media campaign in late March to promote access to the lifesaving medication.

Every overdose death is a preventable tragedy. With

naloxone in hand, you can save a life.

*Tracie Gardner is the executive director of the National Black Harm Reduction Network. Daliah Heller is VP of Overdose Prevention Initiatives for Vital Strategies. This article was first published exclusively by the Washington Informer.*



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# Modern Love, Black Voices: BLK's first 'State of Black Singles' report uncovers shifting dating norms

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

BLK, the leading social and dating app for Black singles, has released its inaugural State of Black Singles report, revealing the evolving dynamics of love, sex, and relationships within the Black community. Drawing on thousands of responses from Black singles across the United States, the comprehensive



Image via NNPA

study sheds light on shifting sexual preferences, the growing influence of social media on dating, and the

changing landscape of relationship norms. "We wanted to have a real conversation about

what's actually happening in Black dating culture—no fluff, no filters," said Jonathan Kirkland, Head of Brand and Marketing at BLK. "This report proves that Black singles are pushing boundaries, redefining norms, and making their own rules when it comes to relationships, sex, and self-expression."

### Sexual Attitudes: A New Era of Openness with Defined Boundaries

The report reveals that

Black singles are increasingly embracing modern sexual exploration while still observing certain limits. Notably, 88% of respondents consider oral sex a necessity in their relationships, while nearly half (45.4%) are fully engaged in phone sex and cam play. Interest in group play is also on the rise, with 70% expressing curiosity or experience with threesomes, swinger parties, or orgies. Midnight to early morning

(12 a.m. to 6 a.m.) sexual encounters are preferred by 27.7% of participants, though evening intimacy remains most popular at 33.3%.

Surprisingly, workplace romances are common, with 51.8% admitting to having been involved with a coworker. Additionally, 43.9% disclosed hooking up with someone already in a committed relationship.

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## Black History Month

# Celebrating excellence in every community.

During Black History Month, we honor leaders who consistently dedicate themselves to uplifting and supporting their communities. Through their tireless efforts, they preserve the legacy of those who came before and pave the way for future generations to thrive.

Join us in celebrating fashion entrepreneur Ngozi Okaro, STEM leader Dr. Calvin Mackie, Jamie Aranda, a resilient Air Force veteran, and astronaut Ed Dwight as part of our Everyday Excellence campaign. Their drive and achievements inspire us all, serving as powerful reminders that success is within reach for those who strive for it.



Find career resources to support your own everyday excellence at [aarp.org/work](https://aarp.org/work)



# Prospects to watch for the Dallas Cowboys at 2025 NFL Scouting Combine

By Jamal Baker  
NDG Contributing Writer

The Dallas Cowboys are in the midst of a pivotal off-season that has seen them go through a bevy of changes. First year head coach Brian Schottenheimer has provided a glimpse of the type of team he is trying to build with his recent coordinator hires. Klayton Adams will serve as offensive coordinator and Matt Eberflus will coordinate the defense. Adams is a former offensive line coach who employed a varied rushing attack with the Arizona Cardinals, while Eberflus is a former head coach and respected defensive mind known for getting the most out of linebackers and defensive backs.

The annual NFL Scouting Combine kicked off



DWG Studio

on Monday, February 24 in Indianapolis. Let's start on the offensive side of the ball where Adams is surely lobbying for a running back or offensive lineman to strengthen their run game. Boise State running back Ashton Jeanty will skip on-field drills at the combine, but there are still notable running backs worthy of a day two and day three pick for Dallas. Raheim "Rock-

et" Sanders is a name to watch during drills on Saturday, March 1. Sanders is a powerful runner from the University of Arkansas and South Carolina. He would pair nicely with Rico Dowdle if Dowdle is retained by the Cowboys—forming a formidable former Gamecock backfield.

"When healthy, Sanders has been a productive three-down back at

two SEC spots. He's a big rusher with pop behind his pads. He runs with timing and tempo as a one-cut runner," NFL analyst Lance Zierlein writes.

Future Hall of Fame guard Zack Martin recently announced his retirement,

leaving big shoes to fill at the right guard position—enter LSU Tigers offensive tackle Will Campbell. Dallas has a keen eye for finding special first round talents along the offensive line. If Campbell is unavailable when Dallas is

on the clock, lookout for prospects Kelvin Banks Jr. and Armand Membou—both will test well Sunday, March 2 at the combine.

On the defensive side of the ball, interior defen-

**See COWBOYS, Page 12**



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## 2025-2026 Dallas ISD Budget Meetings

You are invited to discuss Dallas ISD's 2025-2026 budgeting process. Please attend any of the meetings listed here to be part of the conversation. We look forward to seeing you.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Tuesday, February 25	6 p.m.	Resource Center South 4401 S. Second Avenue Dallas, TX 75210
Monday, March 3	6 p.m.	Career Institute North 10115 Midway Road Dallas, TX 75229
Tuesday, March 18	6 p.m.	Environmental Education Center 1600 Bowers Road Seagoville, TX 75159
Wednesday, March 19	6 p.m.	Resource Center West 2200 Dennison Street Dallas, TX 75212
Monday, March 24	6 p.m.	Virtual



Visit [www.dallasisd.org](https://www.dallasisd.org) to learn more.



# Film Review: 'The Accidental Getaway Driver' is a tale about being in the wrong place at the wrong time

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*1/2) It's real. It happened. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time has consequences. This is what went down.

One night in Southern California, Long Ma (Hiệp Trần Nghĩa), an elderly Vietnamese/American cab driver, is working a late-night shift and he picks up three passengers. They turn out to be escaped convicts. Tây (Dustin Nguyen), a Vietnamese crook, sets the stage and terms: "Follow orders and you won't get hurt." Fellow felons Eddie (Phi Vu) and hot-headed Aden (Dali Benssaïah) also hold the senior citizen hostage in a cheap motel room. Things don't go as planned.

The villains abuse the driver, an innocent man who haphazardly got caught up in their violence and heated group dynamics. While others his age are retired and collecting social security, this senior citizen is on the hot seat. Never knowing if he'll survive or ever see his family, again. What a setup. What a premise.

This volatile scenario could have been an ultra-violent, Tarantino-ish crime/thriller. Instead, writer/director Sing J. Lee and cowriter Christopher Chen don't go for the obvious. Amid the turmoil, the film explores the power of family and Asian culture vs the detached anger of those who have lost their



Photo via NNPA

way. All this culled from a real incident that happened in Southern California's Orange County in 2016.

As a first-time feature film director, Lee honed his talents on shorts and videos ("Alicia Keys: Old Memories;" "Zayn: Sour Diesel"). His sense of spacing, staging and film noire style is solid. What's on view is moody, dark and cynical. The situation is testy, foreboding and morally complex. Visually and emotionally this menacing tone is sustained even when the plotline wanes and viewers' interests likely do too. He and co-screenwriter Chen could have benefited from a course in advanced playwriting.

Good playwrights, who don't have the luxury of multiple locations or convenient flashbacks, learn how to keep the drama and suspense real within four walls. They build ties and tension among the characters. Tumultuous feelings like love, hate, anger, fear, rivalry, jealousy and desperation. Then establish a rocky base that builds to an authentic feeling climax, that's often revela-

tory. Some of that is on view here, but not strongly enough and as well-executed as it could be to warrant the film's length. Though the two main characters reach a détente, it doesn't compensate for the slow-moving train that comes before it.

Many scenes are longer than they should be and at 1H 49M the footage could have used some judicious clipping (editor Yang Hua Hu). But to their credit, the filmmakers make you slow down until you see things their way. On their time frame and from their viewpoint (cinematographer Michael Fernandez). The claustrophobic sets (production designer Hanrui Wang) make you feel captured and closed in like you're stuck in a chicken coop. For all the elements that don't work, there's often a counter balance of things that do.

Nghĩa as the vulnerable 80ish protagonist is so right. Caught like a deer in the headlights and fighting for his life using ingenuity. Nguyen as the wayward son who's lost his cultural identity and sense of humanity is an even more

developed character. His rage seems as real as his misguidance.

It will take discipline for audiences to sit through this ode to urban crime, but that's just the surface story. Oddly the social aspects may linger long after the obvious fireworks have dissipated. A theme of redemption will stick with audiences, though not nearly as well as it does in other salvation among the ruined man movies. Like New Zealand's Once Were

Warriors. Like South Africa's Tsotsi, 2005's Oscar-Winner for Best Foreign Language.

In that way, this story would have power even if it was told about immigrants from other communities in the U.S. who've faced the same moral and assimilation challenges: Europeans, Africans, Arabs, Eastern Europeans, Latinos... People from foreign lands who make bad choices and wander into the world of crime.

Lost souls who'll only find their bearings again if they're tuned back into their cultural moorings.

In the end, a lot of intangibles save this film, and you have to acquiesce to Lee's interpretation of an immigrant's ordeal. He creates a subtext story that adds humanity to what is usually a very inhumane genre. And in his own way, he succeeds.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at [DwightBrown-Ink.com](http://DwightBrown-Ink.com).

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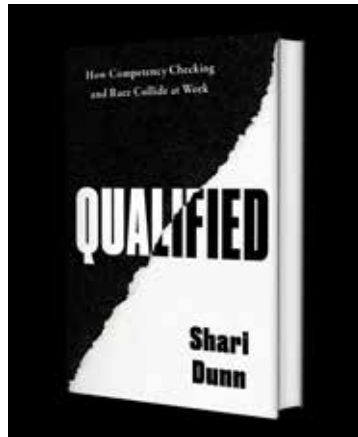
## NDG Book Review: 'Qualified' is a great read for the business-minded crowd

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Check your work.

When you were in school, you probably heard that a lot. Look over that math equation. Be sure your spelling is right. Reexamine your answers. Doing those things should result in rewards, then, right? Unless, as in the new business book, "Qualified" by Shari Dunn, someone's over-checking you.

In her experience as a consultant, Shari Dunn firmly acknowledges that being an employee is complicated and not-so-easy. For Black employees, though, there's additional level of difficulty, "competency checking," or the constant need to prove themselves and their intelligence. Says Dunn, the demand for competency checking can start before someone gets the job, sometimes merely with a name: studies show that employers who carry stereotypes, even



subconsciously, favor resumes with so-called white-sounding names.

Historically speaking, Black workers have been fighting competency checking since they arrived on these shores four hundred years ago. It shows in the words we use that sound innocent but that have dark origins. It shows in our foundational beliefs, ones that we don't often even know we have. It's embedded in white supremacy. And it

shows up as a legacy of slavery and Jim Crow.

So what can employers do to ensure that their Black and Brown workers are welcome, and how do you make sure that the workplace works for them?

First, says Dunn, train yourself and your team to see and disrupt stereotypes, old tropes, and disbelief that skin color indicates competency – because it doesn't. Acknowledge that we do not and might never live in a "color-blind" world. Read up on history to understand where biases come from and how unions and apprenticeships have factored into competency checking in the past. Audit and evaluate your toolkit for any racial bias on a regular basis. Make the workplace a safe place for Black people to be authentic and to show the same emotions you'd allow white workers to display. Finally, offer

See **QUALIFIED**, Page 13

## Soul and R&B mourn loss of Roberta Flack. Gwen McCrae and Jerry Butler

Roberta Flack, the Grammy-winning singer and pianist whose smooth vocals and intimate style made her a defining artist of the 1970s, died Monday at her home surrounded by family. She was 88. Her publicist, Elaine Schock, confirmed the news in a statement. Flack revealed in 2022 that she had been diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, which had taken away her ability to sing.

Her death came just one day after the passing of soul-funk singer Gwen McCrae, who died Sunday at 81. McCrae, best known for hits like "Rockin' Chair" and "Funky Sensation," was celebrated for her enduring influence on soul and disco music. It also came just days after three-time Grammy nominee and Rock and

Roll Hall of Famer Jerry Butler, a premier soul singer of the 1960s, died at 85.

Butler, known as "Ice Man," had numerous hits including "For Your Precious Love," and "Make It Easy on Yourself."

Butler's niece, Yolanda Goff, told The Associated Press that Butler died of Parkinson's disease at his home in Chicago.

### Roberta Flack: A Life in Music

Born Roberta Cleopatra Flack on February 10, 1937, in Black Mountain, North Carolina, she was raised in Arlington, Virginia, where her musical roots were cultivated at the Lomax African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Flack began piano lessons at nine and earned a full scholarship to Howard University at 15. She initially studied piano

before switching to voice. She graduated at 19 and later taught music and English in North Carolina after her father's death.

In Washington, D.C., Flack balanced teaching with nightclub performances, captivating audiences at local venues like Mr. Henry's on Capitol Hill. Her breakthrough came when jazz pianist Les McCann discovered her and arranged an audition with Atlantic Records. Her 1969 debut album *First Take* initially received little attention until Clint Eastwood featured her rendition of "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" in his 1971 film *Play Misty for Me*. Released as a single in 1972, the song topped the Billboard Hot 100 for six weeks and earned Flack her first Grammy Award for Record of the

See **FLAK**, Page 14

"A JAW-DROPPING SPECTACLE"

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# HUD job cuts equal a housing implosion

By April Ryan

Large-scale protests in major cities across the nation and Washington D.C. continue to grow in number and discontent against the drastic Trump administration job cuts. The mass demonstrations have not moved President Trump and Elon Musk to change course to make the US government leaner. Recently, Black Press USA spoke with Black Republican and media mogul Armstrong Williams. “Trump is in charge, and no one is stopping him,” according to



Image via NNPA

Williams.

One of the many DOGE targets is the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Elon Musk and

DOGE are expected to reduce HUD staff by 50%. According to a source close to the department, those cuts would “hollow out the

agency.” That same former official confirms HUD senior staff have already been eliminated. The DOGE anticipated next step in the elimination process targets job cuts of four to five thousand people [HUD employees] across the country.” These cuts would create a work slowdown and a backlog for the “8 million” people serviced monthly by HUD, said the former official who wishes to remain anonymous.

Meanwhile, one of the first cuts in the Trump HUD agency was the program to halt discrimination

in housing appraisals that targeted Black homeowners. On a related note, the Black homeownership rate in 2025 is lower than that of 1968, the year the Fair Housing Act was implemented. Sources have said the HUD job cuts will create a negative jolt for some cities that depend on block grants, funding for public housing, housing vouchers, monies for housing the homeless, housing counseling, remediation of lead pipes, FHA loans, Fair Housing programs along with down payment assistance that helps first time

home buyers. As we count the numbers, hundreds of thousands of people receive home loans from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Viewing the current state of the housing market, there is “a slowdown in the Housing Market” as there is inventory for higher priced homes but those houses are “staying on the market longer” according to Marveta Bozeman the President of the Empire Board of Realtists. When asked about affordable housing, Bozeman says, “The affordability is gone.”

## ← LOVE, from Page 7

“The idea of ‘taboo’ is fading,” Kirkland said. “Black singles are owning their pleasure, exploring new experiences, and challenging outdated stigmas.”

### Social Media’s Expanding Role in Modern Romance

Social media platforms are reshaping how Black singles connect, date, and even face digital pitfalls. Approximately 17% use direct messages as a primary dating method, while platforms like TikTok (16.1%) and Twitter/X (8.3%) are increasingly popular for finding dates. Despite these digital opportunities, catfishing remains a top concern for 61% of respondents.

“Social media has turned dating into a spectator sport,” Kirkland said. “Whether it’s a messy viral breakup or someone shooting their shot in the DMs, Black singles are watching, engaging, and sometimes participating.”

While social media aids

connection, 38.2% of respondents believe Generation Z shares too much about their relationships online, with 26.3% acknowledging an obsession with viral fame and digital drama.

### Relationships and Marriage: Tradition Meets Modern Values

The data indicates a generational shift in how Black singles view marriage and traditional gender roles. While 34% of respondents still see marriage as a major life goal, 49.7% prefer a blend of traditional and modern relationship values. Notably, 70% of participants desire equal partnerships, moving away from conventional norms where men lead and women nurture.

Therapy has become integral to relationship maintenance, with 86% believing it is essential to romantic success. Meanwhile, attitudes toward parenthood vary: Gen Z respondents show strong interest in hav-

ing children (83%), compared to 33.5% of overall respondents who are not interested in raising kids.

“People want the freedom to build relationships that work for them, not necessarily what their parents had,” Kirkland noted. “Black singles are still open to commitment, but it has to be on their terms.”

### Identity, Self-Expression, and the Fight for Representation

Despite an increased focus on diversity, many Black singles feel overlooked in the dating space. Only 25.7% say they feel fully represented on mainstream dating apps, and 30.3% believe that media outlets inadequately portray authentic Black love. Additionally, 21.8% of respondents admit to “code-switching” in dating environments to conform to perceived expectations.

“We’ve always known that dating apps weren’t inherently built for us—but seeing the data proves how much work still needs to be done,” Kirkland said.



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## FLAK, from Page 10

Year.

Flack's success soared with her 1973 recording of "Killing Me Softly with His Song," which became her signature hit. The song spent five weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and earned her two Grammys: Record of the Year and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. With the win, Flack became the first artist to earn consecutive Record of the Year awards.

Her partnership with Donny Hathaway produced hits like "Where Is the Love," which won a Grammy for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group. She continued her chart success with "Feel Like Makin' Love" in 1974, making her the first female vocalist to top the Hot 100 in three consecutive years. Flack's later collaborations with Peabo Bryson and Maxi Priest yielded popular tracks like "Tonight I Celebrate My Love" and "Set

the Night to Music."

Throughout her career, Flack advocated for artist rights and founded the Roberta Flack School of Music, providing free music education to underprivileged youth. She received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1999 and performed for Nelson Mandela that same year. Flack is survived by her son, musician Bernard Wright.

### Gwen McCrae:

#### Soul and Disco Legacy

Gwen McCrae, celebrated for her rich voice and lasting impact on the disco and soul music scenes, died Sunday at 81. A statement from her official brand account called her passing "more bad news" for the music world and acknowledged how fans "are still jamming to 'Rockin' Chair' all these years later."

Born Gwen Mosley in Pensacola, Florida, McCrae began singing in church choirs before meeting

George McCrae, whom she married in 1963. The couple performed as a duo and signed with Henry Stone's Alston label. By 1970, McCrae had achieved early success with "Lead Me On." In 1972, she released "Always On My Mind," a song later popularized by artists including Elvis Presley, Willie Nelson, and the Pet Shop Boys.

Her biggest commercial success came in 1975 with "Rockin' Chair," which topped the R&B chart and reached No. 9 on the Billboard Hot 100. While the single remains her most widely recognized hit, many fans and DJs remember her

for the 1981 club favorite "Funky Sensation," which has endured as a dancefloor staple.

McCrae's career spanned decades, and her other notable songs included "Keep the Fire Burning." Despite her accomplishments, she often spoke about the lack of recognition and fair com-

pensation for Black artists of her era.

After suffering a stroke in 2012 that left her partially paralyzed, McCrae retired from performing. Her daughter, Leah McCrae, carries on the family's musical legacy as a solo artist and member of the group Daughters of Soul.

## COWBOYS, from Page 8

sive line and linebackers should be the Cowboys main focus. However, the best player available strategy should still stand to ensure depth—any position group could suffer injuries throughout the course of a season. Oregon defensive lineman Derrick Harmon could be the best of both worlds for Dallas. Harmon is undoubtedly a first-round talent and fills an immediate position of need. He can play both 3-tech and 1-tech given his special combination of size and strength. If Osa Odighizuwa is re-signed by Dallas, Harmon would join an attacking

group that also has position versatility. Eberflus and company will certainly have their eye on Harmon in Indianapolis.

The NFL Scouting Combine serves as one of the most important job interviews invited prospects have ever been a part of. With the chance to impress both on the field and in meeting rooms, diamonds in the rough can be discovered. Dallas Cowboys Vice President of Player Personnel Will McClay has done an exceptional job discovering these proverbial diamonds—this year will be no different.



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### McKinney Housing Authority 2025 ANNUAL & FIVE-YEAR PLAN

#### PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE

The Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires the McKinney Housing Authority to submit an Agency Plan each year.

The PHA Plan is a comprehensive guide to public housing agency (PHA) policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. There are two parts to the PHA Plan: the 5-Year Plan, which each PHA submits to HUD once every 5th PHA fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year.

Below is a list of meetings that are scheduled to review and discuss the Agency Plan documents for the 2025 fiscal year. Program participants, the public and staff are encouraged to attend the meetings.

#### Autoridad de Vivienda McKinney PLAN ANUAL Y QUINQUENAL 2025

#### REUNIONES DARSE CUENTA

La Ley de Vivienda y Responsabilidad Laboral de Calidad de 1998 requiere que la Autoridad de Vivienda de McKinney presente un Plan de la Agencia cada año.

El Plan PHA es una guía completa de las políticas, programas, operaciones y estrategias de las agencias de vivienda pública (PHA) para satisfacer las necesidades y los objetivos de vivienda locales. Hay dos partes en el Plan PHA: el Plan de 5 años, que cada PHA presenta a HUD una vez cada quinto año fiscal de PHA, y el Plan anual, que se envía a HUD cada año.

A continuación hay una lista de reuniones que están programadas para revisar y analizar los documentos del Plan de la Agencia para el año fiscal 2025.

Se anima a los participantes del programa, al público y al personal a asistir a las reuniones

Tuesday January 28, 2025	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Thursday February 13, 2025	4:30pm	Public Meeting	Newsome Homes Community Center	1450 Amcott St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday February 25, 2025	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069

A draft of the proposed ANNUAL and Five Year Plan is available for review at the MHA main office located at: 603 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX.

Comments can be submitted by hand delivery, mail, or email to McKinney Housing Authority Main Office; 603 North Tennessee Street; Attn: Roslyn Miller; McKinney, TX 75069 or [info@mckinneyha.org](mailto:info@mckinneyha.org). The final public hearing for plan adoption will be held on Tuesday, March 25th at 4:30pm – Merritt Homes community center.

**QUALIFIED, from Page 11**

support to all, and create a place for everyone, regardless of skin color, to thrive. In her epilogue, author Shari Dunn explains to readers that "Qualified" was written in the middle of Joe Biden's presidency and final-edited after Ka-

mala Harris stepped up as the Democratic nominee for President, changes which are "head-spinning." Sadly, history has taken things further: Dunn extensively touches upon DEI policies in this book, and we all know how that's go-

ing. Even so, despite the controversy, take a big-picture look: the entire basis of this book is essential reading, since it's aimed at businesses of all sizes, including (and especially) those that can't afford to turn away good workers. "Qualified" helps ensure that you

find those workers, no matter what they look like, and that you make them happy and comfortable enough to want to stay; furthermore, easy-to-follow examples teach readers why maintaining diversity overall is important for growth, both personally and professionally.

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# Don't Call Me Stupid, Just Whisper It

Dr. James L. Snyder

One thing that irritates me is people talking behind my back. I want to be part of the conversation because I know more about me than they do. Or at least I think I do.

While in the mall recently, I passed two people, and I heard one say, "Doesn't he look stupid?"

Tempted as I was, I didn't turn around and inquire what they were talking about. Why did they think I looked stupid?

I have found out that when I hear something, I usually don't hear the whole story. If I don't hear the whole story, I'm going to get it wrong, and if I react, I certainly will look stupid. Why do I care if someone I don't know thinks I look stupid?

If The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage says I look stupid, that is a completely different scenario. I need to get the information she has so I can change whatever I need to change so I don't look stupid in her eyes. Really, her opinion the only one that really matters to me.

As often as I have heard

this throughout my life, you would think I would have reached the point of post-stupidity. I'm not sure what that means, but I'll let it go for now.

At my age, I don't care what people think I look like. If someone thinks I look stupid, I'm quite okay with that. I just don't want them shouting to the rest of the world. Whisper it, and let's keep it between us.

How often have I made a mistake judging someone by their outward appearance? I've gotten into a lot of trouble down the years doing that. I don't need to judge people. Whatever people are wearing and how they look is none of my business whatsoever. And I'll keep my thoughts to myself. At least I try.

While at the mall, I see people whose looks are very close to the neighborhood of stupid. Why they wear what they wear or don't wear is something I will never quite understand.

Years ago, there was a sense of decency in what people wore. Today, however, that sense of decency is far gone. I sure do miss those good old days.

What does stupid really

look like? How can I tell that someone looks stupid just by walking past them?

As a daily discipline, I strive not to judge people before I really get to know them. After getting to know some people, you find out they're not really what they first appear to be. They're not as stupid as they look nor as smart as they look.

While in the mall, I passed several people with tattoos all over their body. Tattoos, ear piercings, nose piercings, and even one had a tongue piercing. I have no idea what these things are called or why anybody would want to do that.

Never in the morning have I gotten up, gone to my bathroom, looked in the mirror and said to myself, "You need to get some tattoos today." I'm not even sure my mirror would allow me to do that.

If somebody has all of these tattoos and piercings, it has nothing to do with me. If they think it makes them look special, that's quite all right with me. I work very hard at not judging people. Sometimes, it's hard, but I work at it all the more. If somebody wants to look the way they look,

only the president can decide what is lawful—a statement more in line with authoritarianism than constitutional democracy.

Henry, the NNPA chairman, said the Black community must remain vigilant.

"Our collective strength is our greatest asset," he said. "Let's stand united for Joy and for the future of Black journalism."

who am I to tell them it's wrong?

I've been going to the same barber for around 30 years. During that time, the hair on my head has gotten thinner and thinner, and if I blame the barber for that, I am stupid. It's not my barber's fault, and really, it's not my fault. I didn't tell any of my hair to leave, but they have, never to return.

Judging somebody by his or her outside appearance really challenges decency. I've counseled many people over the years and learned one thing: most of them do not want to hear the truth.

They will ask me a question, but they don't want me to tell them the absolute truth. They want me to tell them what they want to

hear.

That's the kind of world we live in today. Nobody wants to hear the truth or tell the truth, and everybody is completely happy with that. Well, I'm not.

I think of a joke about Abraham Lincoln. This may not have happened to him, but in the joke, Abraham's wife gets a new dress, puts it on, comes before her husband and says, "Abe, does this dress make me look fat?"

If Abraham Lincoln were as smart as I think he was, he would never have answered that question.

So, if you think I look stupid, don't say it out loud; just whisper it, and let's keep it between the two of us. Then, I won't tell people what I think about

you.

Thinking about this I was reminded what Jesus said. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

Jesus did not judge according to appearance. It's not how we look, but how we act that is the defining factor. So, instead of concentrating on my outside, I need to focus on my inside, that is my relationship with Christ. That is how God will judge me in the final day.

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## REID, from Page 2

Black voices critical of that power is being viewed as deliberate.

MSNBC's move comes as Trump continues targeting the press. He has filed a lawsuit against 60 Minutes, claiming the program manipulated an interview with Vice President Kamala Harris. Trump also ordered federal agencies

to cancel subscriptions to major outlets, including The New York Times, Politico, and Reuters, cutting public employees off from independent news sources. He has praised Fox News as his administration's "official" media outlet, further tightening control over the information pipeline.

Trump has declared that

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# Moving into Women's History Month



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor

Bessie Blount, a physical therapist who worked with soldiers injured in WW II, invented a device allowing amputees to feed themselves in 1951.

Born in Hickory, Virginia and initially attended Union Junior College. She received nurse's training at Community Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Newark, New Jersey. She then went on to Panzer College of Physical Education and Hygiene in East Orange, New



Jersey. Along the way, she studied physical therapy in Chicago.

During World War II, Blount, as part of her work with wounded soldiers, Blount devised an apparatus to help amputees feed themselves. She invented an electronic feeding device in 1951, a feeding tube that delivered one mouthful of

food at a time, controlled by biting down on the tube. The American Veterans Administration did not accept her invention, so she sold it to the French government.

She became friends with Theodore Edison, son of famed inventor Thomas Edison and while in his home she invented the disposable cardboard emesis basin.


This invention was also not accepted by the American Veterans Administration, so she sold it to Belgium.


In 1969, Blount went into law enforcement as a forensic scientist, at the Vineland police Department and the Norfolk Police Department.

In the mid-1970s, she became the chief document examiner at the Portsmouth Police Department. In 1977, she trained and worked at Scotland Yard in England. She was the first African-American woman to work there. She studied slave

papers and Civil War documents as well as verifying the authenticity of documents containing Native American-U.S. treaties.

*(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in March 2012. It has been edited for space.)*

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