In a surprising bipartisan move, last week, Congress passed legislation to abolish Black History Month. If the bill is not vetoed by the newly elected president, Black History Month could soon be history.

The reason for the legislation is that after the election of this country's first black president, many Americans no longer believe the celebration of black history is necessary. Some even have gone so far as calling for a ban on the teaching of black history because they say it is divisive.

Although many white Americans, especially the Right Wing, have questioned the validity of a month set aside to honor one racial group, there are many blacks, as well, who would like to bid Black History Month a adieu.

For some African Americans black history has been seen as a stumbling block; just another barrier that has kept them from enjoying

their piece of the American pie. Many black people strive their whole lives to detach the word "African" from "African American."

"Ain"t no need to be talking all that black stuff. That's just another way to divide us," says Carletta "CJ" Walker, owner of New City Beauty Salon in Atlanta. "We need to stop living in the past."

The problem of having to be African and American, simultaneously, has plagued African

Americans since the Emancipation Proclamation. It is a paradox that WEB Dubois described as "a double consciousness" that black folks had to have in order to survive in a white dominated society.

During the early 20th century, the issue was bitterly debated by those who wanted inclusion into American society like Dubois and his Talented 10th and those who wanted separation like Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association.

Later, during the 60's and early 70's there was a constant ideological war between the Civil Rights activists and the Black Power activists that personified itself in the forms of Dr. Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Dr. King believed in a dream where all Americans would be treated as equals but Malcolm X envisioned a nightmare where African Americans would forever be treated as second class citizens.

For many young African Americans, black history has been replaced by a Hip Hop pseudo culture that has long abandoned any connection to black culture. Instead it has embraced a false ideology that music and fashion could end 400 years of oppression. Some of the rappers are even claiming that they are no longer black but they are "Hip Hop."

"I don"t care what color a dude is. As long as he keeps it gangsta, he's cool with me," says New York City aspiring rapper Tyrone "T-Boogie" Johnson. "How is learning about black history gonna get me signed to a contract ?"

The disconnection of the youth can partially be blamed on an educational system that has

helped to promote institutionalized white supremacy under the guise of preparing African American children to be able to make it in the real world. Any attempt to add Afrocentric studies to a curriculum by black teachers is often met with dire consequences.

CG Woods, an 8th grade social studies teacher in Jackson, Mississippi, recently was suspended without pay for instructing his students to read "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa" by Walter Rodney.

Some say that the lack of appreciation for black history is due to the fact that what is usually celebrated every February is not black history at all but the relatively brief history of black people in this country; a history of emancipated slaves. Few have paid attention to the rich history that African people had prior to 1619. This is mostly because the white corporations that have become the major sponsors of black history events have confined any discussion of black history to the boundaries of America.

Perhaps the people most affected by the end of Black History Month will be African American businesses, especially black book stores. Shaka Nzinga, owner of Black History, Inc, the world's largest distribuor of Afrocentric material has already announced that he will close his doors at the end of February unless business picks up.

Although, some African Americans have decided to allow black history to fade into obscurity, there are a few activists across the country who are not going out without a fight. They have

started the Black History Bailout Campaign. The group is asking the black community to come up with their own socio-economic stimulus package as a last ditch effort to save black history.

Although the activists hope that the movement gains momentum over the next few weeks, as of yesterday the only people protesting in front of the Capitol were an elderly man with a Marcus Garvey sweatshirt and his young grandson holding up signs that said,"

"A people without knowledge of their history is like a tree without roots."

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