



Bridging the Divide Between Gen. X and Millennials

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Abstract

The problems that plague the Black community are a multi-dimensional phenomenon deeply rooted in systemic racism. For 400 years, the Black experience in America has been one of subjugation, segregation, lynching, discrimination and racism. The historic Civil Rights Movement changed legislation, but it didn't change racist attitudes or institutions.

During Donald Trump's presidency, America has witnessed a resurgence of White supremacists' attitudes, beliefs, values and practices towards people of color, especially Blacks. His administration supports the social, political, criminal justice and economic institutions that negatively affect the Black community. As a result, Blacks have the highest incarceration rate, poverty violence and unemployment.

Today, the Black community is in desperate need of a social, political and economic agenda to eradicate systemic racism. The future and responsibility falls with Generation X and Millennials. The critical question is how the perceived conflicts and perspectives can be resolved to address systemic economic exploitation, political oppression and social degradation.

Session Description

The Civil Rights Movement has been regarded as the crowning legislative achievement for Black America's quest for freedom and equality. Led by Martin Luther King Jr and other leaders, the movement was successful in that it ended segregation, discrimination, and gave Blacks the right to vote. However, it failed to dismantle racist institutions, economic barriers, the cycle of poverty, and violence.

Fifty years later, the Black experience of inequality and oppression is still persistent. The unemployment rate for Blacks remains considerably higher than Whites. Blacks are still in an inferior position economically. The wage income gap between the two races has not made any significant improvements. Gentrification has replaced segregation which has caused inequality and poverty in many urban areas. Black men and women are incarcerated at a higher rate than Whites through a corrupt criminal justice system that supports police brutality and racial profiling.

In a 1964 speech entitled, *The Ballot or Bullet*, Malcolm X posed a question, "Where do we go from here"? Malcolm expressed the need for new friends and allies in the struggle to give the movement a new and broader interpretation by looking at the movement inside and out.

As the Baby Boomers fade from the scene, the primary accountability and responsibility of the Black community rests with the succeeding generations. According to the Census Bureau, in 2018, Generation X reached its population peak with 65.8 million. By 2019, Millennials will surpass Baby Boomers as the largest generation with 73 million.

The Millennial generation is drastically changing the political and social landscape of the country. Grassroot organizations such as *Black Lives Matter*, *Black Youth Project 100* and the *Dream Defenders* have revolutionized the way Blacks fight for freedom and equality. Ironically, there has been some push back regarding the protest tactics from both Baby Boomers and Gen. X. Some traditional activists criticize young activists for not having a specific agenda. Young activists clap back alleging the criticism is dismissive and disrespectful. Also, they contend that many of the traditional activists have become a part of the establishment they once fought.

The conflict between generations is real and bridging the widening gap is imperative to success in the Black community. This discourse is designed to foster a collaborative initiative between generations to address systemic inequality, marginalization, and racism.

Objectives

1. Gain an understanding of the differences in each generation.
2. Facilitate the importance of unifying the generations.
3. Understand how major events, social trends and cultural impacts influenced generational ideas and perspectives.
4. Learn how to resolve the conflicts between generations

Key Concepts

Generation X, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Millennials, Economic Exploitation, Civil Rights Movement, Black Lives Matter, Black Nationalism, Political oppression, Social Degradation

Relevant Credentials

Bachelor of Arts, Sociology - University of Tennessee

MBA in Human Resources - Strayer University

Bachelor of Theology - American Baptist College

Member of Toastmasters International

Certified Motivational Speakers - IADP

Materials Needed

Microphone and Podium

Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Background
 - B. Objectives of Discourse

- II. Challenges Confronting the Black Community
 - A. Economic Exploitation
 - B. Political Oppression
 - C. Social Degradation

- III. The Ballot or Bullet vs. I have a Dream
 - A. Political Revolutionary - Martin Luther King Jr.
 - B. Cultural Revolutionary - Malcolm X
 - C. Similarities and Differences
 - D. Two Men: One Voice

- IV. Generation Overview and Influencers
 - A. Major Historical Events
 - B. Social Trends
 - C. Cultural Impact

- V. Conflicts between Gen. X and Millennials
 - A. Communication
 - B. Value and Beliefs
 - C. Philosophical Differences

- VI. Resolving Conflicts
 - A. Consider Generational factors
 - B. Consider generational values at stake
 - C. Communicate different perceptions and perspectives
 - D. Learn from one another
 - E. Find generational appropriate fix

- VII. Conclusion
 - A. Q & A

