

DECOLONIZE THAT DIET

TO NOT BE A SLAVE, DON'T EAT LIKE ONE
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FOR THE HOOD HEALTH HANDBOOK
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We've all been there. We got a little bit of health information that we want to share with our friends or family. Usually we have some information about how smoking is bad (after seeing a lot of friends and family have lung, throat issues) or how pork is bad (after seeing a lot of friends and family have hypertension, heart issues). We get to the point where we want the people around us to improve their lives. We're articulate. We lay it all out and this is the response we get: "We're all going to die sometime." Hands down one of the most ignorant statements in the world. No one who says that takes out a gun and shoots their self in the head. That's because everybody wants to live as long as they can. The key is to make sure that a person sees the importance of living a life which is of a high quality (health wise) as well as quantity (length).

Our communities are beset by a host of problems (gangs, economic hardship, crime, environmental racism, etc) that need to go the way of the dinosaur. We have to handle these issues because we are all that we have. We can't expect the producers of these conditions (the vanguard of white supremacy) to fix our problems. Our problems are their lifeblood. We do not need to accept being just products of our environments. We can become the producers of the environment. In order to make any change, large or small, you have to be healthy. The race isn't about the swift or the one that endures to the end. It is about the one who is strong enough to even enter the race. In this respect we need to get our weight up.

Throw off that yoke

The Black Church has been a rock in the Black community in many different ways. It assisted the Underground Railroad. It was a source of strength during slavery. Some of the first Freedom Schools were housed in churches. They were centers of organization during the Civil Rights era. Yet in one area they get a big fat F. That is in the area of health. I grew up in the church, so I know exactly what I am talking about. The Black church is one of the main pushers of an unhealthy diet that hasn't been put under a health review, in the form of "Soul Food." Though modern-day Soul Food is unhealthy, the foundation of Soul Food isn't, and can still be reclaimed. The Black Church, overall, isn't doing that reclaiming. According to most Black Christian traditions if you pray over food then it is 'blessed'. Ironically the levels of high blood pressure, hypertension and diabetes hasn't gone down in the Black community.

Change gonna come (if you make it come)

An obese person can't lead a revolution. If you are in debt to someone else and always giving back money to the enemy or just pouring it down the drain you won't be successful. We need to understand that during various times of progress in our communities certain drugs were pushed in order to make us ineffective. Thus during the 70's Black Power Movement heroin was pushed into the Black community. During the 80's crack was pushed into the Black community. And since the 70's junk food has been pushed into the Black and Brown community.

Revolutionary movements realized that the key in changing the way that a person thought was rooted in the food they were consuming. One cannot eat the oppressors food and expect to feel free. In fact when you eat the oppressor's food you get the "itus" or "nigga-itus." It's when after you eat a huge meal that you want to just lie down and go to sleep. It is the physical manifestation of that sin of sloth and gluttony.

"I get these explosions of energy. I don't know how long they last, but they're like explosions. So powerful" – Mike Tyson, regarding his vegan diet

Now the fundamental purpose of food is to provide energy and fuel to the body. Can you imagine

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filling up the tank of your car and it not starting? That doesn't make any sense. When you eat you are supposed to be energized.

When you are eating the wrong foods your body actually has to use more energy to digest it. Thus the net result is that your body shuts down to digest the food and in the end you don't even get that much energy since most was used for that digestion. You can't make a change if you are sitting on your ass all of the time.

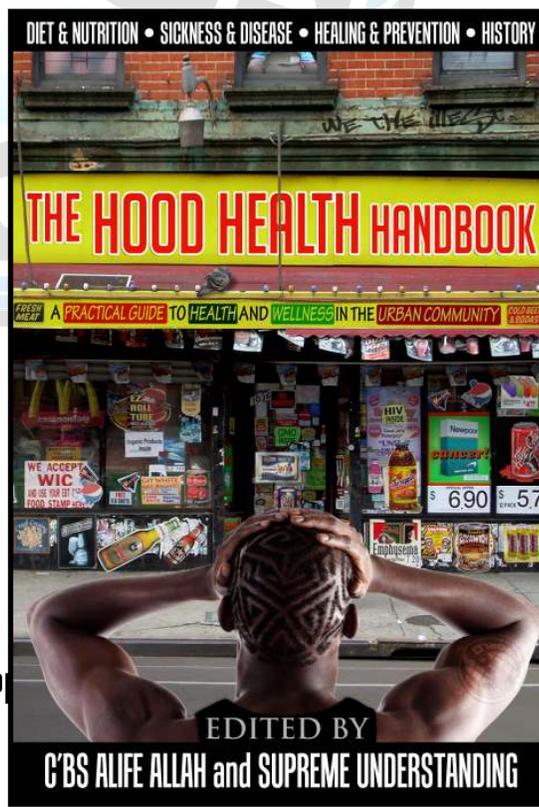
One of the first groups to make a significant health dent in the Black community was the Nation of Islam. One of the major books put out by the Nation of Islam was *How to Eat to Live*. The Nation of Islam also brought two major elements into the Black community. They brought bean soup and bean pies. The bean soup is nourishing and the bean utilized is the navy bean. The bean pie is familiar to many inhabitants of inner cities where the Muslims of the Nation of Islam often share the bean pie along with the Final Call newspaper. The bean pie is a type of custard pie whose main ingredient is also the navy bean. Though members of the Nation of Islam eat certain type of allowed meats, the writing of Elijah Muhammad champions a vegetarian lifestyle.

The Nation of Gods and Earths aka the Five Percenters are one of the main reasons why Black people from various walks of life don't eat pork. Allah, the founder of the Nation of Gods and Earths, came through the Nation of Islam, yet left to start his own Nation. Emphasizing us leaving pork alone took root with those who he taught. The Nation of Gods and Earths thus became the main avenue that Black people in the streets, as well as in prisons, came to consciousness.

The African Hebrew Israelites are a group of African Americans who eventually migrated to Israel. They hold fast to a pure vegetarian diet (abstaining from all eggs and dairy) which is based upon their interpretation of Genesis 1:29 ("And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for men."). They don't use alcohol other than self-made wine. They also don't use illegal or pharmaceutical drugs. They own a chain of vegetarian restaurants throughout the world. All adult members exercise 3 times a week and are advised to have at least one full body massage a month.

The modern day Mexica movement which promotes the reclaiming of American from European imperialism advocates returning to a more indigenous diet usually centered around the "seven warriors." The seven warrior are corn, beans, squash, chile, cactus, maguey and amaranth. It is important to notice the emphasis in eating foods that were not brought by the colonizer. If one is to remove oneself from the white supremacist paradigm then one needs to remove their food from their diet.

All of the above groups main ways that white people was by changing they ate. Not only did the Original people lethargic in impacted their culture. dealing with a foreign their own. Finally food on breaks down into essential chemicals cause the brain differently. It is a each of these they realized the being colonized and eating order to change a have to move into a



realized that one of people conquered their the foods that change in diet make many ways it also They soon were culture that was no the most basic level chemicals. Different to react and think acknowledgement to organizations that connection between a colonizer's food. In colonized state we decolonized diet.

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THE URBAN COMMUNITY