

Rise up Hip Hop Nation Wise Up The Choice is Yours

Written by Professor Tina Wright ID4533
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This is an excerpt from a blog on Myspace by Professor Tina Wright. It is a very insightful writing and as the title states – ‘Rise up Hip Hop Nation, Wise Up: The Choice is Yours’.

I teach at a college in South LA (serving cities of Inglewood, Hawthorne, Watts, Compton and South LA). Discussing the election with my classes, I discovered a mixture of those that are following the election and those that are not. Those most excited tend to be older African Americans. Some are even planning block parties to celebrate the historic moment if Obama wins and becomes the first African American president.

Younger students, the hip hop youth, are less passionate about the election. While some are excited about the possibility of a black president, they are also into a lot of other things and not "following" as closely.... Many being realists from low income communities are naturally cynical about the political process and would not be surprised by a stolen election or Obama loss due to racism. Most know their lives won't be affected directly so they are not as personally invested as older students. So while they are wearing Obama t-shirts and many will vote, if Obama loses, they will go about their business November 5th no differently than they did November 3rd. So I don't see hip hop (black youth) taking it to the streets if Obama loses, although I know it doesn't take much to start something... I was actually in LA when the Rodney King verdict came down and while the buzz was incredulous that even with "taped evidence we still got got" no one expected what they would see hours later and days after that... fires all around the city... you never know, someone might start something and it won't take much to escalate, especially given the hard times... but I do believe that there is more chance of a "violent uproar" by white nationalists with an Obama win... some folks are just not ready....

At a sociology conference this summer, many voiced a concern that an Obama win would symbolize the end of racism in many people's minds (that we had "overcome"), despite the reality of a completely racialized society. What now seems to be more likely is that an Obama win will expose more than anything in recent history how far we have NOT "come". And for that reason alone, all must understand the real stakes of this election. This truth must be exposed and addressed boldly in order to really progress toward a more just society. If Obama wins, the scab of an American sore that was never treated properly will finally be off and the real healing can begin. This is what is at stake.

If Obama loses, white nationalism, and the political party that is sustained by it, gets a reprieve

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and will use that power to make sure no such "close call" happens again anytime soon. Think Prison Industrial Complex and disenfranchisement will be taken to another level...anti-immigrant sentiments stoked, Patriot Act expanded...If the masses (of people of all backgrounds) inspired by Obama can even get over such a tough loss, they will be so well controlled, their efforts to challenge the status quo will prove most difficult. An historic opportunity would be lost and irrelevance could be the true result of election night returns. The next two weeks will probably just get uglier with desperation setting in, and white nationalists protecting their interests by any means necessary. Are you (hip hop) ready to do the same?

Read the full article by Professor Tina Wright - Rise up Hip Hop Nation, Wise Up: The Choice is Yours at

<http://blog.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=blog.view&friendID=15116190&blogID=443441085>