

## HEY BLACK SLAVE.....WHAT SIZE ARE YOUR WRISTS?

Written by Jeffrey L. Boney  
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Psssst!!! Wanna know why I am whispering?

I'm trying not to make too much noise, so that your slave master doesn't catch me talking to you about this escape plan that I'm attempting. You see, as I look at the various things taking place in America, I can't help but to get gravely concerned.

What things, you might ask?

I'm talking about the current plight, condition and mindset of Black people in this country, whereas it seems we have managed to catapult ourselves back in time, to a place that I could have sworn we had left behind. I mean, it's as if Black people have allowed themselves to get voluntarily captured and become collective "modern-day slaves" all over again; trading in our former physical shackles for some new and improved, mental ones.

If you don't know the history of slave shackles, please let me enlighten you.

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Slave shackles were restraining mechanisms used as early as the 15th century to chain slaves, either on the wrists, ankles or neck. These shackles, made out of wrought iron, were not only used as a means to keep slaves controlled, but they were also used as a way to humiliate defiant slaves who tried to escape. These shackles served as an effective way for a plantation owner to physically and psychologically control their slaves.

One of my historical heroes, Harriet Tubman, famously said, "I freed a thousand slaves. I could have freed a thousand more if only they knew they were slaves." Tubman wasn't speaking about the physical shackles of slaves, but the mental ones they possessed. Sadly, those mental shackles are the reason our Black race is in the state it's in and needs a serious butt-kicking.

Blacks lead the way in most of the bad categories and are at the bottom of most of the good categories. We lead the way in buying power, which could be a good category for us if the majority of that money was actually being spent with Black businesses. Black people have a buying power that is swiftly approaching \$1 trillion dollars, yet have very few major assets to show for it.

I mean, what do Black people truly "own" anyway, huh? A nice house; a vehicle; maybe a few other toys here and there. Okay, then what?

We have great talent and ability, but we don't collectively own that talent and ability and learn to treat that talent and ability as an asset. Whether you get a fancy degree and go work for somebody or whether you become a star athlete, your talent and ability is still owned by somebody else.

If you look at the Black race in America, compared to others, we collectively have no REAL unified power or control over any significant assets, especially our own talent and ability.

If I asked you who owned the majority of nail salons in this country, who would you say does? Now ask yourself, who makes them wealthy? If I asked you who owned the majority of shoe companies and cell phone companies in this country, who would you say does? Now ask yourself, who makes them wealthy? And lastly, if I asked you who owned the majority of sports franchises and entertainment companies in this country, who would you say does? Now ask

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yourself, who makes them wealthy?

If your answer to the question, "who makes them wealthy" is Black people, you win the prize.

Many Black people are so naive and caught up with this "post-racial society" hype, that they don't even realize they are being collectively corralled and systematically controlled by mental shackles; not the physical shackles that were used before.

Let me tell you how I know.

In the book, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, published by Carter G. Woodson in 1933, he stated, "When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions."

It hasn't even been 50 years since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were signed into law, before we have now started to see these very protections that were fought, bled and died for by our Civil Rights patriarchs, discarded like trash by an ideological Supreme Court. How did we allow that to happen on our watch?

On top of that, Blacks have the highest unemployment rate of any group, yet refuse to actively support Black businesses with their dollar. Blacks are suffering from mandatory minimum sentencing and a discriminatory "War on Drugs," but choose to glorify this lifestyle and accept it within our communities. Blacks are getting squeezed out of contracting opportunities, employment opportunities, advertising opportunities and other key financially-focused decisions that could help stimulate our communities, yet we remain quiet about it. How did we allow that to happen on our watch?

Black people must wake up and quickly recognize that our collective strength and unity is the only thing that will help us advance. Slavery was real and is nothing that we hope to go back to. I know none of us want to have someone come up and ask you that ill-fated question, "What Size Are Your Wrists?"

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