


# BLACK MARKET

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The Holiday Issue: 2023

Magazine



## The Mis- Education of the Holiday Spirits

*PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE...*

The History of  
Watch Night & New Year's

Thanksgiving  
VS

Thanks-taking

What Christmas Was  
Like During Slavery

Do's & Dont's at  
the Table

and MORE.....

With Holiday Message From The Publisher Alan S. Hill



Here we go again....

Another year,... another dollar for the Mis-education machine.

There is nothing Scroogelike going on here. Well maybe just a little. Let me tell you why!

I ain't getting no warm and fuzzy feelings. See I remember the holidays being a much simpler time....We got out of school on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and went back directly on Monday. We got out a couple days before X-mas and went back on January 2nd. There was a real vibe in the atmosphere. An excitement of something coming. We got bikes and balls, skates without helmets and elbow pads. BB guns and baseball bats. We got stuff that literally today would be considered deadly weapons or at the very least you couldn't carry through TSA. Does anyone know what Stretch Armstrong was made out of? It seemed a little suspect with its gushy explosive like compounds and capabilities! I'm still wondering if Emergency Room visits were higher during X-mas or the 4th of July.



First I'm talking about that real Holiday Money! The Exploitation Money! The Guilt Money! The "Devil is a Lie" Money!

That Lexus, Mercedes Benz, big red bow money. That Jared, Macy's, Kay Jewelry, "she been waiting for that glimmery trinket kinda money!" No. I don't want them gifts. Seriously if you really want a car, you don't have to wait until the Toyota Christmas-a-thon. Do you really have to wait until the holiday sale to buy an engagement ring? Either he want you or he don't!

Secondly, the multi-faux faceted ideas of Christmas has been overshadowed by commercialization. The holiday has become a prime opportunity for corporations to capitalize on consumer spending. Christmas is no longer a simple celebration of faith and family; it has become a marketing frenzy with stores promoting sales, Christmas-themed products and an abundance of decorations.

I can live with one of the tenets characterized in the overall greed of the ugly demon called White Privilege. Clearly the idea of taking every concept known to man and turning it into a money making machine is rooted in the same vein as slavery. Every precaution has been employed to ensure total domination and profitability for generations to come.



When the Black Market Team decided to take a look at the Mis-education, it wasn't just a look at the multi- faceted faux holiday season, but at a core curriculum and business model that continues to thrive for a group of people that constantly strive to continue a narrative of exploitation and greed. These deep roots continue to grow and flourish.... Just think of us as spraying weed killer. And remember, as I always say... "IF YOU KNEW BETTER, YOU'D DO BETTER! - Now DO BETTER!

*Alan S. Hill*



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## Letter from the Editor

As the holidays after Halloween roll around, from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, most everyone gets in the spirit of family, friends and/or co-workers gathering to eat lots of good food, exchange gifts, and watch lots of Hallmark movies along with classics like "It's A Wonderful Life" or "A Christmas Carol." Children finalize their Christmas lists to Santa Claus in hopes of getting most if not everything they want left under the Christmas tree. Those hosting family at their homes to celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's start their long lists of ingredients they'll need to cook up lots of delicious traditional meals for everyone to eat and enjoy either around the dining table or perhaps even sitting on couch's while watching holiday parades or football games on televisions.

The holidays, more than any time of year, is about giving. It is a time to reflect on our history, the things we have, family and friends we are thankful for, and what we can share with others. However, is this feeling of celebration and giving thanks based in reality or based on stories we've been fed since we were young enough to comprehend what was being told to us - stories woven by Whites to sugar-coat or down right lie about what they did and why they did it? Take a look at the FACTS vs. what was falsely woven and fed to us. In early childhood education, we are taught that America is a melting pot in which cultural assimilation results in blending the heritage and traditions of previously distinct ethnic groups. The definition of cultural assimilation is a process by which members of an ethnic minority group lose cultural characteristics that distinguish them from the dominant cultural group or take on the cultural characteristics of another group.

So are we as Black people in reality celebrating our racial and cultural assimilation into the White American society, conforming to White expectations of behavior at the price of sacrificing Black identities and cultural values? If this is the case, rather than celebration, should we perhaps be recognizing or mourning? Should we be embracing our own history and while celebrating our accomplishments also recognizing how far we have to go and what we need to do as a people to prevent ourselves from sliding backwards?

Black history in the United States is a rich and varied chronicle of slavery and liberty, oppression and progress, segregation and achievement. We should know better than to follow the falsehoods Whites have written in their history books, celebrating holidays that for us represented times of great suffering, persecution and enslavement.

*"We will NOT apologize for embracing our culture and acknowledging our (REAL) history." -Unknown*

**Alisa D. Perdue**  
Editor in Chief



# The Mis-Education of the Holiday Spirits *Past, Present, Future...*

I'm sure everyone is aware, especially if you love watching horror movies, Black folk don't want to have ANYTHING to do with ghosts, spirits, apparitions or whatever you want to call someone who isn't "flesh and blood." I'll chalk it up to self-preservation, but we seem to be the first to run in the opposite direction when we see one, whether on the screen or in reality. Which has always made me wonder how in the world we're always the first ones to get killed in these very same horror movies! Regardless, let's stretch our minds and imaginations and ponder on what our experience as an African American would be if one evening shortly before Thanksgiving, after snuggling down in a comfy bed and drifting off to sleep, like Ebenezer Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol," we were visited by the Three Ghosts of the Holidays – the Ghost of Holidays Past, the Ghost of Holidays Present and the Ghost of Holidays Future. If you survived the night, the stories you'd have to tell, the things you would have learned! Here are just a few that you'll learn from these holiday ghosts.... Imagine if you are visited by three ghosts - the Ghosts of Holidays Past, Present and Future - and are shown the TRUE meaning of the holidays. Through these "ghostly experiences," you will hopefully be educated and experience reflections that allow you the opportunity to make informed choices on how you and your family recognize or celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's.

So...right after drifting off to sleep an unusual chill in the air and the feeling of snow lightly falling on your face awakens you....Drifting slowly to the foot of your bed is a beautiful ghostly apparition. Beckoning you to follow her, you find yourself floating above your bed, then fading away with her...back into TRUE history...where you experience how Blacks observed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's in years long, long ago.....



*Ghost of Holidays Past*



*Ghost of Holidays Present*



*Ghost of Holidays Future*

# Ghost of Holidays Past

- *Thanksgiving (aka “Thanks-taking”)*
- *How Slaves spent Thanksgiving...*
- *Christmas Past*
- *New Year’s Past*
- *New Year’s Day*



## *Thanksgiving (aka “Thanks-taking”)*

Instead of telling the real story of Thanksgiving, American history is kept covered in order for us to believe that the Pilgrims and colonists got along with the Native Americans and they lived in perfect harmony. Real history reveals why Whites sit around a table with smiles, celebrating and giving thanks for a bountiful table in a home most likely on land they appropriated long ago. Land they have written history books to say they first discovered in the 17th century and through many toils and troubles built a foundation that would later become known as the United States of America. Thanksgiving is known as a time to be grateful, but it's built on the violent relationship between American colonists and Native Americans.

In reality, this land had been discovered by Native Americans long before they landed on these shores. In reality, it was through appropriation and large scale massacres of the Native American people and through enslavement of Black people wrenched from their native lands of Africa to build the lands that would become the generational wealth for countless White people.

*“Could you pass the pumpkins and maze, and we’ll pass you the smallpox blankets”*

Both before and after the first Thanksgiving gathering, Native Americans began to die after encountering diseases unintentionally (or intentionally, depending on who is telling the story) brought by the white colonists. Before the colonists arrived on the Native American shores, these diseases were unheard of on native soil - thus the Native American immune systems were unable to fight off these ravaging diseases. While some telling this story say the many deaths by diseases brought by the colonists were unintentional, the fighting and killing of the Native Americans by the settlers was, however, very intentional.

For the first 100 years, Thanksgiving was an event that was reserved for white people only. Black people were enslaved, tortured and killed, and prohibited from owning land during this time period. Black people have not traditionally celebrated Thanksgiving because they have been excluded from the event since its inception. We were never invited to the party and didn't have the opportunity to create or celebrate our own. So I ask the question - if we were never invited to the Thanksgiving party, why in the HELL are we celebrating and giving thanks for that same party? Come on my people, WAKE UP!

## *How Slaves Spent Thanksgiving Day Might Surprise You*

*“We didn’t land on Plymouth Rock, Plymouth Rock landed on us!”*

The first Thanksgiving occurred in the 17th century and was a harvest celebration of the Plymouth colony pilgrims, meant to celebrate a successful harvest after experiencing a harsh winter. During slavery time, slaves took time to be thankful for what they had, which of course was not much. They rejoiced for rain to break droughts and to have plenty of harvest. They rejoiced for things they provided the “big house” and rarely benefited from. Since the harvest was for the slave owners, what did the slaves eat on this day they were allowed to celebrate? The slaves who worked in the fields would often go out and catch wild game for their family and close slave friends. The women would prepare cornmeal cakes, or pone cakes to go along with the game. The house slaves had it better than the field slaves; house slaves feasted on the leftovers from the “main house” after the slave-owners finished their meals.

A forgotten fact, Thanksgiving started off as a **church-oriented** celebration for the Black community. African American pastors often gave sermons that could be heard loud and clear through the small Black churches. The sermons would be about struggles, hopes, fears, and triumphs. The sermons usually grieved the institution of slavery; the suffering of the Black people; and often pleaded that an awakening of a slave-free America would come someday soon. Some slaves saw the Thanksgiving holiday as an opportunity to escape. They took advantage of relaxed work schedules due to the end of crop season and the holiday travels of slaveholders, who were too far away to stop them. While some slaveholders treated the Thanksgiving holiday as any other workday, others allowed for a suspension of work for celebration and family visits. Since many slaves had spouses, children, and family who were owned by different masters, and who lived on other properties, slaves often requested passes to travel and visit family during this time. Some slaves used the passes to explain their presence on the road and delay the discovery of their escape, though their masters’ expectation was that they would soon return from their “family visit.”

Today, many African-Americans still spend time traveling and visiting family and friends during Thanksgiving. The practice from slavery times of spending Thanksgiving Day in church has long been forgotten by many. Thanksgiving today is not recognized for the same reasons as it was in slavery times. Today it is a day that spent with family and friends being thankful for one’s many blessings. Thanksgiving has a bloody history and serves as a remembrance of the injustices that Native Americans and Blacks have faced for centuries. Many have taken to calling Thanksgiving a “National Day of Mourning.”



## *Christmas Past*

So what was Christmas like for slaves?

Slaves were allowed to dance, feast and visit family on other plantations. But this revelry preceded 'hiring day', when families could be torn apart, by just a week.

Christmas time on southern antebellum plantations was the occasion that slaves looked forward to the most. Even while subjected to the evils of slavery and its horrors, blacks managed to find small pockets of joy in this holiday celebration. As former slave Charley Hurt told federal officials assigned to document his experiences, "Dat was one day on Massa's place when all am happy and forgets dey am slaves."

While some have contended the holiday spirit caused slaveowners to temporarily treat their slaves with some measure of dignity, the reality is the celebration was used to reinforce paternalism, encourage slave allegiance, and provide what Frederick Douglass described as a, "safety valve to carry off the rebellious spirit of enslaved humanity."

*In other words, Christmas was used to keep slaves passive and in check.*

Slaves found a way to make Christmastime significant by strengthening communal bonds, reuniting families, and rejuvenating their bodies and spirits from the extremely brutal conditions of slavery.





## Some examples of how slave masters “allowed” slaves to celebrate Christmas:

- Slaves were allowed to dress up in costume (really for the amusement of the slave owners)
- Slaves were allowed to speak freely to their masters without being punished
- Single days off for slaves
- Some slaves were allowed to come and go as they pleased, as long as they returned by a certain date
- Any money earned during this holiday was theirs to keep
- Slaves went dancing or to prayer meetings to celebrate
- Christmas was a time of rest and relaxation for the most part for slaves in the South
- Slaves were allowed to drink alcohol that they were normally prohibited from drinking by slave masters (in most cases the alcohol was “watered down”)
- Some slave owners forced their slaves to drink during Christmas, getting them drunk and reminding them that they needed their masters to make good decisions
- Some slaves who did not dance were forced to dance by their slave masters
- Slaves were made to dress up, go around the masters homes (“the Big House”) singing and handing out presents (they were called “Kooners”)
- Masters used the threat of withholding their Christmas “privileges” if they didn’t work hard during the rest of the year.
- Slaves received “luxury” food once a year (at Christmas) which while appreciated only emphasized how little they received to eat the rest of the year
- Slaves often got one pair of shoes per year from the slave masters, given at Christmas, that had to last them all year long until the next Christmas.



*Harriet Tubman increased efforts to guide slaves to Freedom during the Christmas season due to the relaxed nature of the holidays and masters sometimes weren't as diligent about watching slaves during this time.*

### **New Year's Eve - Watch Night**

In the Christian community, "Watch Night" refers to worship services held on New Year's Eve. Watch Night is an annual New Year's Eve tradition that includes the memory of slavery and freedom, reflections on faith, and celebration of community and strength. Watch Night services have been celebrated since the 1700's.



Watch Night took on a special meaning, when on December 31, 1862, also known as, "Freedom's Eve," slaves were eagerly awaiting the Emancipation Proclamation which would go into effect on January 1, 1863.

Contrary to popular belief, the first Emancipation Proclamation did not free all slaves. The first proclamation was issued on September 22nd and warned the southern "states in rebellion" that slaves would be freed if they continued to defy the Union.

On January 1, 1863 the proclamation went into effect. But it only freed slaves in the southern confederate states. It was a war tactic designed to weaken the Confederate army. It was actually the 13th amendment of 1865 that finally freed all slaves.

Clearly Watch Night took on a new significance for African Americans and those who stood against the cause of slavery with the enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation. The Watch Night tradition continues to be celebrated today with many Christians of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds. The Emancipation Proclamation became law on New Year's Day, 1863, when the news arrived that there were prayers, shouts, and songs of joy as people fell to their knees and thanked God. Since that "Freedom's Eve," the Black community has gathered in churches annually on New Year's Eve to observe Watch Night, praising God for bringing us safely through another year.



This celebration takes many American descendants of slaves into a new year with praise and worship. The service usually begins anywhere from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm and ends at midnight with the beginning of the New Year.

## *New Year's Day*

Most Americans are likely to think of New Year's Eve and New Year's Day as a time to celebrate the fresh start that a new year represents, but there is also a troubling side to the holiday's history. In the years before the Civil War, the first day of the new year was often a heartbreaking one for slaves.

In the African-American community, New Year's Day used to be widely known as "Hiring Day" — or "Heartbreak Day," — because slaves spent New Year's Eve waiting, wondering if their owners were going to rent them out to someone else, thus potentially splitting up their families. The renting out of slave labor was a relatively common practice in the antebellum South, and a profitable practice for white slave owners and hirers.

"Hiring Day" (New Year's Day) during slavery times was a day in which most debts were collected and settled. Some slaves were put up for auction that day, or held under contracts that started in January and lasted for different amounts of time. These deals were conducted privately among slave owners, their friends and business contacts, and slaves were handed over in town squares, on courthouse steps and sometimes simply on the side of the road.

Slaves who attempted to resist going to their new masters were whipped and thrown in jail until they relented and promised not to run away during the new arrangement.

But the history of New Year's Day and American slavery is not all horror. The holiday became more associated with freedom than slavery when Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing slaves in Confederate states on New Year's Day in 1863.

Many people of African descent celebrated and this day went from a day of dread and trepidation to one of celebration. In South Carolina, they had a barbecue. Some 3,000 newly emancipated Blacks — men, women and children — assembled at Camp Saxton, the camp of the First South Carolina Volunteers, near Beaufort, to celebrate the day with a barbecue. They were accommodated at rudely constructed tables, upon which were ranged rows of tin-ware, and were served celebratory meals by the officers of the Color-Sergeant regiment.

*"Emancipation Day in South Carolina" – the Color-Sergeant of the 1st South Carolina (Colored) addressing the regiment, after having been presented with the Stars and Stripes, at Smith's plantation, Port Royal, January 1 (1863)*



# BLACK HOLIDAYS WORD

Y W K S L D W G U G A O K H P M X O O S V V C S C  
T R P T Y N Q H U G V H S S Z T K P M W F Z G T A  
C R E N X A I I N F F T Y B C I F P O I K I I P H  
D T A V A K D E G P M M M U B A O R D Z T S B L M  
O H J N A M J I N A Y G K P F L Z E E N R R W I G  
M A E I S L B Y L Z A C S R W N G S E U Q A S Y R  
I N A Q P F S U T O W U I F M I E S R I P E V T E  
N K A H K G O H T B H C N B M Y E I F Z D Y S U E  
O S C H S E G R E G A T I O N R T O C U O W B Q N  
E T T E I R A H M N N A K U P H S N C U T E A M B  
S A J P E S I A A A S C G D G J C A N J R N G E O  
L K E L R B A M W V T I A I Y Y T F U T U R E Q O  
D I P C D O E M K Z H I N E A I S R Z C A S L V K  
Q N B X T R C W T V P H O R O S N O I T I D A R T  
T G H E I T A L F S C G B N E I L E T D T V B K U  
L Q Q C R N D W A T I A T A R S D B I U S C Q P M  
R Y A N Z T Y L A M B R Y C U D J A Q Q A K J T L  
A N T A U Z Y W A G A U H X T R Q S E R P I Y S Z  
P Z A U K I N Q E V C T P C L A E Q F R M U U X U  
C Q Z C G N L F O I J P I B U L F K Q C B E K T Y  
E M A N C I P A T I O N Y O C L V J R B A N N I A  
N L T T Z P S T S O H G P W N O P O Q I Y L R X P  
B N O I T A N I M I R C S I D C W O Y E P Z Y O N  
B L A C K E Y E D P E A S X A G O O R U E T D T C  
I L B U B V R Z L V U Q G C C J H O M K Q I V Y J

africanamerican  
christmas  
culture  
emancipation  
ghosts  
holidays  
kwanzaa  
newyears  
pork  
segregation  
traditions  
watchnight

black  
collards  
discrimination  
freedom  
greenbook  
jenga  
liberty  
oppression  
present  
slavery  
transformation

blackeyedpeas  
cornbread  
dominoes  
future  
hariett  
jimcrow  
miseducation  
past  
proclamation  
thankstaking  
tubman

**Find the word in the puzzle.**

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

FLAVA OF THE MONTH



TATA TA'TILIOUS....  
Toronto, Canada

# Ghost of Holidays Present

- *Christmas*
- *Kwanzaa*
- *Bring in the New Year with Intention*
- *Do's and Don'ts at the Holiday Table*

**S**o drifting under your warm, snug covers, your visit with the Ghost of Holidays Past has prepared you for your night's adventure. Just before your eyes close to welcome a much needed sleep, you sense another presence in your room. The smells that engulf you remind you of a holiday feast...you smell Frasier Fir from a tree or wreath, warm apple cider, roasting turkey, and many other aromas associated with a holiday celebration. Then you hear a warm chuckle and a male voice that invites you to open your eyes and go on a journey into Holidays Present with him. This jovial, giant ghost, bearing a glowing torch and sitting in your bedroom on a floating throne, is a manifestation of everyone's Holiday celebrations. He will show you visions of Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's in the Present - visions of generosity, good will and the joy you can find from giving to others and celebrating together.

The Ghost of Holidays Present will show you how the holidays are currently celebrated and recognized. He will show you that with the knowledge you now have of Holidays Past you can examine how you currently celebrate the holidays in the Present and recognize that if you want to make any changes, there is no better time to start than NOW....



**Wrap 24 books and put them under the tree for the kids to choose one each night before Christmas. Every evening they get to take one of the books and open them and you spend some time reading to them.**



## *Christmas*

Black families tend to celebrate Present Christmases however we want to. Some of us celebrate Christmas by recognizing and/or celebrating old traditions; some choose to celebrate what they have and those celebrating Christmas with you; and some celebrate Christmas Present by making new traditions of their own.



## *Kwanzaa*

Kwanzaa is a celebration of African American culture. Traditionally, the seven days after Christmas through New Year's Day, African American's celebrate our culture annually with Kwanzaa from December 26 through January 1. Created by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an activist, author, and professor of African American studies, the weeklong event was first celebrated in 1966 after the Watts rebellion that occurred in Watts and the surrounding Los Angeles communities August 11, 1965. He tailored the event specifically as an African American holiday with the goal of giving African Americans an opportunity to celebrate themselves and their history.

Kwanzaa comes from the Swahili phrase, “matunda ya kwanza” meaning “first fruits of the harvest” or simply “first fruits.” He intentionally spelled the holiday's name with an additional “a” so that it would have a symbolic seven letters. After its initial creation in California, Kwanzaa spread across and outside the United States.

The seven principles stand at the heart and origin of Kwanzaa. The seven days of Kwanzaa celebrate Nguzo Saba, the seven principles of African heritage. Originally developed in 1965, the seven principles of Kwanzaa or Nguzo Saba comprise Kawaida, a Swahili word meaning “common.” Each day of Kwanzaa features one of these seven principles.



## ORDER OF LIGHTING THE KINARA



**Day 1:** Unity or Umoja – to strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

**Day 2:** Self-determination or Kujichagulia – to define and name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.

**Day 3:** Collective Work and Responsibility or Ujima – to build and maintain our community together and make our brother's and sister's problems our problems and to solve them together.

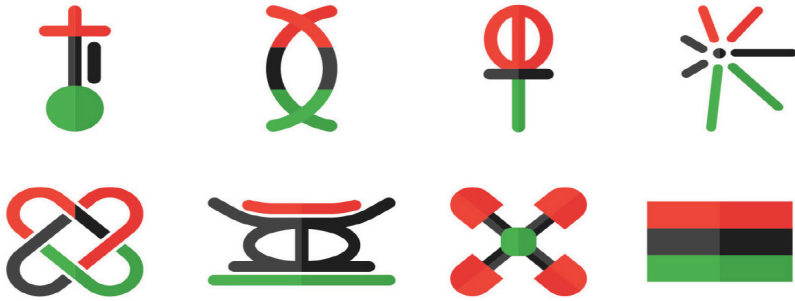
**Day 4:** Cooperative Economics or Ujamaa – to build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.

**Day 5:** Purpose or Nia – to make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

**Day 6:** Creativity or Kuumba – to do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.

**Day 7:** Faith or Imani – to believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.





### The Seven Symbols of Kwanzaa include:

- Mkeka or mat** – that symbolizes the foundation of the African diaspora, tradition, and heritage.
- Kinara or candleholder** – symbolizes African roots.
- Mishumaa Saba or seven candles** – emblematic of Nguzo Saba the seven principles of Kwanzaa. These candles embody the values of the African diaspora.
- Kikombe Cha Umoja or unity cup** – symbolizes the foundation, principle, and practice of unity.
- Mazao or crops** – symbolize African harvesting celebrations as well as the rewards of productivity and collective labor. Vibunzi or ear of corn – represents children and future which belongs to them.
- Zawadi or gifts** – represents parental labor and love as well as the commitment parents make to their children.
- Bendera or flag** – the colors of the Kwanzaa flag are black, red, and green. These colors were originally established as colors of freedom and unity by Marcus Garvey. Black is for people, red for the struggle endured, and green for the future and hope of their struggles.

Kwanzaa observances usually include daily candle lighting ceremony, drumming and musical selections, libations, readings of the African pledge and the principles of blackness, a reflection on the Pan-African colors, a discussion of the African principle of the day or a chapter in African history, artistic performance, and often on December 31, New Year’s Eve, a feast of faith or Karamu.

The greeting for each day of Kwanzaa is habari gani which is Swahili for “how are you?” Families celebrating Kwanzaa decorate their house with objects of art, colorful African clothes such as kente, especially the wearing of kaftans by women, and fresh fruits that represent African idealism.

## ***Bring in the New Year with Intention!***

There is a common belief that how you bring in the New Year will represent the theme for your year. Some people bring in the New Year in Church. (pre covid) Others with family or friends.

### **African-American New Year Traditions: The Meal is *Everything!***

As a Southerner, I'm so excited to tell you about some of our food traditions. They are known to be lucky and help us to bring in the year with a good start!

Collard greens represent "Money." We add them to our plate for financial abundance, with a side of yummy!

Some historians say that collard greens represented the number of friends you would make. But, in modern times, we typically refer to our "greens" as "the money."

**Collard Greens**

**Collard greens represent "Money." We add them to our plate for financial abundance, with a side of yummy!**

Some historians say that collard greens represented the number of friends you would make. But, in modern times, we typically refer to our "greens" as the money.



[www.evolvedteacher.com](http://www.evolvedteacher.com)



Black-eyed peas represent "good luck." I always made sure that I had a heap on my plate when I was a kid. Black Eyed peas are also often referred to as "God's Eyes." They do look like little eyes don't they?

Cornbread is said to represent gold. But the idea is that when you eat it, you will have "spending money" throughout the year!  
A Southern Secret: good cornbread is made in a skillet!

### **There's more to it than food.**

It's more than food. Many of this symbolism began in slavery. They were a fun way of bringing joy and hope.

Although every item in the meal wasn't symbolic, a lot of the focus was on forward movement. For example, animals that moved backward faster than they moved forward (like crab or shrimp) were avoided and animals that move forward quickly were eaten.

-Apparently, pigs push things forward with their snouts, which makes ham represent moving forward and progress.

### **Stuffing and 9 Other Black Holiday Faux Pas That Will Earn You a Side Dish of Side Eye**

I have a complicated relationship with the Holiday season. “For example, Thanksgiving has historically been framed as a day, every year, when we are gluttonous to celebrate the fact that white people were saved by Native Americans. Therefore, it is only fitting that Thanksgiving, like the word “nigga,” has become one of the blackest things in America.



As with that word, we took something rooted in white supremacy and filled it with cultural blackness. The food (there may be chitterlings—pronounced “chitlins”), music (Frankie Beverly) and traditions of black Thanksgiving (the long prayer of the matriarch before dinner is served) are, to me, sacred.

Contrary to white supremacist narratives about what it means to be Black, we, as a people, do not all like the same things. Our preferences vary according to region and class, and our traditions sometimes differ. We are a complex, beautiful people, and we should celebrate our variations instead of seeking uniformity.

Yet, despite the fact that we are diverse, the following statements will almost certainly cause a difficult conversation (and maybe a few side eyes) at almost any black home during Holiday dinners.

#### **1. “Do y’all have anything other than Louisiana?”**

I have a frat brother in Oklahoma who SWEARS by Frank’s RedHot hot sauce. Since I discovered that about him, our friendship has never been the same. You just can’t trust a man who chooses warm ketchup over Louisiana.

#### **2. “Pass me that stuffing.”**

This is a regional thing, and I get it—there are many black families that serve stuffing instead of the cornmeal-based dressing. Y’all can do that. Just know that the same thing is being served at the home of Clarence Thomas.

#### **3. “I don’t want my son to sit at the kids table.”**

This is a case of “insufficient daddyin.” Tables specifically for kids are a staple in many Black homes during Thanksgiving. You can try to sit your little bad-ass 8-year-old in a seat at the adult table if you want to; just know that the wine and spirits will be flowing. If he hears something that scars him for life, that’s on you.

**4. “I wish Granny had made pumpkin pie instead.” Blank stare.**

Someone will probably respond with, “That’s why you need to leave those white girls alone.”

**5. “Why hasn’t dinner started yet? I need to get to Wal-Mart.”**

Fool, you know that Thanksgiving dinner never starts on time. You better try to catch that Black Friday online deal.

**6. “You know, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad says in Eat to Live”**

Shut up. I’m eating this ham today. Ain’t nobody got time for that. It’s Thanksgiving.

**7. “Why y’all gotta argue about spades?”**

I get mad suspicious if someone starts walking jacks at the spades table. Makes me think something funny is going on. Listen, I once knew a man in rural Texas who got a roscow (large-caliber handgun) pulled on him because he was caught cheating in a game of spades. Legend has it that no one ever played with, nor spoke to, him again. Yes, it’s that serious.

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**8. “I really wish this was Jiffy cornbread.”**

Apparently that sweet cornbread is what these millennial Black folks eat. They can have it. For me, hot-water cornbread is preferable, but regular cornbread will suffice. Asking for Jiffy is just disrespectful; you’re looking for a fight. That mess is, as Imani Perry, the Hughes-Rogers Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University, once said, “post-civil-rights processed-food gentrification.” I’m inclined to agree.



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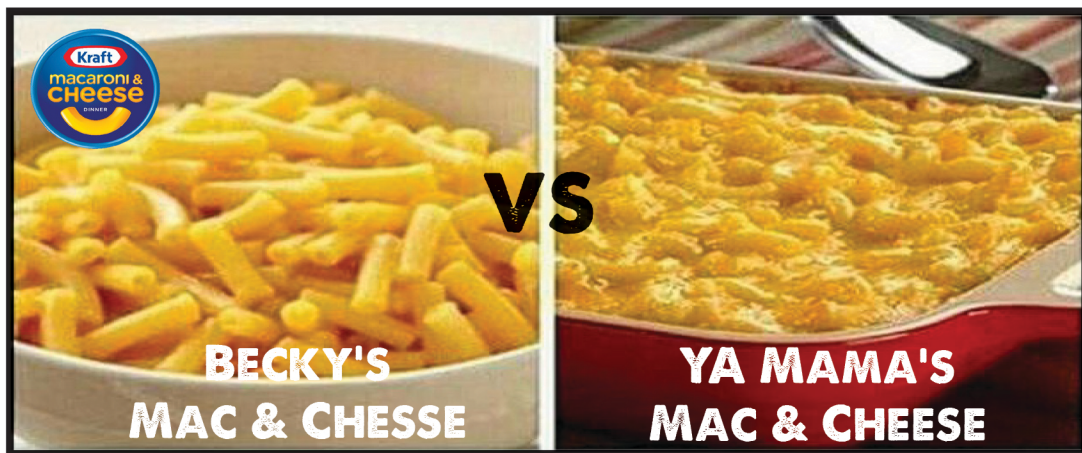
### 9. “Stop slamming those dominoes!”

I honestly don't know how to put dominoes down on a table quietly. I'm not sure it can be done. And even if such a thing were possible, it feels disrespectful to the ancestors to do it.

### 10. “I made these greens myself. They're from Neiman Marcus.”

A group of taste testers recently tasted the store's widely discussed \$66 greens. It didn't end well. Bring that to the house if you want to. Just know we gon' talk about you when you leave.

Because of the complexity of the black experience, the aforementioned are forgivable—and, to be sure, centered in my Southern bias. There is one black Thanksgiving deal breaker, though: “Yeah, Trump said some mean things, but ...” Utter this and you'll probably get the taste slapped out your mouth—and you will have deserved it.



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# Ghost of Holidays Future

*Know your African American History or you're doomed to repeat it!*

- *The Black Thanksgiving*
- *In Black Home's, In the Future, Christmas and Kwanzaa Holidays Meet*
- *11 Black New Year's Eve Traditions*

As Christmas Present brings you back to your comfy bed, before you can even think about shutting your eyes, a sense of fear and foreboding suddenly overtakes you. Each breath you take feels labored, you suddenly feel really cold and each time you exhale you can see the misty condensation with every breath. A foreboding and silent figure clad in a hooded black robe with long, claw like hands, seems to you to be as mysterious and unknowable as the future itself. You ask him what he's about to show you, but he remains silent, pointing in the direction he wants you to follow. presence glides to your bedside, and you know that this must be the Ghost of Holidays Future. Gazing at this faceless presence, you are left feeling worried and terrified for what he is about to show you...Is the Ghost of Holidays Future about to show you things that WILL be, or may be?

## **Miseducation, Denial and Avoidance Brings About a "Moral Reckoning"**

What might the holidays in the future look like for African Americans if we ignore what Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's was really like in the past. What might future holidays look like for us if we make the choice to live in a bubble, continuing to celebrate stories and versions of history told by white people for white people? I'll tell you what it will look like. We'll end up losing our identity, our history and we'll allow all the progress our forefathers may have made to just fade away.

## **There will be further regression vs. progression.**

For a lot of African Americans, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's, even in "normal" times can bring about self-reflection, anxiety, loneliness, and depression. If how we navigate through these holidays doesn't change in some pretty significant ways, stress, depression and suicide rates will continue to increase at a disproportionate rate to Whites, along with unemployment, land ownership and racial and social unrest.





Feelings of grief may also be more pronounced right now, when the absence of loved ones from annual events is plainly evident. With the disproportionate number of Black and brown people who have become sick or died of COVID-19, along with other significant events of the past two years, such as racial and social unrest and mass job loss, the Black community may be even more at risk of depression and anxiety this holiday season than in past years.

Whether it's the absence of a loved one, financial insecurity, or a mental health condition that's contributing to anxiety, depression, or simply feeling off, there are things you can do to prevent a spiral during the holiday season.

While many relish in the excitement of gift exchanges and breaking bread with their loved ones — shopping, gathering with family and friends, and holiday-related obligations and expectations can cause an added pressure to the already busy and stressful lives of many. The holidays seem to also highlight an absence that may exist in the lives of some people. Whether it be the absence of financial security, a loved one, or those who are already dealing with mental health conditions such as an anxiety disorder or clinical depression — the holidays can hit some people like a ton of bricks and members of the Black community might be even more at risk of finding themselves in the throes of depression and anxiety this holiday season.

Even more disheartening, suicide rates are steadily increasing in the Black community, particularly in children. Among high schoolers, almost 10% of Black students report attempting suicide, compared to just over 6% of their white peers. Although it was reported that suicide attempts among white teens decreased between 1991 and 2017, suicide attempt rates rose among Black teenagers in the same period and were the leading cause of death among Black young people aged 15–24. This disturbing trend has only increased over time.

## *The Black Thanksgiving*

What might a “healthy,” future Thanksgiving look like for Black families who honor their past history while celebrating and giving thanks for what and who they have in their lives?

First, you will probably see a lot of Black families and friends gather around a big Thanksgiving-style meal. This will be a mix of traditional Thanksgiving food and Black culture. You’ll see the classic Thanksgiving dishes like turkey, mashed potatoes, and stuffing paired with collard greens, yams, mac and cheese, and other traditional Black dishes.



Another way Black people will incorporate their culture into future Thanksgiving holidays is by using Thanksgiving as an opportunity to gather and educate the people in your life about the Black experience. This could be as simple as telling your White friends and family a little bit about the history of Black people in America and why we have a separate Thanksgiving holiday.

The main reason why Black people have not traditionally celebrated Thanksgiving is because we have been excluded from the event since its inception during slavery. We were never invited to the party and didn’t have the opportunity to create or celebrate our own.

The truth is that every community has their own set of “Thanksgiving” traditions. These things exist because they are necessary and important to the group that they serve. You don’t need to feel the need to cancel your Black Thanksgiving plans in order to celebrate Thanksgiving. Instead, in the future you can use Thanksgiving as a way to celebrate your culture and history with friends and family, to celebrate who you are as a person and as a community.



### **Southwest Ecumenical Emergency Assistance Center**

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## In Black Homes, the Christmas and Kwanzaa Ghosts of Holidays Future Meet...

A growing number of African Americans have found ways to merge Christmas and Kwanzaa, affirming and celebrating their identities as Africans and Americans.

Kwanzaa began as an African-American alternative to Christmas observed primarily by black nationalists and it has gradually evolved into a holiday enjoyed in various degrees by about 13 million Blacks.

### 11 Black New Year's Eve traditions that even COVID-19 can't cancel



Many New Year's Eve practices for Blacks focus on improving one's luck, setting intentions and becoming closer to loved ones. Thanks to the somber and introspective approach of these practices, many can be done alone, with members of your household or even over a Zoom call. So whether you are looking for safe ways to celebrate the end of upcoming crazy and uncertain years or just want a little bit of history on the traditions you grew up doing, here are 11 Black New Year's Eve traditions to help turn future New Year's luck around.

**1. Hoppin' John** - When slaves would gain their freedom, they would take dried beans with them since they could be planted in many places and still flourish. And so the black-eyed pea is associated with good luck, new beginnings and even wisdom. The dish often calls for celery and bell peppers, while some Black families like to add hot peppers. The running joke is that the spice will “wake us up” to a new dawn.

**2. Collard Greens or Cabbage** - Collard greens and cabbage are considered good luck. Because of their green color and the way they lay on a plate when cooked, collard greens have come to represent “folded money” since when you have a lot of bills, you often fold them to keep them compact and neat. Eating collard greens is said to bring prosperity to the eater in the new year and are often eaten with the Hoppin' John.

**3. Cornbread** - Eating delicious, warm cornbread is a sure way to improve any mood. On New Year's Eve, this soul food staple is supposed to bring riches into your life, specifically disposable income. The association likely comes from cornbread's golden color.

**4. Eating Pork** - Many times in our nation's cultural history, African Americans have been left with undesirable plants, seeds and parts of meat. We've had to make meals out of what was considered "livestock food" and feed them to our families. The tradition of preparing pig feet, fatback and chitlins developed from this necessity and duly became a part of Black New Year's Eve traditions. Pork not only adds amazing flavor to dishes like Hoppin' John or collard greens, but also has some symbolism. As some have noted, pigs root forward in the mud versus chickens and turkeys who scratch their feet backward. For this reason, pigs have come to symbolize progress.

**5. Soup Jouvou** - Eating soup jouvou or "freedom soup" is a Haitian tradition that is said to have started in 1804 after Haiti gained its freedom. Eating Soup Jouvou became a symbol of liberation, pride and freedom.

**6. Deep cleaning the house on New Year's Eve** - This practice has roots in Vodou. On New Year's Eve, the dwellers of the house need to clean, scrub and sweep the entire house and then throw the dirt away and outside. This is related to the belief that energies can be altered and moved from one place to another with the right actions and intentions. Sweeping represents removing the stale energy from the previous year that will no longer serve us in the new year, and making room for new blessings and growth.

**7. Not leaving the house on the first day of the year** - Another reason it's a good idea to clean your house on New Year's Eve is the tradition of not being allowed to remove a single thing from your house on New Year's Day. For 24 hours, every bit of trash or dirt has to stay put. Some families will even hide their cleaning tools away for the day to avoid any mishaps. Similarly from the deep cleaning from the day before, throwing anything out on New Year's Day means risking throwing away any good luck or energy the new year might have given you when the clock struck midnight.



*Soup Jouvou or "Freedom Soup"*

**8. Opening all your windows** -

This practice follows the same idea as sweeping. Old, stale energy moves out of your house, taking old year air with it. Fresh, new air is ushered in it. This is also a way to passively allow the new year's energy to take hold in your dwelling wherever it needs to go.

**9. Making sure your cupboard is full** - The idea here is that you need to start the new year the same way that you want to go through it. This action is supposed to be preventative. Starting the new year with an empty cupboard could mean that your cupboard will stay barren all year. This is about intentional energy and steering the energy of the new year into the parts of your life where you need it.

**10. Making sure the person who crosses your threshold after midnight is the right person** - There are many versions of this tradition. I've had single friends ask a member of their attracted gender to cross their threshold after midnight. I heard of hopeful couples directing a child they know through the front door (if the kids are still awake) to encourage fertility. Some people don't like to interfere with fate at all, allowing the new year to bring through their front door whoever is supposed to be there. Whoever walks through the door on New Year's Day and however they get there, they need to have some money in their pocket to, once again, bring monetary growth and prosperity to the dwellers of the house.

**11. Going to church for a "Watch Night" or "Freedom's Eve" service** - It is said that African Americans adopted this practice starting on Dec. 31, 1862, when many enslaved Black people stayed up all night in anticipation of President Abraham Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation. On New Year's Day, they were legally free.

These services usually start around 10 p.m. and end around midnight. They are filled with reflection, prayer and making intentions for the new year.

Black New Year's Eve traditions, like many other cultures, were developed to encourage hope, luck and generosity in the new year. I hope that in addition to providing a little history this list brings you a stroke of good luck!



# Relationship Section

## Holiday Cuffing Season

Cuffing Season.... Oh what a wonderful time. The Anticipation, the bittersweet touch of anxiety, the feel of something new and exciting...something to add a lil bounce in your step a lil mo pimp in your walk. A different tilt of your snapback or breaking out the good mink eyelashes. Timing your arrival in the parking lot at church or work to coincide with that potential significant other. Some have even likened it to the giddiness of a 5th grade school girl with that new almost sexy adult bra, or that 11 year boy who won't stop harassing you because deep down inside he's just too young to have any game whatsoever or waiting for that note that sez, Do You Like Me? Check Yes, No or Maybe So.

You get the idea! Either way. THE HOLIDAYS is not CUFFING SEASON! Sorry to break your visions of wintery fireplace bearskin rugs and R. Kelly on the Bluetooth. Our research department has released its latest survey results on Holiday Romance. And it's equally disturbing as a tRump November winning election. Our survey concluded the following:

1. Most breakups occur just after Halloween, while most women will tend to blame the increased level of college and professional sports as the lack of interest and later nights and missed dates. It's the set up for the breakup.
2. An unusual amount of breakups occur around Thanksgiving- Primary cause being a lack of attendance at family gatherings, (due to having to attend functions of other wives, girlfriends, boyfriends, etc.). There is also diminished interest due to several factors including the fact that some winter gear choices are just not as sexy as summer gear. Less outdoor events mean less opportunities to mingle. This is also an opportune time to cut potential expenses like Christmas gifts and travel expenditures. In other words, some people breakup to stay within budget. Why buy gifts for kids who don't belong to you or folk who may not be around or requested during the Annual Spring Cuffing Season!

In order to maintain a normal rotation of required family or business events, we have provided several options that may or may not be available in your area. However we do encourage entrepreneurship in helping the dating challenged or disadvantaged singles and in some cases borderline marriages, recently divorced or serial dating failures, which could lead to an alternate source of income.

**Until then, please join us in upcoming issues as we explore more RELATIONSHIP concerns, questions and advice!**

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### 1st Package Deal

- Laugh at all your dad's jokes
- Bring a store bought dessert
- Stay in the kitchen 30 min with family members
- Hold hands through out the evening

### 2nd Package Deal

- Help your mom setup/ cook
- Play spades and win, trash talk
- Social media pictures and video
- Offer to pray over the food
- Will fix your food
- Will feed you dessert
- Offer to go get last minute items from the store
- Hold family members Babies

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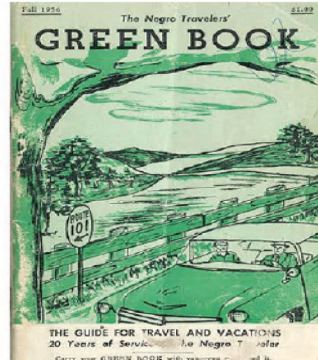
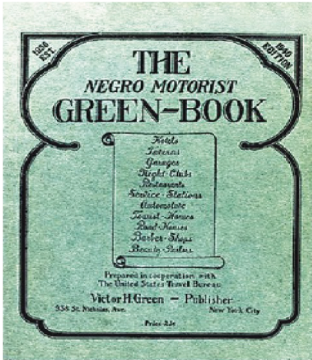
- All day
- Matching Oufits
- Tell a few jokes
- Offer to say prayer at dinner
- Call your Dad "Pops"
- A little PDA (holding hands and a kiss)
- Begin ministering at the table

(quote a few scriptures, speak in tongues, and ect...)

# The Travelers Section

## *The Negro Motorist Green Book*

The Green Book was an annual guidebook that was first published in 1936 and helped African Americans safely navigate the roads of a segregated country. Victor H. Green wrote this guide to identify services and places relatively friendly to African Americans so they could patronize and find lodgings, businesses, and gas stations that would serve them along the road as they traveled throughout the United States. This was especially helpful to African Americans traveling during the holidays to visit family and friends.



With its list of hotels, boarding houses, restaurants, beauty shops, barber shops and various other services, it was the idea of Green to save the travelers of his race as many difficulties and embarrassments as possible.

A postal worker, he corroborated with his postal colleagues around the country and published “The Negro Motorist Green Book in 1936,” later known as “The Negro Travelers’ Green Book,” or more commonly, simply “The Green Book.”

Due to Jim Crow laws, African-Americans understood that they were not welcomed in many restaurants, particularly in the South. As they traveled, African-Americans would pack enough food to last them for the duration of the trip. Eating was one obstacle, lodging was an entirely different hurdle. “42,” a film produced about the great Jackie Robinson, who was one of the first African-Americans to break the color barrier in Major League Baseball, highlighted how he could not room with his teammates in the same hotel. Robinson later spoke out against Jim Crow and criticized hotels that refused him. A number of hotels and restaurants where the Dodgers stayed integrated as a result.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin and thus allowed African-Americans to move freely throughout the country. “The Green Book” discontinued its publication soon after this bill was passed.

## What "Healthy," Future Holidays Might Look Like...

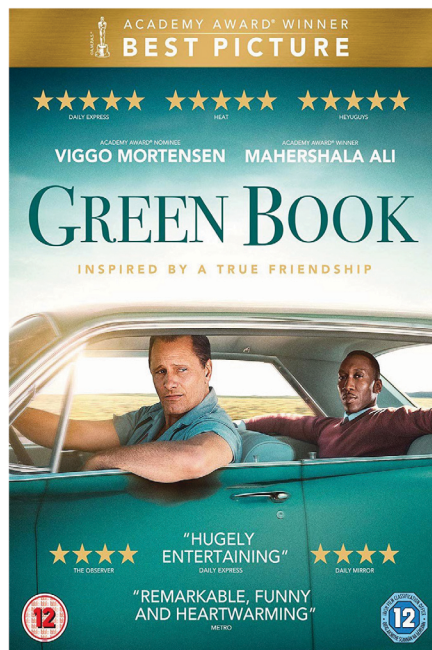
**Traveling During the Holidays** - support black-owned businesses and establishments along the way! Use the Modern Green Book ( <https://moderngreenbook.net/> ) in the same way Black travelers in the past utilized the Green Book. It's both an online database and a digital/hard copy publication "created to **Support, Celebrate** and **Uplift** Black Owned Businesses and Organizations while grounding (readers) in the rich history of the original **Negro Motorist Green Book**."

Discover Black-Owned Brands across the United States, both online and brick-and-mortar. This guide can be used on your travels or from the comfort of your home! So before you "hit the road" to visit friends and family during the holidays, plan your travel route to stop along the way and at your destination and support Black-owned businesses. You can find these businesses and read more about them using the Modern Green Book.



In 2018, Universal Pictures & Dream works did a American biographical comedy-drama film on **Green Book**, directed by Peter Farrelly. Starring **Viggo Mortensen** and **Mahershala Ali**, the film is inspired by the true story of a 1962 tour of the Deep South by African American pianist Don Shirley and Italian American bouncer and later actor Frank "Tony Lip" Vallelonga, who served as Shirley's driver and bodyguard.

If you have not seen this movie, please have a look this holiday season...I'm sure you will enjoy it.



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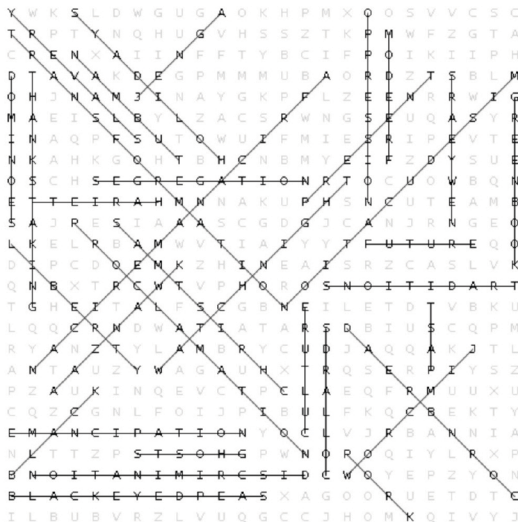
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