

BLACK PEOPLE ARE LOUD!

by
Dortell Williams

“Black people are loud,” goes the stereotype. To some degree, this may be true. My paternal side of the family is loud. Up close, they talk as if they are across the street. Inside the house, in a grocery store, it’s as if they are all deaf!

Their geographical origins are from Texas, a former concentrated slave-holding state. Their surnames, as with mine, are Williams, the name of a very prolific owner of human chattel.

History is important to understand the context of the familial custom of talking inappropriately loud. In slave quarters, the blacks spoke loud. In fact, they were forced to speak loud, so the slave masters could hear them and allay any fears of revolt or escape. Whispers among the slaves raised suspicions among the masters, so the slaves adopted this custom. Surely this adoption was at a subconscious level, but through the generations, talking loud suppressed tensions on the plantation.

By 1966, my year of birth, one-hundred and one years in the shadow of the Emancipation Proclamation, my shyness as a child kept me immune from this custom. In fact, I’m one of the most soft-spoken in the family. Nevertheless, reading the history of black folk helped me understand this phenomenon.

Should I say it a little louder????

Bio:

Dortell Williams is a prisoner at the California State Prison in Los Angeles. He has made it his mission to focus on self-rehabilitation, earning various college degrees and self-improvement certificates. He is a published author, loves to read, mentors youth and helps crime survivors heal from trauma. He is currently pursuing a BA degree in Communication Theory at CSU-Los Angeles. He appreciates feedback from readers. He can be reached directly at: Dortell Williams, H-45771 / A5-204, P.O. Box 4430, Lancaster, CA 93539, or indirectly at: DortellWilliams@gmx.com.