

ECONOMIC VIOLENCE - Are You Guilty? If So, What Are You Doing About It? Author Unknown

Have you ever received money from a Chinese person for anything other than them making change for you? No, is the answer I have been receiving when asking this question as part of an informal survey to Black People. The follow up question is, "Have you ever given money to a Chinese person?" The answer invariably is yes. This imbalance of give and take is reflective of the consciousness of Black people and consequently our relationship with ourselves and others.

There is a reason why every Black Ghetto has a Chinese food restaurant, but there are no Soul Food restaurants in Chinatown. In fact, the most popular Soul Food restaurant in Harlem, New York on 135th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard is owned and operated by a Chinese family.

Again, there are no Soul Food restaurants in Chinatown and there certainly is no Chinese Food restaurant in China town owned and operated by a Black family. If a Black person tried, the business would be shut down, before it started. Why? Economic Violence.

Every group of people understands practices and strategically utilizes the concept of economic violence, except Black people. In fact the economic violence that we, as Black people, practice is economic violence against ourselves. Economic violence is the art and science of using the exchange of money for goods and/or services as an aspect of ethnic warfare, survival and prosperity.

The Chinese will not support a Black business over their own, because they are not interested in ethnic suicide. The Chinese are logical, as self preservation is the most basic of human instincts. So not only will a Chinese person not support a Black business over a Chinese business, they take it one step further and plant their business in a Black community and implement plans to take Black people's money. This ideological posture is pure and scientific economic violence. Replace Chinese with any other ethnic group besides Black, and the picture becomes clearer. The above is not a condemnation of Chinese, Korean, Arab or white businesses at all. It is a condemnation of Black people who have forgotten The Honorable Marcus Garvey's mantra of "Race First." Every ethnic group has mastered this concept except Black people. It is in my interest to come from a powerful people. Therefore, my interest is committing economic violence on behalf of Black people. That means purchasing a Black person's service or product "first" before I purchase any other ethnic group or race's service or product.

Have you committed economic violence on your behalf or against yourself today? If you are a Black person reading this, I am sure that you are familiar with the notion of, "I just want the best product or service for my money and a lot of times, Black folks just aren't up to par."

My response is,

1. If that's your attitudinal posture, then do not get mad if people don't patronize your Black business (product or service) for fear of deficiencies.
2. Since when has the uncleanness of a Chinese food restaurant stopped you from buying a to-go order of shrimp fried rice, or the messiness of an Arab or Indian corner-store, gas station or bodega stopped you from purchasing those pork rinds you love and a soft drink. Have you committed economic violence on your behalf or against yourself today?

Black people: Due to our lack of economic militarism, we are losing the fight for economic independence. That's why everyone, and I mean everyone, "bangs" on Black people. All ethnic groups gain their financial strength in America by economically banging on Black people. This is how white people became wealthy in this world.

The European transatlantic slave trade of kidnapping millions of Africans as Prisoners of War was the biggest gang bang of all time. Chattel and plantation slavery was a continuation of this policy of economic violence. Since then, we have been left open to economic attack by every ethnic group that makes it to America. Nothing has really changed, because the relationship between slave and slave-master is still the same.

***Tastes, Interests and Values:**

Stop Eating Pizza, *You're not Italian The first step in perpetuating economic violence against a people is to change their tastes, interests and values to the tastes, interests and values of the invading culture. Tastes, interests and values are the sole determinative factors in the decision to purchase a service or product.

This is extremely important as all products and services spring from a cultural landscape. Here are some extremely basic examples to illustrate my point:

(1) An overwhelming amount of people in America, purchase turkey on the third week of November, every single year. The turkey is an imperative for a Thanksgiving dinner. Thanksgiving is a white cultural holiday designed to celebrate white conquest and genocide of the native American population, but is masked as a day of family togetherness and thanks. The people who own turkey farms are white poultry farmers. They are the direct economic beneficiaries of the values of this particular cultural holiday. If native American and Black people were the owners of turkey farms, you can bet your last dollar that turkey would not be a requirement of that holiday. White people understand economic violence and under no circumstance would they allow anyone other than whites to benefit from a white holiday.

(2) This is the same reason why U.S. federal, state and municipal government cars must be American cars. They understand economic violence. Have you committed economic violence on your behalf or against yourself today?

(3) Selling beef to Hindus won't work. The Hindu religion absolutely forbids the killing of cows as the cow is sacred to them. Therefore selling beef products to this crowd is not economically feasible. However, if you are able to convert the Hindus away from their religion into say, Christianity, you would have not just brought a new group of people to the priest or the pastor on Sunday, but a new group of people to McDonald's and Burger King, because their tastes, interests and values concerning cows would have changed.

A further examination of tastes, interests and values reveal that once you adopt or are coerced into perpetuating the tastes, interests and values of another group of people you will not only be committing economic violence against yourself but you will be committing violence against your health.

Example 1: In Hawaii, over 50 percent of native adults 40 years old or more were diagnosed with diabetes. The Hawaiians are a Polynesian people who have for centuries flourished on a local diet of vegetables and fruits from their land. After the U.S. invasion and displacement of the Hawaiian Queen Liliuokalani, the tastes, values and interests of native Hawaiians were changed to the tastes of white people. Hawaiians began eating Hamburgers, Pizza, etc. and became zombies of American fast foodism

and forgot about their traditional foods. Something interesting happened: Disease in the form of Diabetes. Diabetes was never a problem for Hawaiians until their tastes were changed. In effect, Hawaiians were funding their Diabetes. A Hawaiian doctor trained in western medicine and traditional healing sciences went on a crusade to save her people from Diabetes. She did not prescribe insulin-controlled by white pharmaceutical companies, which is a band-aid to the real problem, but she prescribed a traditional Hawaiian diet and forbade her patients to eat European made food. As her patients ate green leaves, fruits and root food vegetables from the place where they evolved, their diabetes was wiped out completely. Additionally, in this manner, Hawaiian farmers benefit from the purchase of food grown on their own land, thereby restoring economic and physical health-simultaneously.

*Example 2: I was at a supermarket in Miami,*Florida buying a yam. Not a sweet potato, but a real yam, brown and hard. The cashier was Black and said, "What's that, a turnip?" I was startled and had a serious epiphany. Black people have been so oppressed in America, that we do not even recognize our own ancestral foods. The implications again are self inflicted economic and physical violence (dis-ease).

*** A major disease that affects Black Americans is Sickle Cell Anemia*.**

However, this disease does not affect Black people in Africa nearly as much.

The reason: The shifting of tastes, interests, and values much like the Hawaiian example. The sickle cell trait is a trait that helps Africans fight off malaria. The sickling of the red blood cell helps prevent the malaria parasite from binding to the cell due to the peculiar shape of a sickled cell and its hemoglobin. Since Black Americans are literally from West Africa, they have this trait just like any other West African. The difference is the West African diet contains root foods from the Africans soil like cassava and yam. Studies by Nigerian researcher, Dr. Ogi Agbai have, shown that thiocyanate in cassava and yam and their leaves alleviate the symptoms of Sickle Cell Anemia. Black Americans do not eat cassava or true yams, so Sickle Cell Anemia is rampant. Instead, Black Americans have been forced to develop a taste for everything, other than African root food, therefore the disease is present. Disease is defined as imbalance. When a person or a people have tastes, interests and values outside of who they really are, all types of imbalances occur such as economic and physical health imbalances. Recalibrating a Black American diet from chitlins and fried chicken back to a West African diet of plantains, cassava, yams, etc., will create a necessary economic balance by supporting African commodities markets and enriching personal, group economic and physical health simultaneously. Have you committed economic violence today?

****The Opium Wars: There is Nothing You Have That We Want** China****

In studying economic violence, tastes interests and values, a cursory discussion on the Opium Wars is extremely important.

Please note that major wars occur due to the addictions of Europeans. Today, there is a war in Iraq, due to the European addiction to oil. In the 19th century, the Opium wars between Britain and China were due to the British addiction to tea. The Chinese have an ancient tradition of drinking tea as part of their daily ritual. The British developed this custom due to the travels of many European "explorers" who successfully made it over to Asia. By the 19th century, tea became a staple of the British, particularly the middle class and ruling class. The British imported all of their tea from China. In a short amount of time, there was a huge trade imbalance between Britain and China in favor of China. The British paid China for their tea with gold. Soon, the British became nervous as their gold reserves were being

depleted. However, the British population's taste for tea was insatiable and there would have been riots if the British population was deprived of their tea. In response to the economic violence that Britain was suffering at the hands of China, British leaders arranged a meeting with Chinese leaders.

The British wanted to stop trading tea for gold. They told the Chinese that they would trade anything else that Britain produced for the Chinese tea.

The Chinese response was laughter as the Chinese retorted, "There is nothing that you have that we want." The British were stunned as they took this as an offense to their way of life and their plans to keep their gold. The British went back to Britain and decided to pump opium into China. The opium was to be traded for gold in China, and thereby getting the gold back into British hands. In addition, the British took lands from the Indian subcontinent for two purposes:

- 1) for growing the poppy plant for opium to facilitate their drug trade and
- 2) for growing various other plants for tea so that trading tea with China would be obsolete. In fact, today one of the most famous tea names is Ceylon tea. Ceylon is the former British colonial name for the country in the Indian sub-continent now named Sri Lanka .

One day, in 1839, the Chinese seized a ship off of its shores containing tons of opium. The Chinese rightfully seized the ship as opium was illegal in China and anyone caught with opium was given the death penalty. The British declared the Chinese seizure of their ship as an act of war, and hence the initiation of the Opium wars which were from 1839-1842 and 1856-1860 between Britain and China .

The Chinese have never forgotten the economic war with Europeans and the implications are felt today. Consequently, the Chinese have nuclear weapons, the largest standing army in the world and Europe and America as debtors in trade. 'BOUT TIME AFRICA BORROWED A LEAF FROM THE CHINESE! Their major strength has been maintaining their own tastes, interests and values and the ability to look at Europeans in the face and say, "There is nothing that you have that we want." Black people, can we say the same? The reason why we have been in trouble as a race for so long is our unrelenting taste for things European.

Remember, African prisoners of war (slaves) were traded for white commodities like European processed rum, spare parts and European textiles. Have you committed economic violence today?

****Slavery and the Value of Labor: Adam Smith* ***

Adam Smith was an economic philosopher from England and considered the patron saint of European Capitalist thought. He was also an opponent of the enslavement of Africans in America and Europe. However, he was not opposed to our enslavement for moral or noble reasons. He was opposed to slavery because he thought it was inefficient in the capitalist world. He believed Africans should be paid for our labor so that we could buy European goods. That was his sole argument. He didn't like the idea that such a large population could not be consumers because slaves were not allowed the ability to earn money. What does this mean? It means that the only reason why it was acceptable for you and I to not be enslaved is so that we could feed the economic system of white supremacy better and more efficiently. And what are Black people now? The biggest one-dimensional pure consumers the world has ever seen.

The slavery relationship is still the same. If you work a job that pays you ten dollars per hour and you pay \$150.00 to Tommy Hilfiger for his jeans, you have effectively given 15 hours of your labor to Tommy Hilfiger.

You worked 15 hours for him. When are you going to work for yourself and your people, by purchasing Black goods and services with your labor hours? Tommy Hilfiger and company doesn't even have to whip us any more to turn over our labor to him. He is still economically violent, and we are still bleeding.

Lesson: In your economic life, if you are not buying from your own people first, then you are committing suicide on many levels and enlisting for slavery and zombification. Buy Black with no apology and if you have to buy from others, try to make sure it's a bootleg. *Never pay full price for anything from others-especially those who have historically and continue to benefit from your underdevelopment. For in fact, our relationship is dialectical to our oppressors.

Their development is dependent on our underdevelopment.

Have you committed economic violence /self-hate today?