

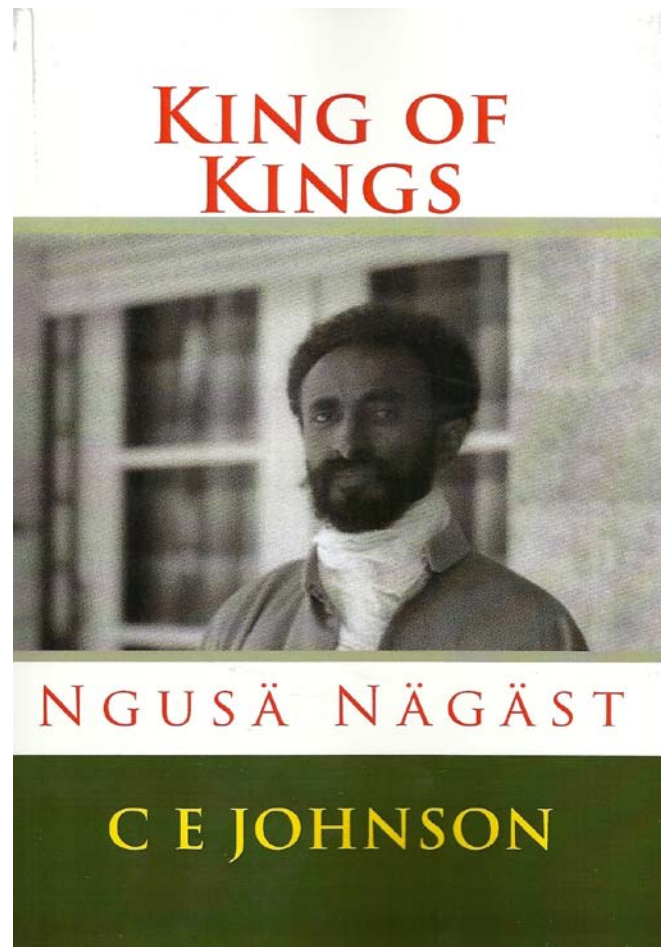
SPECIAL GUEST



Claudette E Johnson

“King of Kings started out as an educational compilation for my children whom I home school, to be used as part of their curriculum. King of Kings is an attempt to answer many questions they have asked about God, religion, the bible and our culture...”

PANTHER NEWSLETTER SPECIAL GUEST this issue is Claudette E Johnson. I hooked up with Claudette to reason with her, about her and her works...



NSS: First of all Claudette, thanks for taking time out to talk with *PANTHER NEWSLETTER*.

CJ: Thank you very much for having me.

NSS: What type of work do you do?

CJ: I have a degree in computer science and have spent over twenty years in community service. I started working in Clara Muhammad Schools in Dallas and Houston TX as a teacher. I also have a journalistic background – published and wrote freelance feature articles for newsletters. I have a musical background as well. I'm a tenant's advocate and involved on a pro-bono basis with the local Neighborhood House social service agency.

NSS: When did you first realise you wanted to pursue your career? – What prompted you?

CJ: As a youth. Indecent housing, injustice, violence drugs and mis-education were a normal part of my life. As soon as the opportunity presented itself, I vowed to try and be part of the solution.

NSS: Who has inspired you in particular? (Authors/poets/people)?

CJ: My inspiration comes from many sources. First of all, my father, a WWII veteran who told me of His Imperial Majesty and Marcus Garvey. The many local community activists. The Black Panther Party had a strong presence in my community as a child. When they were dismantled the Nation of Islam was there and quickly came under the leadership of Imam Warith Deen Muhammad son of Elijah Muhammad and good friend of one of my biggest inspirations Malcolm X and of course I would want to be where Malcolm's influence was. There are many authors, Ra Un Nefer Amen, Queen Afua, Henry Thoreau, Zora Neale Hurston, George Jackson, and many others

NSS: What do you most enjoy about your work?

CJ: Being able to learn and share information about our history and culture.

NSS: Does your work enable you to visit many countries? – If so which countries have you visited?

CJ: So far the only country I have visited outside the US is Mexico in search of Yanga one of the Americas' earliest "maroon communities": settlements founded by fugitive slaves. Originally known as San Lorenzo de los Negros, in 1932 the town was renamed for its founder, a rebellious Muslim man from what is now Nigeria. In 1609, after resisting recapture for 38 years, Yanga negotiated with the Spaniards to establish a free black community.

NSS: About your book King of Kings; what is the story behind that, how did it come about?

CJ: King of Kings started out as an educational compilation for my children whom I home school, to be used as part of their curriculum. King of Kings is an attempt to answer the many questions they have asked about God, religion, the bible and our culture.

NSS: What kind of research was involved?

CJ: Historical research involving long hours in the library, internet sites and talking to family members and people from Ethiopia.

NSS: Do you impose a discipline on yourself regarding schedules, goals etc?

CJ: Yes, I try to stay focused and give myself at least a year or two to finish a project.

NSS: Do you write full-time?

CJ: No not at this time

NSS: How do you promote yourself? Do you have a website?

CJ: Yes, King of Kings is now available on Amazon.com and will be available in stores universities and libraries soon come. But you must obtain the link on Facebook or Myspace. There is a King of Kings page on Facebook for anyone who would like to support the book. Just type in King of Kings or Claudette Johnson on Facebook also you can go to www.myspace.com/cejohnsonbooks you may get the Amazon link from there.

NSS: Have you received any awards for your work?

CJ: No, but I was nominated for a radio broadcasting award for an interview with the ANC in 1991.

NSS: What does it take for a person to be successful in your chosen vocation; a freelance writer/publisher?

CJ: Keep writing! Write about what you know and what you don't know. When you write about things that you don't know it forces you to be inventive. A good book and a successful book are not necessarily the same thing. Some of the greatest books of our time have taken as long as sixty years to come in to the public's attention. Have some idea of what the market has been doing for say ten years. If you try to write for the market you will find that they tend to change on the basis of a sensational type of book that sells many copies. If you can not find a publishing company interested in your work, self publish and let the people decide.

NSS: Are you working on a current project(s)?

CJ: Yes, I am currently working on volume 2 of King of Kings and the Project involving the treasures which were stolen from Ethiopia by the English soldiers in 1834.

NSS: Outside of work, what other interests and hobbies do you have?

CJ: Outside of being an on-air personality, showcasing new talent and promoting community events, I am interested in music publishing. I am also an advocate for sustainable energy such as hydroelectricity, solar energy, and wind power.

NSS: Do you have any advice and encouragement you would like to share with the *PANTHER NEWSLETTER* readers especially the youth?

CJ: Yes. One of the most important decisions a young person can make, to realize their relationship and responsibility to humanities common lot, is to become a dedicated community organizer promoting growth and change. As Malcolm X said: "*The Power structure today is as much interested in perpetuating slavery as they were a hundred years ago. Only now they use modern methods in doing so.*" One of the effects is to take totally out of the picture a generation or two of young Black, Latino males, and Black females who now have the highest incarceration rate of 200% since 1990. These youth either get involved in the drug trade or drug consumption with drugs manufactured by the government for the community and end up in prison. America continues to grow rich from the body and labour of poor, especially young people.

NSS: **Claudette, I give thanks to you for taking time out and agreeing to reason in this issue of *PANTHER NEWSLETTER*. It has been a pleasure connecting with you. May our Creator guide you and protect you in all your future ventures. Jah Bless.**

Log on next month and meet another *SPECIAL GUEST* or *ARTIST OF THE MONTH* here on *PANTHER NEWSLETTER*.