

# THE Skanner®

Challenging People to Shape  
a Better Future Now

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**The Skanner Newspaper**, established in October 1975, is a weekly publication, published every Wednesday by IMM Publications Inc.

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The Skanner is a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association.

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## THE Skanner.com

- Local News
- Pacific NW News
- World News
- Opinions
- Jobs, Bids
- Entertainment
- Community Calendar

### LOCAL NEWS BRIEFS

Updated daily.



# Opinion

## In Defense of Black Women and Girls

### Black Women and Girls Deserve More Respect, Visibility in the #MeToo Movement

This has been a monumental year for the reaffirmation of women's rights in the workplace and the ballot booth. This is long overdue. The battle for the rights of women, and specifically Black women and girls, has gone on for centuries. In America, the spotlight on this fight for women's rights shines brightly on White women, while Black women, who have often fought more vigorously for equality and justice, are largely consigned to the shadows of the movement.

TIME magazine placed "The Silence Breakers" on their cover, noting that the tenacity and courage of the women's voices could be heard over the walls of systemic oppression.

Still, in the stories of Dajeria Becton, a teenager who was violently handcuffed and thrown to the ground by an overzealous McKinney, Texas police officer and Sandra Bland, who was arrested and died in police custody in Prairie View, Texas, that oppression seems unsurmountable.

Most acts of extrajudicial violence and aggression towards Black women never become national headlines and many Black women suffer in quiet silence as their com-



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plaints of sexual harassment are ignored and discounted, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Mainstream America labels

**“We must elevate Black women from social media hashtags to highly-valued and respected members of the global community**

Black women as angry Jezebels unfit for normal, social interactions. Black American pop culture hypersexualizes our young girls while condemning them for being too fast. There is a deafening silence in the Black community that is complicit in the degradation of our Black women.

When we do speak, instead of a healing, sometimes our words just cause more wounds.

One of the most influential hip-hop artists of all time, Tupac Shakur spoke directly to Black women in "Wonda Why They Call U Bytch":

*You leave your kids with your mama 'cuz your headin' for the club*

*In a skin-tight miniskirt lookin' for some love*

*Got them legs wide open while you're sittin' at the bar*

*Talkin' to some n\*\*ga 'bout his car*

*I guess he said he had a Lexus, what's next?*

*You headin' to his car for some sex*

Today, some people would criticize Shakur for slut-shaming, while others would applaud him for telling it like it is.

White women have been applauded for coming forward to tell their stories of sexual assault and harassment under the #MeToo flag. The movement would be much stronger and more credible, if its leaders forced mainstream media to also carry the stories of Black women on their morning shows and popular websites.

Black men must bear some

of the blame for mainstream media's ignorance and apathy towards the plight of Black women. We band together, as brothers, ignoring the anguished cries of our sisters. We must stop, look and listen.

We must reject R. Kelly for his alleged abuse of Black women and girls with the same unanimity that Black voters in Alabama rejected the alleged sexual predator Roy Moore.

We must step in the name of love and in the name of justice with respect for our Black mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. This respect must begin in the Black community; we must clean our own house, first. We must elevate our women from social media hashtags to highly-valued and respected members of the global community.

In "Keep Ya Head Up," Shakur offers a critique on the exploitation of women in the Black community:

*And since we all came from a woman*

*Got our name from a woman and our game from a woman*

*I wonder why we take from our women*

Read the rest of this commentary at [TheSkanner.com](http://TheSkanner.com)

## Add Civil Rights Voices to Housing Policy Discussions

Wherever you live, or household size, home is a special place where children are raised, and memories are made. Owning a home is also the largest, single investment that most families make in a lifetime.

Since the nationwide housing crash, family outcomes have varied. While some households have witnessed full recovery, others – often people of color – wonder when or how they too can turn the proverbial financial corner.

Now, nine national civil rights organizations are demanding to know why related deliberations of a key policy issue now underway with both the U.S. Senate Banking Committee and its counterpart, the House Financial Services Committee are being conducted in private: the future of affordable homeownership.

"Our constituents represent the majority of future homebuyers, and any system that is not structured so as to ensure that they have fair access to safe and sustainable mortgages will not serve the country well," wrote the coalition to leadership of both committees on December 15.

Signing the letter were: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the National Coalition for Asian Pacific Community Develop-



Charlene Crowell  
NNPA  
Columnist

ment, the Center for Responsible Lending, National Fair Housing Alliance, NAACP, UNIDOSUS (formerly known as the National Conference of La Raza, National Urban

**“Low-and-moderate-income consumers, as well as consumers of color could easily question whether fair access to mortgage credit will be possible for them**

League, National Community Reinvestment Coalition and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

"At a time when the national homeownership rate is declining, and local rents are skyrocketing, every effort should be made to increase sustainable homeownership opportunity and make rental housing more affordable," the coalition continued. "Alternative facts and false math should not be used to undo the access and affordability provisions that have helped secure opportunity for hard-working families for more

than 25 years."

Central to these discussions is the future of two Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) – Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. During the housing crisis, The Federal Home Loan Corporation, more commonly known as Freddie Mac, and the Federal National Mortgage Corporation – Fannie Mae – went into federal conservatorship. As a result, the entities created decades ago by Congress to

reduce the cost of credit for low and moderate-income households has remained in government control.

Now, as much of the housing market has recovered, questions are being posed as to when or how the two GSEs will return to private operations. Secondly, as housing costs continue to soar for renters and homeowners alike, affordable housing is a growing concern nationwide. Without an affirmative policy in place, many low-and-moderate-income consumers, as well as consumers of color could easily question whether

fair access to mortgage credit will be possible for them.

For their part, the civil rights organizations' letter gave committee chairs a list of 10 items that if left unaddressed will trigger organized opposition:

1. Align with and support longstanding federal anti-discrimination laws and enforcement;
2. Provide adequate capital to protect taxpayers and housing system;
3. Serve all credit-worthy borrowers;
4. Eliminate and ban excessive risk-based pricing;
5. Serve all markets across the country throughout the business cycle;
6. Require utility regulation and expand restrictions that prevent risky behaviors;
7. Ensure equal treatment for small lenders;
8. Promote cost-effective loan modifications;
9. Strengthen FHA and preserve low down payment mortgage loans; and
10. Address the federal government's history in fostering racially discriminatory mortgage lending policies.

Read the rest of this commentary at [TheSkanner.com](http://TheSkanner.com)