

# The Lions Of History

by Mannie Jackson

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According to one of Aesop Fables, at a certain age, a person automatically becomes one of the surviving “lions of history”. I’ve recently had thoughts of what this meant, especially after analyzing past leaders and writers like Fredrick Douglass, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Joseph Stiglitz, and others. I’ve accepted that I’ve survived to be a storyteller having traveled to 105 countries and having over a million followers; many of those from Asia after PUBLISHING my AUTOBIOGRAPHY **BOXCAR TO BOARDROOMS** ... however, nothing matches my diminishing recall of all the bad and the very ugly stuff I’ve chosen to forgive and forget. Sports Hall of Famers frequently claim it’s an advantage to have a short memory. My own view is that unforgiveness carries with it a very expensive luxury tax.

According to google, Lyndon Johnson's civil rights act 1964, prohibited discrimination in all public places and made employment discrimination illegal. The women's voting rights act followed in 1965. These legislative actions were proudly proclaimed to the world as the wonders of America's freedom and democracy. However, this was soon met by the reality that women and Blacks' rights to vote were being blatantly denied. The first state to abolish slavery was Vermont in 1777 followed closely by Pennsylvania in 1780. Women's voting rights under the 19th amendment were not signed in Mississippi until 1984.

The rule of law was denied while neighborhoods, businesses, and schools remained segregated – but even worse the media said and did very little. The schools and churches did very little and most elected officials did little. Absolutely no accountability- as my minister once said “ all these sins and no sinners”.

By the way, was anyone surprised about the recent NFL debacle? Imagine 32 teams with an average market capitalization of over 4 billion dollars and only one Black head coach/ no owners – shameful considering over 70% of the players (mostly college-educated) are nonwhite. By now everyone knows about the years of avoiding Black Quarterbacks in the NFL and of course professional basketball's racial quota system. Today both leagues are booming financially with 70-80 percent Black players. When leadership and participation are merit-based, this old Lion is cool regardless of gender, skin color, or sexual preference. My best friend and teammate from Edwardsville, Illinois was denied a professional career in Basketball because of quotas.

As a “lion of history”; allow me to now get to the point of what I've learned. The selection of elected and appointed leaders to solve climate change, hate crime growth, poverty, etc. are long game challenges and very costly matters. Accountants can read financial reports and tell whether a business is viable or real; so, I simply suggest that you study the details of America's financial trends.

Today's leaders, too often focus on opportunities and ignore shortcomings and sustainability. If schools taught facts and truth, instead of “feel good” myths and ideology, voters would be less tolerant of Network TV personalities who earn millions talking and criticizing everything and everybody while offering no solutions.

This Lion of History follows Ta-Nehisi Coates who proclaims that in 2022 he still feels he's living in someone else's country and the rest of the world was being protected from him- some politicians and media have created a deadly cottage industry out of the perpetuating myth that people of color are threats to all that's sacred.

I seldom hear discussions of causation. How can you expect a sustainable fix if you don't know and understand the facts around root causes of what you see and believe isn't working?

The bottom line is that USA's population density and diversity are rapidly changing and the countries' sense of national Identity is diminishing so fast that tolerating inequality has become so expensive it may eventually bankrupt us all. This "Lion of History" is simply saying wakeup and stop using fear and band-aids before the enterprise called America is no longer a viable place to live.

Joe E. Stieglitz says it best "Today's Divided Society Endangers our Future" and AESOP says in the face of pending disaster. "Lion and man are stronger together".