



Ever since I can recall, I have been fascinated with mass communication, more distinctly by methods specializing in education, and enlightenment; aka to most around me, the boring stuff. My first love was the pulpit, The Black Pulpit. Funny thing, my college years were torn between how I could preach, and create the next Tonight Show. Life again, as we discussed decided my curriculum choices were no match for my wallet, sending me to the arms of YouTube, which bowed to content creating. This became my social savior, my economic redeemer, and in all intents and purposes, my friend. Anything I could think of was on YouTube, more interesting, anything I needed to know was on YouTube.

I began to see creators, dominate their respective spaces; from technology, to science, politics, even home economics. Come to think, there was that one time, AOC, was holding town hall meetings on twitch, while playing Fortnite. I sat in my room, watching the world evolve; witnessing life as we know it, transition before my eyes, everywhere, accept in Norfolk. Here we were still in the land of Funeral Directors, Real Estate Agents, Principals, and Assistants, and let I not forget, those who rely on our unstable relationship with justice. Now before you ask, No!! I have no qualms about how one chooses to make a living; my only gripe is that differing ideologies are not just seemingly dismissed, but blocked.

So lets address the elephant, at least in my room. We all know who is responsible for involvement with entities such as the ERT, but what may puzzle, even an Andria McClellan, is why! Along Hampton Blvd, beginning at Terminal, heading east, sits the only three options for someone like me to combat poverty. If played right, which many I knew did, one could begin on TERMINAL, and conclude in Chelsea. Three checks, plus socials would buy a lot of chips, in that casino y'all want over yonder.

Here's the monkey wrench. In order to have a successful military career, I'm talking more than twenty, with some gold. It requires a strenuous amount of physical fitness, resulting in some of our immediately being disqualified. I know, because I was one of em. At the time, I could not see an effective route of achieving physical success; a route to this day, I still have an obsession to find.

All this brings me to my point. Empower NFK was not just some event, stacked with the cities elites, discussing much ado about nothing, rather a crash course, Intro To NFK, 101 if you will. It was the starting line, to navigating seemingly the most confusing city in the union; most of all, it was a way to showcase the veracity of who we are, and how we feel. Some in this town, believe it should feel, and operate a certain way; I say give West Ghent and Berkeley what they want. The rest of us, operate with a different view finder, use different lenses. We're young, ambitious, creative, and some of us live at the home.

Now we all know them, who take the position, anything connected to government, politics, or the individuals on which its stands, are nothing more than pillars of toxicity. The sacred text argues in Hosea 4, The people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge. It is by this principle, that I draw my belief that a healthy culture, requires a basic understanding. What are my Rights; How do I defend myself; How Do I Understand the Future; and finally How do I prepare for the future.

I know we have numerous questions still unanswered, about me, and why it matters to anything. The year 2016, was the first time I had been invited to share a space with the mayor. You were not the victor yet, but everybody knew. I wrote a letter, laying out my hopes, and dreams. It took eight years to get to this moment of hope; where the door of what's possible is opened. I am convinced, we have a chance to put a fresh set of firestones on ol NFK; and we do that with the collaboration of **"The Power and The People"** resulting in a more prosperous, engaging, and EMPOWERED NFK.

Sincerely yours,

*Erik DeSean Barrett*

