



In Memory: Frances Cress Welsing, M.D.

March 18, 1935 – January 2, 2016



On January 2, 2016, one of the most renowned members globally of the Black Psychiatrists of America (BPA), Frances Cress Welsing, M.D., made her transition to the realm of Ancestor in Washington, DC due to the complications of two cerebral vascular accidents. It is with the deepest sympathy that we offer to her family at this time of their grief. She was 80 years of age at the time of her passing. She came from a legacy of healers and both her father and grandfather were physicians. Dr. Welsing, a native of Chicago, IL, was a graduate of Antioch College and a graduate of Howard University Medical School where she had once served on the medical college faculty in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry before building a professional career in the private practice of Psychiatry in Washington, DC.

She was best known for her scholarly work and lectures on racism.

In 1970, she wrote “The Cress Theory of Color Confrontation and Racism” and first presented her theory at the National Medical Association’s section on Psychiatry. Spanning more than 40 years since that publication, she fiercely defended her position to both friend and foes. She even debated the eugenicist, Dr. William Shockley, on Tony Brown’s Journal and was reported to have “eviscerated” the Nobel Prize winner, explaining that her theory was “an attempt to understanding the behavior of white people in relationship to all people of color around the world.” She also appeared on the Phil Donahue show. She stated that “White Supremacy behavior of white people was the number one mental health problem in this nation and it is the number one cause of other mental health problems”. It was her belief that the genetic dominance of Blacks and other people of color had the capacity to annihilate “whiteness” as a color as it was a recessive genetic trait and that White + Black = colored; White + Brown = colored and White + Yellow = colored. She therefore, felt that world systems were created to suppress this fact and give the illusion that White was superior over all of the world’s people of color despite there being numerically more people of color on the planet than those who chose to classify themselves as “white”.

Dr. Welsing never deviated from this position despite job terminations and threats to her person as well as her property. “As Black people, we need to understand exactly what racism is and how it operates to maintain the system of white supremacy”, she said on numerous occasions. “If we fail to understand what exactly is happening to our families, the attack on the Black family in general, and the attack specifically on Black males as husbands and fathers, then we fail to comprehend that the system of racism white supremacy is a form of genetic warfare for the survival of the so-called white race”, according to Dr. Welsing. She first began to formulate her theories while still in college and went to Germany as a graduation gift some 12 years after World War II, to attempt to understand how the German people could do what they were doing to those of Jewish culture and heritage. She wanted to see “up close and personal” why so many of them were in support of Adolph Hitler and the parallel with what was happening in the USA with respect to relationships between Blacks and other non-white peoples to white in this country.

Dr. Welsing was a much sought after lecturer both nationally as well as internationally and inspired generations of African people around the globe to be proud of their heritage, skin color and creativity. She was the inspiration behind the album “Fear of a Black Planet”, according to Chuck D, a member of the legendary Hip-Hop group, “Public Enemy”. She encouraged African people both on the continent and in the African Diaspora to take stock of their greatness and to be kinder to each other as human beings. She was the creator of a monthly lecture series through the Frances Welsing Institute which was a hallmark for many generations of young African people in and around the Washington, DC area for decades and culminated in her authoring of “*The Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors*” (1991) which consisted of a series composite of her lectures at the Institute.

There was always a Freudian sexual aspect to her theories where she equated the gun with the phallus and the days of the “Wild, Wild West” which she quoted former President Ronald Regan, saying “It is the greatest equalizer.” She felt that guns were equivalent with “penis envy” noting that white males often call each other “son of a gun”. She writes in the Isis Papers, “The firing of a gun in function achieves for white males the destruction of Black lives the same way the black penis can destroy white genetic survival.” Her belief that “Melanin” made the difference in why the “Racism White Supremacy System” was established in the first place and was very actively involved in the KM-WR Science Consortium’s Annual Melanin Conferences during the “80’s dealing with scientific aspects of the pigment Melanin along with another Ancestor and BPA Member, Richard King, M.D. and current member, Dr. Pat Newton.

Despite the ongoing controversy surrounding her work, often being called “pseudo-science”, she was extremely popular and hailed for her genius. She leaves a legacy of tireless pursuit of constantly “seeking to know the truth”. She continues to be celebrated even more than she is debated.

She has been affectionately referred to as the “Warrior Queen” who with her transition will continue to affect the lives of future generations of African scholars and intellectuals around the globe. For her tireless efforts to understand and eliminate the effects of racism, the Black Psychiatrists of America have chosen to honor her with its highest membership category, “Distinguished Life Member”.

A mighty oak tree has fallen but its roots run deep and its branches have and will continue to bear many fruit.

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