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**Will He (President Obama) Stand Up For The Righteous Cause?**

**The Substance of Truth**

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In light of Sen. Obama's historic win on Tuesday night, certain perspectives must be taken into consideration in order to avoid being taken for a 4 year ride, which provides nothing, having promised **NOTHING!** In the long and winded 20-month battle for a seat at the table of presidency, Sen. Obama has often conducted himself with an unimpeachable level of dignity, grace and humility. Nevertheless, there have been times when the Good Senator has fallen short of those ranks. In fact, he has, throughout the course of his presidential bid, played the 90% hand that fed, clothed, nurtured and *made* him: The Black Community. Whilst many Black progressives seem quite comfortable with being snubbed – in exchange for a Black presidency – [not every](#) card-carrying member of the Black Community appreciates the Illinois Senator's disposition on the issue of *Race*. They are fully aware of the tightrope which needs to be walked for a Black man to transport himself to the pedestal of history, but many see a tension between [overt opportunism](#) and the potential for a progressive Black president. In my humble judgment, there are ten issues of concern to the Black Community on which Sen. Obama has failed woefully in the course of his political career and this historic campaign:

1. **Hurricane Katrina:** Shortly after the furious storms ripped asunder New Orleans, and Black folks waited hopelessly for 5 days without any governmental intervention, Barack Obama chose to deposit his two cents into the tense discourse surrounding the correlation between skin pigmentation and FEMA's ineptitude. On September 5th 2005, [Obama remarked](#): "*There's been much attention in the press about the fact that those who were left behind in New Orleans were disproportionately poor and African American. I've said publicly that*

*I do not subscribe to the notion that the painfully slow response of FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security was racially-based. The ineptitude was colorblind." With [84% of Blacks](#) endorsing the sentiment that the "painfully slow response" was, in fact, directly tied to discrimination, Sen. Obama, a Black man, appeared to have intentionally pitted himself against the Community which has steadfastly stood with him every step of the way.*

2. **Ronald Reagan:** He is perhaps the most hated figure in Black circles. Nowhere has his name been more circulated, in unflattering terms than within the Hip-Hop (young Black and Brown) Community. Yet, [Obama's admiration](#) for the Conservative Icon seems too huge to contain: *"I think Ronald Reagan changed the trajectory of America in a way that Richard Nixon did not and in a way that Bill Clinton did not. He put us on a fundamentally different path because the country was ready for it."* With such public affection for a man who reveled in the characterization of destitute Black Women as "Welfare Queens," [Obama's assault](#) on the same constituency seemed appropriate.
3. **Inequality:** Having [praised Ronald Reagan](#) for eliminating "the excesses of the 1960s and 1970s" – otherwise known as the struggle for equality – it came as no surprise when Sen. Obama stood in the midst of Civil Rights leaders – who wouldn't dare challenge him – and [declared](#) the Black Community to have come "90 percent of the way" to equality with whites. Obama's statements do a fine job of spitting in the face of a [2004 Pew Hispanic study](#) which displayed, in explicit terms, how *"the wealth of Latino and Black households is less than one-tenth the wealth of White households even though Census data show their income is two-thirds again as high."*
4. **Black Fathers:** On June 15th, earlier this year, Obama [chose to spend](#) his Father's Day on the South Side of Chicago in the *Apostolic Church of God*. With a [clear agenda](#) at play, Obama took to the pulpit and rendered unilateral and generalized swipes against Black men for abandoning *"their responsibilities, acting like boys instead of men."* Acclaimed Scholar and Obama supporter, Michael Eric Dyson, noted that Obama's "rebuke" of "his own race" was a clearly *"aimed at those whites still on the fence about whom to send to the White House."* Sen. Obama's decision to use Black men as the sacrificial lamb for presidential victory is strikingly reminiscent of Clarence Thomas's decision to [pawn his financially-challenged sister](#) as the stepping stone to greater success.
5. **Sean Bell:** When a man's body is desecrated by the bum rush of 50 bullets, it's safe to say an injustice was wrought. [Commenting](#) on the exonerating verdict rendered in favor of the police officers, Obama described the execution-style murder of the soon-to-be bridegroom as a *"possible case of excessive force."* Referring to any form of violence as *"unacceptable and counterproductive,"* Obama asked Black folks to *"respect the verdict that came down,"* because *"the judge has made his ruling, and we're a nation of laws."* The Rev. Al Sharpton, clearly disappointed, was [quick to accuse](#) Obama of trying to *"grandstand in front of white people."*
6. **Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright & TUCC:** When Sen. Obama *defended* Rev. Wright's

right to free speech, many neo-liberals praised his unwillingness to throw his 20-year mentor under the bus. But when Rev. Wright hit the public airwaves to reclaim his dignity, Obama suddenly felt the urge to distance himself from his "old uncle *who says things I don't always agree with.*" Obama's condescension toward the widely-respected Black theologian and scholar blossomed into full-fledge status, following Rev. Wright's press conference on April 28th. With his description of Wright's remarks as "*a bunch of rants that aren't grounded in truth,*" Obama [chastised](#) Wright's decision to focus so "*much on the plight of the historically oppressed,*" and lose "*sight of what we have in common.*" Following this logic, Black people, being historically oppressed, should not have that much faith in the possibility of an Obama presidency to "focus so much" on their abysmal plight.

7. **40th Anniversary of Dr. King's Legacy:** Whilst Hillary and John McCain were in a rush to express manufactured admiration for Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Obama, perhaps too big for Memphis, [chose to speak](#) 400 miles away in Indiana. Taking his 90% Black-voting bloc for granted, Obama would rather give a stump speech in Fort Wayne, Indiana, than pay homage to one of the greatest moral crusaders the world has ever produced. Upon hearing this, many Black wondered: "Who does he think he is?" Indeed, who does he think he is?
8. **Democratic Convention Speech:** Having intentionally structured the last day of the DNC on the 45th anniversary of Dr. King's historical speech at the Lincoln Memorial, it was highly disappointing for many Black scholars to see Obama relegate Dr. King's legacy to simply, "a young *preacher from Georgia.*" Two renowned Black scholars, Dr. Julianne Malveaux (**BC** Editorial Board [member](#)) and Dr. Cornel West, expressed [immediate disdain](#) with Obama's obsession with political expediency. Dr. Malveaux's description of Obama's speech as a "whitewash of our history," correlated with Dr. West's opinion that Sen. Obama was attempting to both "ignore" and "run" from history and memory.
9. **Affirmative Action:** In a discussion with Journalists of culture/color at the annual Unity Convention, Obama was asked about his present stance on Affirmative Action. Obama responded that the race-based system, under which it currently functions, is faulty and, under an Obama presidency, would undergo reform. Sen. Obama [mentioned](#) that he believes Universities and Colleges "*should be able to take into account race, but they should also be able to take into account class, and hardship, and difficulty in making assessments about whether or not a young person is deserving of - of opportunity.*" Such statements only promise more hardship for an already fractured and disenfranchised community.
10. **Iraq War:** Through his hawkish rhetoric, Senator Obama has shifted his Iraq War stance as far to the right as the Democratic platform permits. Once an *opponent* of the War, Obama has [skillfully reneged](#) on his promise to end the War within 2 years of his presidency. His increasingly moderate views on the Iraq/Afghanistan /Iran/Pakistan Wars are definitely in constant conflict with [71% of the Black Community](#), which opposed the War from the start.

If Black folks are not vigilant enough, and choose to be sucked in by the aroma of "firstism," Clarence Thomas v2.0 might as well be sitting in the White House on January

20th. Sen. Obama has displayed an unprecedented level of apathy in dealing with his own race. That's not, however, to charge him irredeemable (Indeed, there have been moments when he has functioned in [ways](#) that [insinuate](#) a deep desire to *do right*). It simply suggests the amount of work cut out for Black progressives. For a man who hasn't shown unseemly eagerness to put integrity before income, sincerity before success and verity before victory, an uncritical level of support of Obama is as much 4 more years as one can imagine.

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