Frances Cress Welsing: Afrocentric Pseudoscientist

By Norm R. Allen Jr.

Frances Cress Welsing, born on March 18, 1935, died on January 2, 2016, at the age of 80. Welsing, a psychiatrist, was wildly popular among Afrocentric thinkers. She is best known for her Cress Theory of Color Confrontation (White Supremacy), developed in 1969, and her book, *The Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors*. Welsing put forth the Cress Theory in 1969. She initially delivered it as a paper for American Psychological Association (APA) members. In 1970, she published the essay.

Dr. Welsing published her collection of essays that she had written over 20 years, *The Isis Papers*, in 1991. It very quickly became a classic among Afrocentrists, Black rappers and others throughout the international Black community.

Welsing maintained that non-Whites are genetically dominant and that Whites are genetically recessive. Whites are afraid of being genetically annihilated by non-Whites and must maintain a system of White supremacy to prevent this from happening. (For an interview with Welsing, visit http://knowshi.com/author-interview-dr-frances-cress-welsing/. For an in-depth critique of Welsing's ideas and legacy, visit http://blackagendareport.com/frances-welsing-legacy.)

Welsing said that Whites are especially afraid of Black males. She asserted that Whites have been obsessed with castrating Black men. She believed that sports and games served as excellent microcosms for examining the White supremacist mind.

For example, in golf, the goal is to use long clubs to knock a little white ball into a hole. The white ball seemingly represents White people and the clubs seemingly represent non-White people. In billiards, the cue or white ball is used to knock all of the colored balls off the table. The black or eight ball is the final one knocked in to win the game. The only ball left standing is the white ball after the game is over. These examples represent unconscious fears of White genetic annihilation.

While White supremacy certainly exists, most of Welsing's work is highly speculative and inconsistent with social and historical reality. For example, in most parts of the world, there have been no major efforts to prevent

"miscegenation" or so-called race mixing. Laws prohibiting race mixing in the U.S. and South Africa have gone by the wayside. Any Black U.S. military member that has ever been stationed abroad knows how easy it is to mix sexually with non-Black people, including Whites. The Black anthropologist and humanist Joel Augustus Rogers spent 50 years demonstrating that it is nearly impossible to find a pure "race," and that mixing has gone on for millennia. Surely at least some among the White powers that be must know this.

Welsing certainly did not help her case by sinking even deeper into pseudoscience. For example, she believed that melanin has actual paranormal powers. In *The Isis Papers*, she wrote of the "Geller effect." She actually believed that the famed "psychic" Uri Geller has paranormal powers because of the melanin content in his dark eyes and hair. However, the noted famed skeptic James Randi exposed Geller on the Johnny Carson show when the magician had the talk show host test Geller under controlled conditions. Geller failed miserably and claimed that, for some strange reason, he could not draw upon his powers at that time.

In any case, Welsing wrote that the great Black scientist George Washington Carver was so successful because of the high melanin content in his dark skin. She claimed that Carver was actually able to communicate telepathically with plants due to this melanin factor! But as is always the case with Afrocentric melanin scholars, Welsing provided no data to back up her extraordinary claims. (And Carver made no such claims.)

However, this pseudoscientific nonsense was relatively harmless. Welsing's views on homosexuality were truly insidious and invidious. She believed that homosexuality was part of a conspiracy by White people to destroy Blacks. Like reactionary White Christians, she thought LGBT people could be cured.

This kind of thinking meshes perfectly with that of the influential and powerful African homophobes that use the law to persecute LGBT people. Having been influenced by White U.S. evangelicals, Africans have passed or strengthened laws against homosexuality. In some African nations, particularly Uganda, they have tried to bring forth the death penalty for LGBT people. African LGBT people find it difficult to organize, get medicine to treat HIV/AIDS, and so forth. And despite all of this, not a single influential Afrocentrist publicly expresses any outrage against

African homophobia or even speaks out forcefully on behalf of African LGBT people.

Despite Welsing's shortcomings, she has one large feather in her cap. She debated the racist Nobel laureate, physicist (not geneticist) William Shockley, and trounced him thoroughly. Shockley argued that Blacks are genetically inferior to Whites, but Welsing admirably tore him to pieces. For that she deserves much praise.

After people die, they do not get to write their obituaries. However, if those obituaries are to be done correctly, the good *and* the bad must be told. It is not accurate to simply state that Welsing loved Black people. She apparently did not love Black LGBT people, unless one buys that trite, hackneyed hate-the-sin love-the-sinner conservative religious crap.

It is great that Afrocentrists and reactionary Black nationalists teach about the importance of Black love, pride, history, unity, opposition to White supremacy, and so forth. It is just too bad that they also feel obligated to promote pseudoscience, homophobia, sexism and other forms of intolerance. Thus, their legacies – like their ideologies – will always be mixed at best.