

Allyship in the Time of Aggrievement

The Case of Black Feminism and the New Black Masculinities

Introduction

Blume Oeur and Grundy characterize Black feminism as "thriving and dying" due to supporters continuing the movement via activism and academia and detractors calling Black feminism hegemonic and anti-male (p. 254). The authors argue that Black feminism supports Black men and boys. Meanwhile, the New Black Masculinities (NBM) claims that Black feminism ignores the struggles of Black men and boys. Delving into three case studies about young Black men, they examine NBM, Black male exceptionalism, and Black male aggrievement (BMA).

Case Studies

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) - Instead of social welfare MBK's **social justice capitalism** relies on private corporations to find places for Black and Latino boys to succeed.

All-male Public High Schools - Some elite public schools are investing in a **character education industry**. These schools use conservative respectability politics to promote personal improvement as the best way to uplift Black boys.

Morehouse College - This historically Black men's operates with a **personal responsibility ethos** which says that a successful Black man is a testament to their race which will incur trickle-down effects in Black communities without direct or active support.

New Black Masculinities

The NBM framework has emerged to highlight the suffering and concerns of Black men and boys in African American studies and philosophy. NBM claims that Black men are "silenced" by Black feminism. Many men feel like feminism is only dedicated to the advancement of women and fail to see that Black feminism aims to liberate everyone from racial gender oppression. Neoliberal ideologies and a post-feminist worldview cultivate the cis-normativity, binary, and conservative politics of NBM and BMA.

Black Male Aggrievement

Black feminism and BMA are both anti-racist. However, BMA adheres to conservative gender politics and a "seesaw logic" that stipulates that Black men are at a disadvantage while Black women are "up" (p. 255). Using BMA, the NBM claims that Black feminist academia is injuring the reputation and advancement of Black men.

Conclusion

The driving forces of these case studies contrast Black feminism's ethics of care and love. Black feminism wishes for and moves towards a better future for all victims of gendered racism and capitalism rather than only ambitious and motivated individuals. When acting only for personal gain, people harm their fellow community members. Black feminism aims to heal those relationships.



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