<u>Note</u>: Full article collaboratively written by Kimberly Bouyer, Sara Thompson, and Tyree Watkins. See below for Kimberly Bouyer's contribution.

Today, the African American woman's experience is situated in a more complex socioeconomic cultural milieu. The Black feminist movement during the second wave of the American women's movement in the 1970s has surely come a long way, evolving to what we see now in our modern era. Currently, in this fourth-wave feminism, contemporary Black feminism, which includes issues related to the Black LGBTQ+ community as well, is not without controversy, especially when it comes to the 21st century Black family. According to Kimberly Springer, former Black Studies professor at Portland State University, third-wave Black Feminism in the 1970s forced Black feminists to disproportionately prioritize their organizing time for activism. Because of the feminist pushback challenges then and now, Black feminists often exhaust most of their energy striving for legitimization within the Black communities. And as Springer points out, this battle for racial and gender equality is somewhat untenable because Black feminists are frequently in the unique position of "advocating a love for Black men while passionately hating Black sexism" (1059).

Despite this dichotomy, Black women are still considered as the central figures in our modern-day civil rights movements—such as, Black Lives Matter and #MeToo. With the constant spotlight on Black feminists, some critics argue that the multidimensional approach to resist racism, sexism, and all other "-isms" has led to untended consequences for the traditional Black family. They believe today's world Black feminism is misguided, focusing entirely too much on social equality and sexual rights and not enough on economic equality for Black Americans. As a result, these critics portend that this disregard in the struggle for the economic equality ultimately destroys the Black family in which the children are the unfortunate victims because of the likelihood of perpetuated poverty.

Since Black women are in this remarkably historical moment, the vituperative attacks against their feminism are ongoing insofar as remaining in the public discourse. For instance, Adam B. Coleman on his website, Black author and founder of the Wrong Speak website, says that feminism damages Black women and their families, defrauding them of authentic female agency and empowerment:

> Feminism encourages black women to exert false masculine energy and reject true femininity so that they will continue to compete with any black man that she attempts to have a relationship with and increasing the likeliness of family separation. The black father is a threat to the matriarchal dominant power structure of the modern black family and feminists cannot have this power imbalance readjusted. The feminist view of the black father is that of a man that wants his power back but the reality is that we want our family back.

So, is this the prevailing sentiment in our society? If we make use of Coleman's metrics for understanding the dynamic between feminism and the Black family—especially, its correlation to the Black relationship between men and women, then Kenya Barris' ABC television series, *Black-ish*, perhaps might reinforce his ad hominem fallacy. The bi-racial—White father and Black mother—female protagonist, Dr. "Bow" Rainbow Johnson (Tracee Ellis Ross), is an anesthesiologist who does not shy away from fervently expressing her viewpoints and opinions

to her husband, Andre "Dre" Johnson, Sr. (Anthony Anderson), about how they raise their Black children. More pointedly, the episode, "Johnson & Johnson," Dre discovers that Bow never legally took his last name. Does this mean that Bow is destroying their family because she did not adhere to the conventions of taking on the Black male's last name?

However, on the other hand, Black feminists are not without supportive allies. The website article, "Stop Saying Black Feminism Destroyed the Black Family," discusses how the Hotepian logic—an Afrocentric Black American movement based on the Egyptian term, "Hotep," meaning "to be satisfied, at peace"—is pervasive on many social media platforms. The definition of Hotep intriguingly has morphed into meaning many different things within the Black community, especially when it relates to the Afrocentric Black male's interpretation of Black pride and family values. The Hoteps believe that Black feminism is designed to emasculate the Black heterosexual male and the patriarchal family structure. In the broadest sense, Hoteps are anti-progress and not interested in equality for all people because arguably, they want to replace White male patriarchy with Black male patriarchy. As Asher Primus (AfroPunk website contributor) asserts: "What really destroyed the black family was black people trying to live up to the white definition of patriarchy while forgetting that other [people of color] may not live a heteronormative lifestyle." Thus, Coleman's cause for disagreement in this regard ostensibly becomes a moot point for further discourse on Black feminism.

Consequently, Black academic scholar Patricia Hill Collins writes: "As feminist scholarship quite rightly points out, the very categories of public and private, work and family, structure and culture rely heavily on specific gender configurations" (51). In other words, the cultural structures of public work become encrypted as masculine enterprises, whereas the private—that is, the family—become the preserve of women. Therefore, the final implication for conceptualizing Black feminism's impact on the family and the Black male is deeply rooted in a paradigm which itself is problematic.