

Selective Influence?

Written by Ed Baswell
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Ebony Magazine Ignores Black Conservatives

Every year, Ebony magazine publishes a list of the 150 “Most Influential Blacks in America.” The list should be renamed “The Most Influential LIBERAL Blacks in America.” The magazine, which has been a monthly staple for black Americans since 1945, conveniently leaves influential conservative black intellectuals off its list.

How can the magazine, in good conscience, leave out a conservative, heavyweight black intellectual like Walter Williams? He is a distinguished professor of economics and former department chairman at George Mason University. He has written 10 books on economics and race relations and also writes a popular weekly syndicated column which is carried in 200 papers. Chances are, if a liberal black intellectual wrote books and columns and chaired a department at a university, Ebony would almost certainly put his or her name on that list.

You see, Ebony apparently believes Williams’ politics hurt black people. Williams, for example, is a leading critic of the minimum wage, a policy that he and many economists believe INCREASES unemployment. The late Milton Friedman, an economist who won a Nobel Prize, called the minimum wage law “one of the most, if not the most, anti-black law on the books.” Even if Ebony disagrees, a significant number of economists say they believe minimum wage laws increase unemployment among those with lower skills—the very people the laws are supposed to help.

Williams calls 14 percent black unemployment, versus 7.8 percent nationwide and 6.9 percent for whites, an outrage. He blames left-wing policies. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, a Missouri Democrat, and the head of the Congressional Black Caucus, admitted, “As the chair of the Black Caucus, I’ve got to tell you, we are always hesitant to criticize the President. With 14 percent (black) unemployment, if we had a white president, we’d be marching around the White House...The President knows we are going to act in deference to him in a way we wouldn’t to someone white.”

Not only does Ebony leave out Walter Williams, the magazine also ignores Thomas Sowell each year. Sowell, who works for Stanford’s Hoover Institution, has written 40 books about economics, politics and race relations. His column appears in more than 300 papers, making him one of the most widely read writers in the English language. David Mamet, a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright called Sowell “our greatest contemporary philosopher.”

Sowell’s point of view is that government anti-poverty programs cause even more poverty and induce a self-defeating dependency on government. Recently, he wrote, “Liberals try to show their concern for the poor by raising the level of the minimum wage laws. Yet they show no interest in hard evidence that minimum wage laws create disastrous levels of unemployment among young blacks in this country, as such laws created high unemployment rates among young people in general in European countries.

“The black family survived centuries of slavery and generations of Jim Crow, but it has disintegrated in the wake of the liberals’ expansion of the welfare state. Most black children grew up in homes with two parents during all that time, but most grow up with only one parent today.”

Sportscaster Bob Costas called the murder-suicide of a black professional football player the

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product of the “gun culture.” In reality, that player, Jovan Belcher, was the product of a “fatherless culture.” Like so many blacks, he was raised without a father.

A significant portion of crime comes from homes where the father is missing. Today, 72 percent of blacks, 53 percent of Hispanics and 36 percent of whites are born out of wedlock. Consider the murder statistics from New York City, a place where 44 percent of the population is white, 29 percent is Hispanic and 25 percent is black. Yet, in 2011, blacks and Hispanics accounted for 91 percent of the homicide suspects. If liberals are not prepared to say blacks and Hispanics are genetically predisposed to commit crime, then they must force themselves to look at the problem of AWOL dads.

Ebony leaves out Williams and Sowell every year and the magazine also ignores Clarence Thomas. He is one of only nine sitting Supreme Court justices. He is left out because Ebony doesn't like his politics. But, to argue that these three men are not influential is laughable. Liberal policies of the last 50 years have to be examined and re-examined, but that is something Ebony, black liberals and white liberals refuse to do. Those policies may very well be the only explanation for the nation's out-of-wedlock birth rate leaping from 25 percent in 1965 to 72 percent in 2013. At the very least, shouldn't liberals look at the numbers and try to figure out what's causing the destruction of the black family? Maybe these brilliant black conservatives are on to something.

Sometimes, the truth hurts. A 72 percent out-of-wedlock birth rate indicates there is an extremely serious problem in the black community. First of all, it is a matter of immorality. Are black preachers emphasizing the Bible's take on sex outside of marriage? Are black preachers calling sin sin? Are black preachers telling their congregants there is a price to pay for immorality? Are black preachers telling their church members they will answer to God for the immoral choices they make? I wonder.

Barack Obama's former pastor, Jeremiah Wright, seemed to be more concerned about black liberation theology than actually preaching against sin. And, even if black preachers are preaching against sin, apparently the message isn't getting through when 7 out of 10 black babies are born out of wedlock. Ultimately, the turnaround will have to start in the black church and fan out into the community. The black church, and for that matter, all churches, need to experience revival.

Even liberals sometimes recognize how the “fatherless culture” has annihilated the black family.

Kweisi Mfume was once the head of the NAACP. He was asked, “Which poses the bigger threat to the black community—white racism or the absence of black fathers?” Without hesitation, Mfume said, “The absence of black fathers.”

Ebony, are you listening?

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