

# LERONE BENNETT Jr.

Former EBONY Magazine Editor, Magazine & Historian

Lerone Bennett, Jr., prolific writer and social historian, has served on the editorial staff of Ebony for over 50 years. He has authored articles, poems, short stories, and over nine books on African American history and current political challenges facing blacks. Bennett skillfully explores United States racial history its struggle for equality.

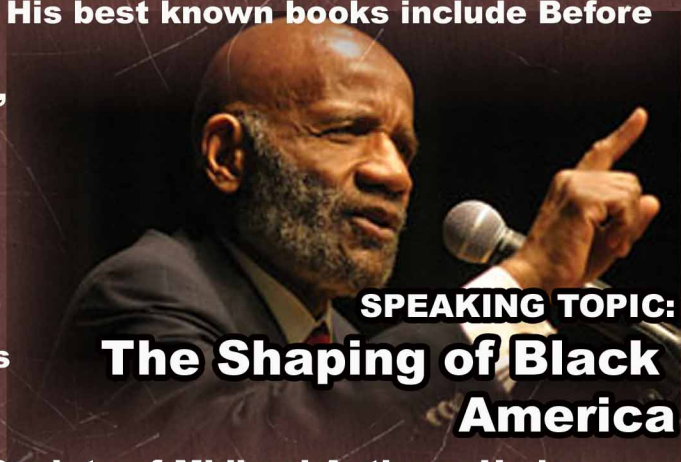
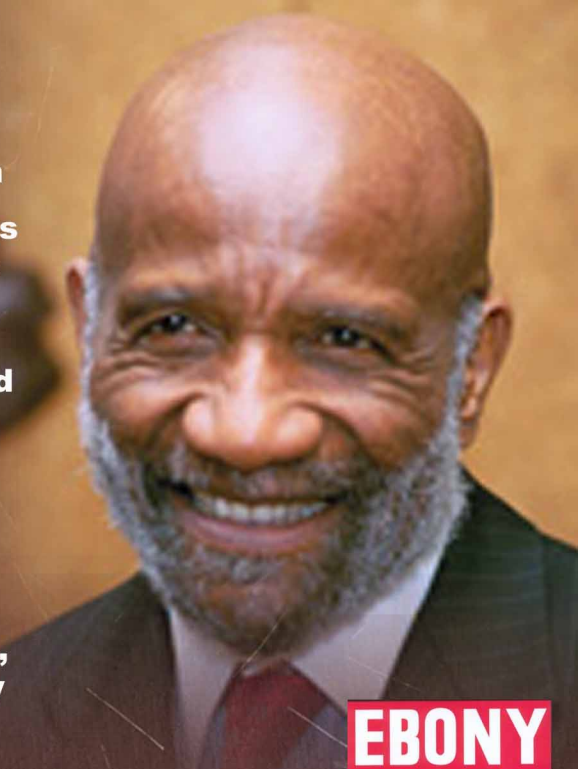
Born in 1928 Clarksdale, Mississippi, Lerone Bennett Jr. was raised in Jackson, Mississippi and later became in 1949 a proud graduate of Morehouse College, the nation's only private, historically black, four-year, liberal arts college for men in Augusta, Georgia. After earning his B.A., Bennett began working as a journalist for the Atlanta Daily World that same year.

In 1952 he became city editor of Jet. He became associate editor of Ebony in 1953, promoted to senior editor in 1958 and executive editor in 1987. Bennett and he was promoted to senior editor of the magazine in 1958. His history articles have become one of the magazine's literary hallmarks.

His work at Ebony resulted in Bennett's first book, a seminal work, *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America, 1619-1962*. The book, with its comprehensive examination of the history of African Americans in the United States, gave Bennett a reputation as a first-rate popular historian. In his eight subsequent books, Bennett has continued to document the historical forces shaping the black experience in the United States. His other works include, *What Manner of Man?*, *Pioneers In Protest* and *The Shaping of Black America*.

His articles have earned him a reputation for combining literary eloquence and comprehensive scholarship with readability appealing to the popular market, all the while producing an insightful critique of racial injustice. His best known books include *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America*, *What Manner of Man: A Biography of Martin Luther King*, *Pioneers In Protest*, *Black Power U.S.A.*, *The Human Side of Reconstruction 1867-1877*, *Great Moments in Black History*, *Forced into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream* and *The Shaping of Black America*.

Bennett's numerous honors include the prestigious Literature Award of the Academy of Arts and Letters, the Book of the Year Award from Capital Press Club and the Patron Saints Award from the Society of Midland Authors. He has served as advisor and consultant to national organizations and commissions, including the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders.



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