

AN African-American

Perspective

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Are Blacks less intelligent than Whites? Some people think so.

Are blacks less intelligent?

Generally speaking, many white people think they are smarter than black people. And a lot of blacks agree with them. Some blacks believe that they are intellectually inferior to whites.

Some blacks also think that they are physically superior to whites. And many whites agree with them. Many whites believe that blacks are better dancers and athletes.

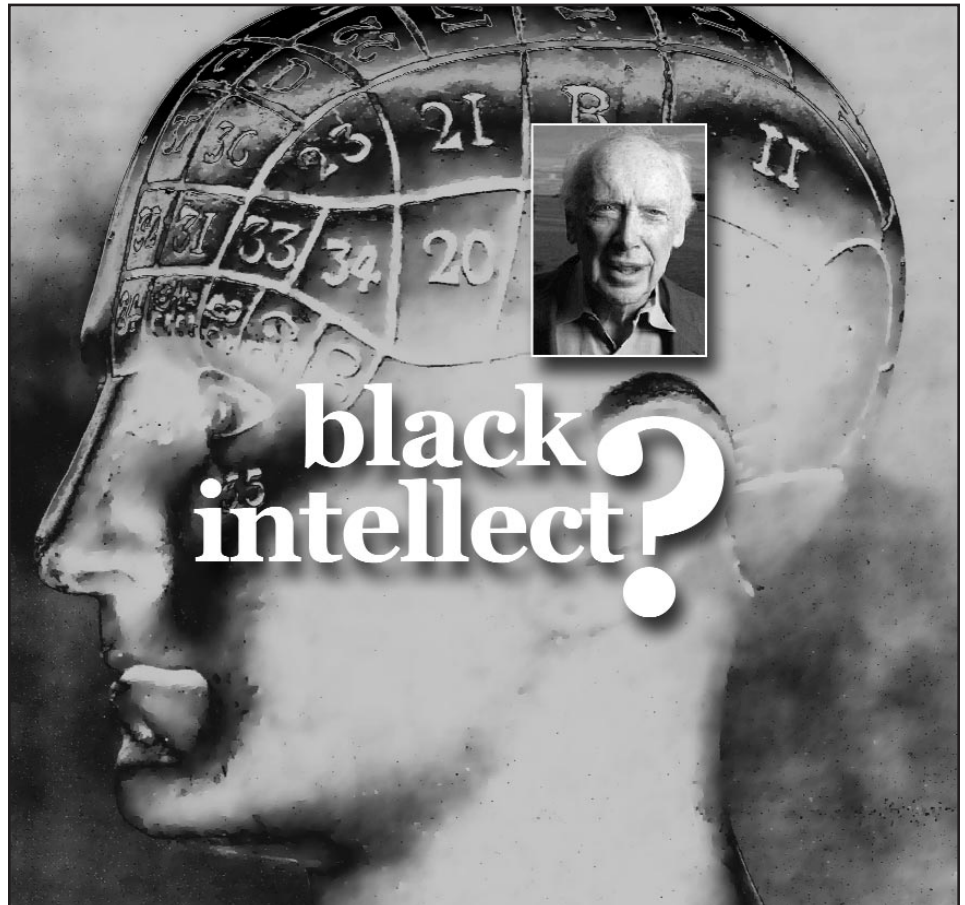
Where do these notions come from? And are they true?

Each person must look to their own hearts and minds to understand the roots of racism, bigotry, discrimination and exploitation. If we are ever going to solve the problems of race in America we must look inward, at ourselves, to see our own prejudices.

It was reported in the London Sunday Times Magazine that noted genetic scientist and Nobel Prize Winner, James Watson said that blacks were less intelligent than whites.

In the October 14, 2007 interview:

He [Watson] says that he is “inherently gloomy about the prospect of Africa” because “all our social policies are based on the fact that their intelligence is the same as ours – whereas all the testing says not really”, and I know that this “hot potato” is going to be difficult to address. His hope is that everyone is equal, but he counters that “people who have to deal with black employees find this not true”.



James Watson, noted geneticist and Nobel Prize winner was reported to have said that blacks are less intelligent than whites. He later apologized for the comments he made.

He says that you should not discriminate on the basis of colour, because “there are many people of colour who are very talented, but don’t promote them when they haven’t succeeded at the lower level”. He writes that “there is no firm reason to anticipate that the intellectual capacities of peoples geographically separated in their evolution should prove to have evolved identically. Our wanting to reserve equal powers of reason as some universal heritage of humanity will not be enough to make it so”.

Dr. Watson was the Chancellor of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory before the research organization suspended his administrative duties. (Note: they didn’t fire him.)

Watson’s startling remarks raises the specter of “Scientific Racism”. During the 1800’s white scientists and political leaders rationalized their imperialistic exploitation of non-whites around the world. One hundred years ago the science of Eugenics categorized Jews, blacks and others as genetically inferior. Such scientific theories led

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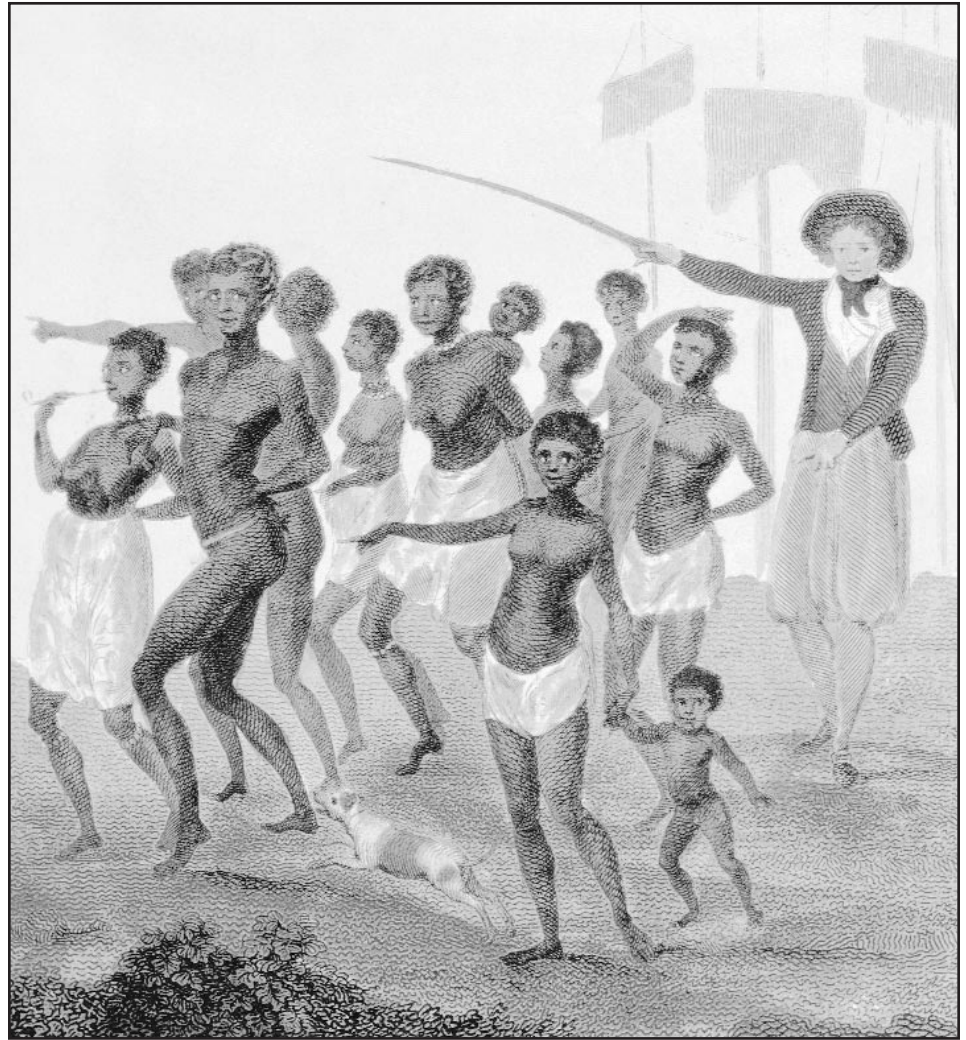
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to the sterilization of the “feeble-minded” and gave rise to Nazism in Germany in 1933.

Watson’s words are particularly troubling because of where he worked - Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York. According to the Scientific American blog site: “What is today known as Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory was once at the center of the American eugenics movement, where it was home to the Eugenics Record Office from 1910 to 1939, at first under the tutelage of the infamous eugenicists Charles Benedict Davenport and Harry Laughlin.”

Watson is not alone in his racist views, other well known white scientists have publicly shared such views. Co-inventor of the transistor, William Shockley said that blacks were inferior to whites. Time Magazine in its top 100 scientists of the 20th century said this about Shockley, “Although he had no formal training in genetics or psychology, he began to formulate a theory of what he called dysgenics. Using data from the U.S. Army’s crude pre-induction IQ tests, he concluded that African Americans were inherently less intelligent than Caucasians — an analysis that stirred wide controversy among laymen and experts in the field alike.

Nonetheless, Shockley pursued his inflammatory ideas in a series of articles and speeches. Regularly interrupted by boos and catcalls, he argued that remedial educational programs were a waste of time. He suggested that individuals with IQs below 100 be paid to undergo voluntary sterilization. He donated openly and repeatedly to a so-called Nobel sperm bank designed to pass on the genes of geniuses. He filed a \$1.25 million libel suit against the Atlanta Constitution, which had compared his ideas to Nazi genetic experiments; the jury awarded him \$1 in damages.”



This early engraving of “happy” negro slaves being “herded” from the slave ships represents the genesis of the myth that blacks are less intelligent than whites. Black slaves were seen as smart animals rather than as human beings. This nearly universal attitude fostered harsh treatment and discrimination of blacks.

Shockley also proposed that individuals with IQs below 100 be paid to undergo voluntary sterilization.

In an interview with U.S. News & World Report he fell into the trap of discussing race. He pointed out that African Americans as a group scored 15 points lower on IQ tests, and suggested the cause was hereditary.

Shockley found himself -- not unhappily -- in a swirl of controversy. Biologists and geneticists blasted his theories, pointing out that eugenics was a rationale used by the Nazis during World War II, and was an

idea that had a weak scientific foundation. Shockley was attacked in print, on television, and in scientific journals.

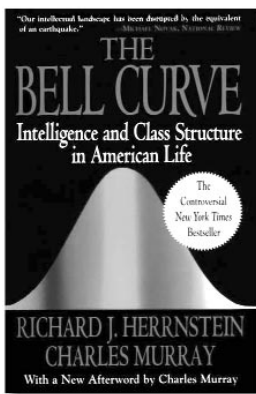
Although the press scoured Shockley, others maintained the never ending beat of blacks being less intelligent than whites.

Charles Murray and the Bell Curve.

During the 1990’s the controversy around studies of intellect and race erupted when the book, “The Bell curve” hit store shelves. It sold over 400,000 copies.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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According to the website, <http://www.indiana.edu/~intell/bell-curve.shtml>, the book claimed that an intellectual elite was forming. It said the best and brightest tend to hang together and that people with lower I.Q.'s were destined for a life as the underclass.

The book also said that low I.Q.'s were responsible for poverty, school dropouts, unemployment, laziness, divorce rates, welfare dependency, poor health, unwanted pregnancies, crime and a lack of interest in civic participation.

It was also reported that the book claimed that East Asians scored higher on I.Q. test than white Americans. However, the focus on whites' superiority over blacks took center stage. The book also said that low IQ women were having more babies than white high IQ women. To fix the problem, "The authors recommend that children born to single mothers with low cognitive ability be voluntarily given up for adoption."

The book suggested that America would become a society based on intelligence with the high IQ's on top and the Low IQ's on the bottom.

The problem with these periodic outburst of Racial Science is that they might take hold and become the basis for a new era of eugenics.

Watson's remarks should not be easily dismissed. Under the right social/economic conditions blacks could find themselves forced to go to "genetic correction centers" where they are sterilized and where their children taken away from them. That last statement is pure hyperbole, I cannot deny it. (But history has shown us that unthinkable social policies can be implemented. Genocide, ethnic cleansing can and has happened in the United States. Go ask a Native American if you don't believe me.)

The site offers critiques and comments about the book's authors. It says, "Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the book is its rhetorical stance. This is one of the most stylistically divisive books that I have ever read. Despite occasional avowals of regret and the few utopian pages at the end, Herrnstein and Murray set up an us/them dichotomy that eventually culminates in an us-against-them opposition." (pg 70)

"Who are 'we' ? Well, we are the people who went to Harvard (as the jacket credits both of the authors) or attended similar colleges and read books like this. We are the smart, the rich, the powerful, the worriers." (pg 70)

"Why is this so singularly off-putting? I would have thought it unnecessary to say, but if people as psychometrically smart as Messrs. Herrnstein and Murray did not "get it," it is safer to be explicit. High IQ doesn't make a person one whit better than anybody else. And if we are to have any chance of a civil and humane society, we had better avoid the smug self-satisfaction of an elite that reeks of arrogance and condescension." (pg 71)

As to the question whether whites are smarter than blacks, I suspect there is a hidden agenda. There is a temptation for the high IQ's to replicate themselves to "help mankind". And of course the majority of high IQ's would be white. In the 1980's one guy started a donor

sperm bank of high IQ men.

U.S. News and World reports Magazine said,

"In 1980, millionaire inventor Robert Graham launched his Repository for Germinal Choice, an exclusive sperm bank dedicated to "improving" the human race by providing sperm from high achievers to infertile couples."

The interviewer asked journalist David Plotz, author of the book *Genius Factory*, a few question about the controversial program

"Q: So did Robert Graham's eugenics experiment fail?

A: I think ultimately it ended up being a nurture project rather than a nature project. What Robert Graham did by offering up a Nobel Prize sperm bank was select a bunch of good customers—women who are eager to have accomplished children, who take it seriously and will push their kids."

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/culture/articles/050616/16genius.htm>

The bottomline: The verdict is still out on which race is more intelligent. In fact, modern day studies suggest that we may have to throw out the concept of race all together. All human beings are more alike than they are different.

Imagine that, "one race, the human race" is quite a concept.

Extremely smart people must not fall into the traps of arrogance and self-aggrandizement.

"Even if you are not responsible for being down, you are responsible for getting up, if you are waiting for those who knocked you down to get you up, you'll never get up, because if they wanted you up, they never would have knocked you down."

Rev. Al Sharpton, 2007

The Dred Scott Decision, Chief Justice Taney and the law.



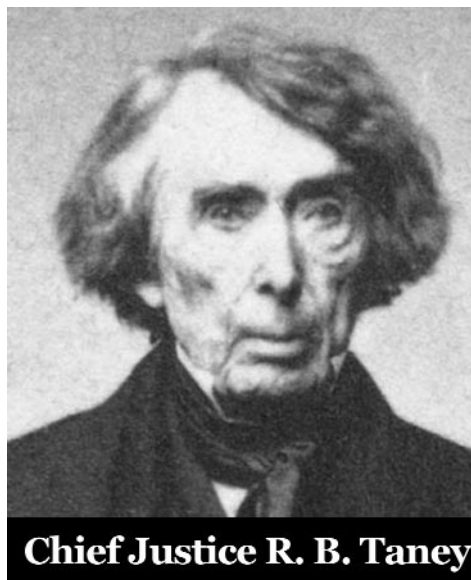
The Dred Scott decision of 1857 clarified the legal status of slaves in the United States. Some historians blame the Supreme Court's ruling that blacks were nothing more than property with the outbreak of the Civil War. The Supreme Court codified the long held notion that blacks were inferior to whites and had no legal status to petition the court for their rights.

In the case, U.S. Supreme Court, DRED SCOTT v. SANDFORD, 60 U.S. 393 (1856), DRED SCOTT, PLAINTIFF IN ERROR, v. JOHN F. A. SANDFORD., December Term, 1856

The basic ruling of the United States Supreme Court, announced by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, was that the framers of the Declaration of Independence were honorable men, therefore, when they held slaves while declaring universal human rights, they obviously could not have intended to include those of African descent, for that would have made them hypocrites

rather than honorable men. Taney found it was "just and lawful" to reduce the black man to slavery "for his own benefit." *Taney also pointed out that if blacks were citizens, they could do things protected by the Constitution, such as speak their mind, go as they please, and keep and carry arms wherever they went, which would produce "discontent and insubordination among them, and endangering the peace and safety of the State."* This is what the Honorable Justice Taney had to say:

"The words 'people of the United States' and 'citizens' are synonymous



terms, and mean the same thing. They both describe the political body who, according to our republican institutions, form the sovereignty, and who hold the power and conduct the Government through their representatives. They are what we familiarly call the 'sovereign people,' and every citizen is one of this people, and a constituent member of this sovereignty. The question before us is, whether the class of persons described in the plea in abatement com-

pose a portion of this people, and are constituent members of this sovereignty? We think they are not, and that they are not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word 'citizens' in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States. On the contrary, they were at that time considered as a subordinate [60 U.S. 393, 405] and inferior class of beings, who had been subjugated by the dominant race, and, whether emancipated or not, yet remained subject to their authority, and had no rights or privileges but such as those who held the power and the Government might choose to grant them.

It is not the province of the court to decide upon the justice or injustice, the policy or impolicy, of these laws. The decision of that question belonged to the political or law-making power; to those who formed the sovereignty and framed the Constitution. The duty of the court is, to interpret the instrument they have framed, with the best lights we can obtain on the subject, and to administer it as we find it, according to its true intent and meaning when it was adopted."

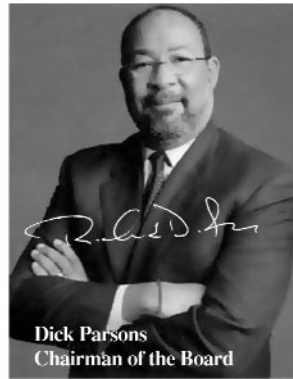
The Supreme Court went on to say that blacks "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Essentially, the Supreme Court of the United States said that blacks from Africa were inherently inferior. And whether free or not they had no rights under the U.S. Constitution.

(Note: There have been reports that Judge Taney fathered black children. It has been said that his black daughter settled in Williamsport, PA. - Editor.)

Two highly intelligent black men - Parsons and Chenault.

Despite the encoding of racism into law and the "scientific" declarations of learned experts, Blacks continue to set new standards of excellence. Here's two shining examples:

Dick Parsons: In the corporate world you have to learn to swim with the sharks. If you don't believe me ask Dick Parsons, Chairman and former CEO of Time-Warner, Inc.



Dick Parsons
Chairman of the Board
Time Warner

There had been speculation for years that investors were not happy with Parsons' stewardship of the multi-billion dollar media company. The word in the inner circles was that Parson's second-in-command was being groomed for his seat.

Well, the speculation is over. Dick Parsons has stepped down as the Chief Executive Officer of the largest media company in the world.

Ken Chenault: When some companies reach rock bottom they hand over the reigns to the black guy waiting in the wings. What could they lose?

In 1997, American Express' stock hit a low 17 points (ouch). Then Ken Chenault took over as Chief Operating Officer and raised the stock price to over one hundred!

After saving the company, they finally made him the top dog, in 2001. Chenault had worked at American Express since 1981.

media empire. And Dick Parson, an African-American, controlled it all.

Why did Parson step aside? Some Wall Street observers believe that the company wasn't bringing in enough profits. According to the company's 2006 fourth quarter reports, revenues were increased by 4% over 2005. But investors want double-digit profit margins in today's greedy marketplace. So poor Dick was replaced by his deputy, Jeff Bewkes, last month.

Chenault, the third African-American CEO of a Fortune 500 company, knows a little something about crisis. The American Express headquarters was directly across the street from the World Trade Center.

In the early days of his career, he piloted a lackluster division of Am Ex from 100 million dollars in sales to over 700 million in just three years. He put in 12-hour days and worked weekends.

How big is Time Warner?

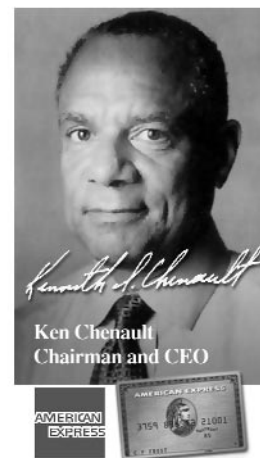
Time Warner is listed as holding assets in every form of modern media. They include the Internet, movies, TV, and print. In one way or another your life has been influenced by the Time-Warner

Parsons has had a hard row to hoe. Time Warner was to have been bought by AOL, the Internet company, in 2000 but the winds of fortune change swiftly and Time Warner found itself holding a dead duck. The merger has been described as the worst business deal in history. Time Warner lost 99 billion dollars!

Parsons came to the rescue and took over in 2002. He managed to keep the company from sinking. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to keep up with his rivals like Disney and Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation.

On top of everything else Parson had his detractors claiming that he was not black enough. Jesse Jackson complained publicly that there were not enough blacks on CNN, a company owned by Time Warner.

It is expected that Parsons will stay on as Time Warner's Chairman of the Board for another year.



Ken Chenault
Chairman and CEO

It is estimated that Ken Chenault increased Am Ex's value by billions of dollars and saved thousands of jobs.

Chenault says that everyone can make a conscious choice to be a leader.

The Center gets a new Executive Director, Melodie Russell



David James, President, the Center's Board of directors and Staff personnel officially introduced the new director, Melodie Russell, to the community in October. Mrs Russell said that she will continue to use the name "The Center" as the facility has come to be known in recent years.

Melodie Russell is a very busy person. Whether she's in her office or at a community function she is constantly besieged with cell phone calls, pressing interruptions and annoying distractions. Yet, she manages to hold everything together with a pleasant smile.

Mrs. Russell has a lot of work cut out for her. As the new Executive Director of the Center she has inherited a hodge-podge of problems that need her immediate attention. Everyone talks about the glory days when P.D. Mitchell successfully managed the Center and they have high hopes that Mrs. Russell can fill his shoes.

To speak about the history of the Center is to invoke cautious speech in hushed tones. Stories of alleged mismanagement in the past has soiled the Center's reputation. Innuendos of financial bickering and political infighting have taken its toll on the facility. The building needs renovation work and maintenance upgrades.

Mrs. Russell's job is to find the money to get it done. With the help from the Lycoming Housing Authority, Mrs. Russell has already had new carpet put down in the computer room and has turned an unused fitness room into a conference room.



The Center is funded in part, by the Lycoming County United Way. Every penny is scrutinized; expense reports double-checked and budgets are strictly enforced. Financial responsibility is the keystone of Mrs. Russell's leadership. She must regain the trust of the community and sometimes that not easy. She has had to make some difficult decisions to move the Center's staff forward.

Mrs. Russell's task is not an enviable position. According to the LCUW's website. "Over 82% of our participants live within walking distance of The Center; Over 88% are from low-moderate income family homes; 91% of the participants are minorities, and 36% of the young adults (ages 17-24) are unemployed. The neighborhood in which The Center is located has the highest crime rate in the city. Some individuals have no hope and are living one day at a time."

Mrs. Russell and her staff can use some help. They need volunteers to monitor children and to help with the various programs offered. Mrs. Russell said, "Children act differently when there are more parents and adults around." Adults need to set the example for the children, she said.

Mrs. Russell, who has no children of her own, cautions against others viewing her as a super mother figure that will come and save the day. She emphasized that restoring the Center to past levels of achievement is a team effort. She is forging new paths that P.D. Mitchell could only dream about.



Community residents examine display of the Center's history.

What's in a name?

The sign on the wall says it is the Bethune-Douglas Center, but it has also been called the Campbell Street Center.

The website also includes the title, "Campbell Street Family, Youth and Community Association, Inc (or CSFYA).

Whatever it is called, it has a rich history and is a valuable asset to the African-American community of Williamsport.

<http://www.campbellstreetcenter.org/>

Increase Your Reading Skills and Command Your Destiny.

What can you do to counteract the myth of black intellect inferiority?

Well, one thing you can do is... READ. Read about the current scientific debate over race and intelligence. Read about the shameful practices of "scientific racism" and eugenics. Read about how blacks were legally classified as sub-human (thus, inferior to whites) in the Dred Scott decision and how that decision led to the Civil War. Read about successful African-Americans that rose to greatness despite racial prejudice.

Actually, reading in and of itself, is a proactive measure against the ingrained notions of black inferiority. Reading expands the mind and brings enlightenment. Reading opens a person's world to new concepts and ideas. Reading is the sharing of human thought that transcends time and space. Reading allows a person to live a better life.

So what you read is not as important as the act of reading itself. If you know someone that has trouble reading, help is available. Check out the resources listed below:

The Center is starting a reading comprehension program based on African-American history in the Williamsport. The concept is the brainchild of **Dr. Harry Lewis** and **Dr. Mamie Diggs**, our local Underground Railroad expert. The program is designed to increase reading speed and comprehension. For more information contact: the Center at 322-5515.

The Learning Center is ready to help those who have a very difficult time reading. Their website says, "Services are free and include: one-on-one tutoring, small group studies, math and writ-

ing assistance, a comprehensive computer lab, Family Literacy programs, English as a second language and Workplace skills programs." For more information contact the Learning Center at 321-0200.

Dr. Betty McCall of **Lycoming College** is also looking to start a Reading Club based the book "Code of the Street", by **Elijah Anderson**.

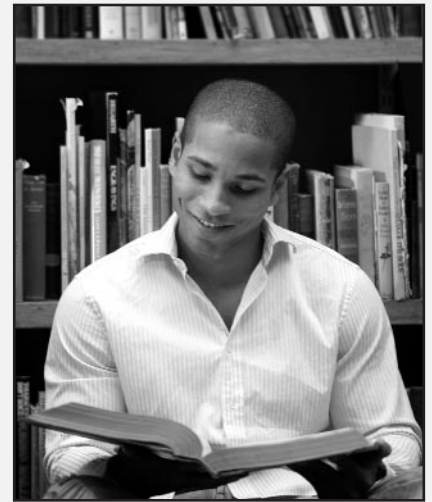
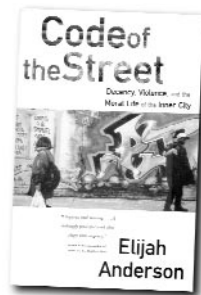
Professor **Anderson**, who teaches at Yale University, is expected to give a lecture at Lycoming College in September 2008. Dr. McCall wants to welcome Anderson to Williamsport by packing the audience with residents familiar with Anderson's work. For more information contact: Lycoming College at 321-4000.

And for those of you that think that reading a book is old-fashioned, check out the future: **the Kindle** by Amazon.com.



It's an electronic book! It features a new "electronic paper" display screen that looks like the printed page. It can hold 200 book titles and there are over 80,000 books

currently available. You can also read magazines and newspapers on it. Costs \$400.00. (A nice Christmas gift for that voracious reader in the family.) For more information visit the website at: www.amazon.com.



The National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) released a new analysis of reading patterns in the United States on November 19, 2007. The report, "To Read or Not Read: A Question of national consequence", reveals recent declines in voluntary reading and test scores alike, exposing trends that have severe consequences for American society.

The report gathered statistics from over 40 different studies of the reading habits of children, teenagers and adults. The declines in reading have civic, social, and economic implications. Advanced readers accrue personal, professional, and social advantages. Deficient readers may fail at achieving worthwhile lifetime goals. The report found that:

- **Nearly two-thirds of employers ranked reading comprehension "very important" for high school graduates. Yet 38 percent consider most high school graduates deficient in this basic skill.**
- **American 15-year-olds ranked fifteenth in average reading scores for 31 industrialized nations, behind Poland, Korea, France, and Canada, among others.**
- **Literary readers are more likely than non-readers to engage in positive civic and individual activities – such as volunteering, attending sports or cultural events, and exercising.**

You can download the report at:
<http://www.nea.gov/research/ToRead.pdf>

Knowledge is like a garden: if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested. - Guinean proverb



Check your facts. Squash the rumors. Share the Truth.

There's been flurry of emails about the blacks permanently losing their rights to vote in 2007 unless the Voting Rights Act is made into law.

Camille Cosby is named in the email as an advocate to urge Congress to pass new legislation to ensure that blacks retain their full citizenship rights.

The problem, it seems, is that the email is several years old. In fact, **President George W. Bush extended the act for another 25 years on July 27, 2006.** The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is safe until the year 2031.

Okay. We're good to go on that point, but that brings up a whole other issue of why the Voting Rights Act was needed in the first place. Many years ago blacks in the South Eastern United States were denied the right to vote by local authorities using arcane regulations to test a voter's literacy. It was proven that the practice was an unfair tactic to deny African-Americans voting privileges. (In many cases, blacks outnumbered whites in southern state jurisdictions.)

All is fair in love and war... and politics. We have seen in past election cycles a "We must win at all costs!" mentality. New strategies are constantly being developed to purge

blacks and other minorities from the voting rolls.

In my opinion, we must vigilant. We cannot fall asleep and expect everyone to play fair. Our hard earned right to vote will always be under attack by those who would love to turn back the clock on America's social progressiveness.

The extension of the Voting Rights Act forces us to re-examine the reality of hardball American politics. Democracy needs a tune up every 25 years or so.

the Editor.



ATTENTION!

African-American Perspective

is looking for volunteers. We need writers, artists, poets, etc., anyone who wants to make a positive difference in our community. No one will be excluded, but we are interested in engaging and showcasing the talents of African-American youth.

Write a brief description of yourself with contact information and send it to:

RCJamesDesign/African-American Perspective
P.O. Box 1181, Williamsport, Pa. 17703