

The Black Panther Jubilee

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Abstract:

October 2016 marked the Golden Jubilee of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. In keeping with this precious milestone, the *Journal of African American Studies* has published a special issue on the organization about which many have written; unfortunately, little of which can be considered fresh or cutting-edge. This special issue does not have a specific genre; rather, it consists of many academics who employed varying methodological perspectives to tackle topics in several creative and original ways. In the end, our goal is to provide the academic community and reading public with a more nuanced perspective on the diversity and complexity of this militant group. Such perspectives will aid in continued dialog on the organization and provide a template to strategies/tactics that can be transferred and applied to other contexts. This collection of writers has produced reflections on the organization's 50th anniversary, plowed new scholarly ground, provided insightful interviews of former Panthers, and offered their take on some of the most recent books on the Black Panther Party (BPP). The interviews and conversations with former Panthers are especially informative. Readers are treated to an up close and personal look at some of the men and women who comprised the Black Panther Party from California to Baltimore. These narratives are presented as stories in themselves, but when seamed together, create a part of the great international spectacle that was/is the Black Panther Party (BPP).

Keyword: Black Panther Jubilee | Golden Jubilee | Black liberation struggle | *Journal of African American Studies* | October 2016

Article:

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As we reflect on this historical landmark, it is key that we remember the sacrifices made by the rank-and-file members of the BPP—who demonstrated their commitment to transform the social and political landscape of this nation. But more importantly, how they stretched the boundaries of what the human psyche can do when limitations are foisted on them. In this special issue of the *Journal of African American Studies*, we dedicated our efforts to capturing the fusion between Panther and struggle—a relationship intertwined with strength, hope, love, and a determination to survive.