

## A Lot of My Friends Are Black

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney, Associate Editor  
Thursday, 02 August 2012 09:01

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Being Black is one of the many blessings that God has bestowed upon me. I call it a blessing, because my skin is not my sin, contrary to how many people seek to define it.

Racism, however, is alive and well and has become more prevalent and blatant in the United States since the election of President Barack Obama. President Obama has been blatantly disrespected and his culture mocked by many people in this country, because he is a black man in America.

Whether choosing to Photoshop his face onto a chimpanzee's body or putting his face on a food stamp with items such as watermelons, the Kool-aid man and a bucket of chicken (all stereotypes associated with the Black culture), the brazen attack on the Black culture is on full display like never more in America.

So, if the leader of the free world can be disrespected like that, who am I to think that I'm any different?

Never since Blacks were lynched and subjected to legalized Jim Crow laws that discriminated against them, has the Black culture been so boldly and openly under attack.

And the reason being.....? Because we are Black in America.

One of the most often repeated phrases that I get hit with when I choose to call this disrespectful and racist behavior out is, "I'm not a racist. Many of my friends are Black!"

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Huh?

How can oil and water co-exist together without there being a visible distinction? In the same vein, how can a person feel comfortable enough to spew racist rhetoric and claim to have Black 'friends'?

How can a true 'friend' of Black people think that it is acceptable to send or forward racist emails and not think about its' potential insensitivity towards Black people?

Funny thing though, when called out about this blatant disrespect and mockery of the Black culture, many of the perpetrators start acting plumb dumb, as if they have no clue how they could even remotely be considered a racist.

Remember Marilyn Davenport? She was the Orange County Republican Party Central Committee Member who sent an email in 2011 to her friends and acquaintances depicting a family portrait of apes, with President Obama's face in the place of the infant ape of the family. The photo has a caption at the bottom that reads, "Now you know why no birth certificate."

But, like many people that spread offensive material about Black people, she just didn't get it.

She stated, "I'm sorry if my email offended anyone. I simply found it amusing regarding the character of Obama and all the questions surrounding his origin of birth. In no way did I even consider the fact that he's half-Black when I sent out the email. In fact, the thought never entered my mind until one or two other people tried to make this about race."

Her ignorance and weak apology, along with many others concerning the insensitive treatment of blacks in America is as rampant and blatant than it has ever been since the 1960's, at the height of the Civil Rights movement.

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The sad reality is, several other monkey pictures have been generated and sent out as well.

No other sitting president has been treated the way that President Obama has. Some call it a joke. Others call it satire. Some say that people shouldn't be so sensitive. Others say that if you really knew their heart, you would know that they aren't racist or being racist.

Each race and culture has their unique characteristics and attributes. Those unique characteristics and attributes should be acknowledged by everyone, but more importantly they should be respected.

The best way to show your Black 'friends' that you aren't racist is by not displaying racist behaviors, by not distributing racist material and by not saying racially insensitive comments.

If enough people tell you that something is a problem, then maybe you might want to listen to them. Maybe you might learn something, hopefully, about yourself.

Oh, but I shouldn't trip. I must've forgot.....a lot of your friends are black.

*Jeffrey L. Boney is Associate Editor for the Houston Forward Times newspaper, a Next Generation Project Fellow and a dynamic, international speaker. Jeffrey is the Founder and CEO of the Texas Business Alliance and is an experienced entrepreneur and business development strategist. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at [jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org](mailto:jboney1@texasbusinessalliance.org).*

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