

The Struggle Continues!

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney, Associate Editor
Wednesday, 13 February 2013 00:00



So, we just had the privilege of hosting NBA All-Star Weekend in our great city and needless to say it was full of memorable moments. The whole world was focused on Houston, Texas for the entire weekend, as the world's greatest basketball players descended upon our city to display their talents and perform community service.

As I attended many events during this weekend, I couldn't help but notice the response to the NBA All-Star game from those who were fans and spectators versus those who were athletes and entertainers.

Many times, I stop and take a moment to take a deeper look at my surroundings and analyze what I believe is really going on around me. I saw the athletes, entertainers and celebrities walking around enjoying life and enjoying the experience of being at the All-Star festivities. It quickly dawned on me that they were here, having fun at the All-Star game while making a boat-load of money.

Then I started looking at the number of parties and events that were taking place all around the city. At some venues, people were paying upwards of \$800 to get into an event to see their hottest celebrity, athlete or entertainer.

The crazy thing was...not only were folks standing in lines about 100 deep, they were actually PAYING. It was bananas!!!

And of course, we heard about the fact that the Galleria Mall was over capacity and had to stop

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letting people come in. There was even an urban myth that resonated across Houston that the Galleria Mall was charging people anywhere from \$25 to \$75 just to get in the mall and walk around. Of course, that story was completely untrue. Countless people were gathered together to socialize and interact with each other and hopefully see some celebrities show up.

All-in-all, I couldn't help but sit back and marvel at how far we have come as Black people.

I mean, there was a time when we couldn't play in the NBA; or sit courtside at a game; or get into high-profiled celebrity events; or even think twice about walking up in the Galleria Mall to hang out.

I mean seriously, there was a time when we didn't earn the type of money that we earn now or have access to the type of resources we have access to now. It is truly a blessing to see how far we have come.

It is equally as disturbing to me; however, to see how far we have gone astray from remembering and showing proper respect for the struggle that many of the freedom fighters that came before us had to endure to give us this right and these privileges to do the things we can do now.

It saddens me to see how flippant we are about things and how we use excuses as to why it is acceptable to do so. People fought, bled and died to afford us the privilege to have these freedoms.

Take Lil Wayne for instance. Lil Wayne recorded a verse on a song recently where he compared how he would have sex with a woman to the way Emmett Till was murdered. Seriously.....and we are cool with that why, because it was Lil Wayne that rapped it? We need to have a real-talk, 'Come to Jesus Meeting' with our people if we are going to see change take place within our communities.

But then again, I guess it's kinda easy to be flippant about things when you didn't have to die fighting for it or endure a struggle to obtain it. When you have love for something, you cherish it

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and show your appreciation for it. When you look across America, you see that the love and respect we have for ourselves has been eroding for decades since integration went into effect. There is no community-wide respect for our elders, our sisters, our lives or our neighborhoods anymore.

I have a question for you. Would a loving mother endure the inconveniences of carrying a child for nine months and go through the painful process of childbirth, just to discard the child?

Absolutely not!

Not if she truly loved the child and cared for her child, she wouldn't. Although that mother went through all of the pain and the struggle to bring that child into the world, she has an even greater love and appreciation for that child than anyone else could have.

Like that mother, freedom fighters fought to birth a civil rights movement that paved the way for those of us who had not been born yet to experience these new freedoms. They were so proud to see us finally experience some level of equality that it brought tremendous joy to the hearts to know that their sacrifice was not in vain.

Sadly though, many of our young people have become numb to the struggle and unaware of the pain that those freedom fighters had to endure. Their deaths don't mean anything to some and their sacrifice doesn't mean anything to others. The only way that it will, is if we start educating our children and rescuing our young people from a culture that promotes temporary satisfaction and self-degradation.

We have to take responsibility for our own village and be the saviors of our own village. If we don't, the only struggles I foresee us facing in the future are the struggle to remain relevant and the struggle to avoid becoming extinct.

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