

on the down low

On the down low: Understanding the Meaning, Origins, and Usage

In everyday conversations, you might have heard the phrase *on the down low* used to describe actions, secrets, or lifestyles kept discreet from the public eye. But what exactly does this expression mean? How did it originate, and in what contexts is it most commonly used? This article provides a comprehensive exploration of *on the down low*, delving into its definition, history, cultural significance, and practical applications.

What Does "On the Down Low" Mean?

At its core, *on the down low* refers to keeping something secret or discreet, often to avoid public attention or judgment. The phrase typically implies a level of confidentiality about personal matters, relationships, or behaviors that someone prefers to hide from others.

Common interpretations include:

- Concealing romantic or sexual relationships
- Keeping personal or sensitive information private
- Maintaining discretion in social or professional settings
- Engaging in clandestine activities

Examples of usage:

- "He's on the down low about his new relationship."
- "They're on the down low about their business deal."
- "She's been on the down low about her health issues."

Origins and Historical Context

Understanding the roots of *on the down low* helps contextualize its current usage and cultural significance.

Early Origins

While the exact origin of the phrase is difficult to pinpoint, it gained prominence in African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in the late 20th century. It was popularized in urban communities and hip-hop culture, where maintaining discretion about personal matters

was often linked to social survival.

Popularization in the 2000s

The phrase entered mainstream usage through media, music, and pop culture in the early 2000s. Notably, the term became associated with the concealment of same-sex relationships within the African American community, especially when individuals wanted to avoid societal stigma or family disapproval.

Notable instances include:

- Media reports about celebrities and public figures hiding their sexuality
- Hip-hop lyrics referencing being discreet about personal lives
- Discussions about secret relationships in urban communities

Connection to Broader Cultural Movements

The phrase reflects broader themes of privacy, secrecy, and social identity. It highlights the importance of discretion in environments where openness might lead to discrimination or social repercussions.

"On the Down Low" in Popular Culture

The phrase's cultural resonance has been reinforced by its appearances in music, television, and literature.

Music and Entertainment

- Music: Several hip-hop and R&B songs have referenced being "on the down low," often relating to secret romantic or sexual relationships.
- Television: Shows depicting urban life or LGBTQ themes have explored characters' use of the phrase to describe discreet relationships.

Literature and Media

Books and documentaries have examined the phenomenon of secrecy and discretion, especially in contexts involving sexuality, social status, or personal safety.

Modern Usage and Contexts

Today, *on the down low* can refer to various situations where secrecy is desired or necessary.

Common Contexts

- **Romantic Relationships:** Keeping a relationship hidden from friends or family.
- **Personal Health:** Maintaining privacy about health conditions or medical treatments.
- **Financial Matters:** Concealing financial transactions or assets.
- **Professional Settings:** Keeping certain career moves or decisions confidential.

Key Characteristics of "On the Down Low"

- Emphasis on discretion
- Desire to avoid public attention
- Often involves personal or sensitive topics
- Can be motivated by social, cultural, or safety concerns

Implications and Considerations

While keeping things *on the down low* can be beneficial for privacy, it also raises important considerations.

Pros of Being on the Down Low

- Protects personal privacy
- Prevents unnecessary judgment or scrutiny
- Allows individuals to navigate sensitive situations safely

Cons and Risks

- Potential for misunderstandings or mistrust
- May hinder open communication
- Could lead to feelings of secrecy or isolation
- In some cases, secrecy might be associated with dishonesty or deception

Balancing Privacy and Transparency

It's important to evaluate when discretion is appropriate and when openness benefits relationships or personal well-being. Healthy boundaries involve knowing what to keep private and what to share.

How to Use "On the Down Low" Correctly

Understanding the proper usage of the phrase ensures clarity and appropriateness in communication.

In Sentences

- "I'm on the down low about my plans for the surprise party."
- "They decided to keep their engagement on the down low until everything was settled."
- "He's been on the down low about his health issues to avoid unnecessary questions."

In Informal Settings

- The phrase is most suited for casual conversations, especially among friends or within communities familiar with its meaning.
- Avoid using in formal writing or professional contexts unless discussing cultural or social topics explicitly.

Conclusion

On the down low is a versatile phrase rooted in urban and cultural vernacular that signifies discretion, secrecy, or privacy. Its origins in African American communities and hip-hop culture have helped it gain widespread recognition, making it a common way to

describe keeping personal or sensitive matters hidden from public view.

Whether used in the context of romantic relationships, personal health, or social interactions, understanding when and how to use *on the down low* enhances communication, especially in situations where discretion is valued or necessary. Recognizing the cultural nuances and implications associated with this phrase fosters better understanding and respectful dialogue.

Remember, discretion can be both a tool for protection and a source of misunderstanding. Use the phrase thoughtfully, considering the context and the feelings of others involved.

Keywords for SEO Optimization:

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- What does on the down low mean
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- Discretion and secrecy
- Urban slang expressions
- Keeping secrets on the down low
- When to use on the down low
- Cultural significance of on the down low
- Privacy and discretion in relationships

Frequently Asked Questions

What does 'on the down low' mean in modern slang?

'On the down low' refers to keeping something secret or private, often related to personal or sensitive matters, so others remain unaware.

How did the phrase 'on the down low' originate?

The phrase gained popularity in African American Vernacular English and hip-hop culture, originally used to describe discreet behavior, especially regarding secret romantic or sexual relationships.

Is 'on the down low' only used in a sexual context?

While it is often associated with discreet sexual activity, the phrase can also describe any situation where someone wishes to keep information hidden or confidential.

Are there any cultural sensitivities associated with the

phrase 'on the down low'?

Yes, the phrase has been linked to discussions about secrecy in relationships and can sometimes perpetuate stereotypes; it's important to use it thoughtfully and consider its context.

How is 'on the down low' different from saying 'keeping it secret'?

'On the down low' is a colloquial, informal expression often emphasizing discretion within specific communities, whereas 'keeping it secret' is more general and formal in tone.

Additional Resources

On the Down Low: Unveiling a Complex Cultural Phenomenon

The phrase "on the down low" has become a pervasive term within American vernacular, particularly within African American communities, but its significance extends far beyond casual slang. Over the past few decades, the expression has evolved from a colloquialism into a descriptor of complex social behaviors, identities, and cultural dynamics. This article aims to provide a comprehensive exploration of the phrase "on the down low," examining its origins, cultural implications, social controversies, and the broader conversations it sparks about identity, privacy, and societal norms.

Origins and Etymology of "On the Down Low"

Historical Roots and Early Usage

The phrase "on the down low" first gained prominence in African American urban communities during the late 20th century. Its origins are somewhat ambiguous, but it is believed to have emerged within Black street vernacular in the 1980s and 1990s. The term "down low" initially signified secrecy or discretion, often related to personal or community matters that needed to be kept hidden from mainstream society or authoritative figures.

Linguistically, "down low" aligns with other expressions that emphasize concealment or privacy—like "keeping it on the down low" or "playing it low." Its usage likely stems from the idea of keeping something 'below the radar,' out of sight, or not openly acknowledged.

Evolution into a Cultural Phrase

As it entered wider usage, "on the down low" expanded beyond mere secrecy to encapsulate specific behaviors, especially regarding sexuality. The phrase became closely associated with clandestine romantic or sexual activities that are intentionally concealed

from the public or societal expectations.

Over time, it gained recognition beyond community circles, especially through media, music, and pop culture. Artists like rapper R. Kelly popularized the term in the early 2000s, often referencing "on the down low" in songs to describe secret relationships or hidden lifestyles. This exposure amplified the phrase's reach, embedding it into mainstream consciousness.

The Cultural Significance of "On the Down Low"

Identity and Sexuality

One of the most significant associations with "on the down low" pertains to sexual identity and behavior, particularly within African American men. The phrase has been used to describe men who identify as heterosexual publicly but engage in same-sex encounters clandestinely. This duality presents complex questions about masculinity, societal expectations, and identity.

Key aspects include:

- **Hidden Sexuality:** Men on the down low often conceal their same-sex activities, fearing social stigma, discrimination, or rejection.
- **Masculinity and Respectability:** In many communities, traditional notions of masculinity discourage open acknowledgment of same-sex attractions, leading some men to maintain secrecy.
- **Implications for Relationships:** Partners may remain unaware of the other's behaviors, raising issues of trust, fidelity, and emotional health.

Societal and Community Dynamics

The phenomenon of being "on the down low" also reflects broader societal tensions around sexuality and privacy. It underscores the stigma faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, especially in communities where traditional or conservative values dominate.

This clandestine aspect can:

- Reinforce stereotypes and misconceptions about sexuality.
- Lead to internalized homophobia.
- Contribute to health risks, such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, due to lack of open dialogue and access to resources.

Furthermore, the "down low" identity sometimes intersects with issues of masculinity, hypermasculinity, and community reputation, complicating efforts for acceptance and understanding.

Media Representation and Public Perception

Media Portrayals and Their Impact

Media has played a pivotal role in shaping perceptions of "on the down low." Early portrayals often sensationalized the phenomenon, sometimes depicting it as a widespread threat to heterosexual masculinity or as a source of moral panic.

Notable trends in media coverage include:

- Sensationalism: Headlines emphasizing "secret gay men" or "hidden lifestyles" to attract readership.
- Stereotyping: Reinforcing negative stereotypes about Black masculinity and sexuality.
- Misunderstanding: Framing the issue as solely about deception rather than complex personal and societal factors.

While some reports aimed to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS risks, others risked stigmatizing individuals and communities.

Public Discourse and Criticisms

The public debate around "on the down low" often centers on issues such as privacy rights, societal acceptance, and the impact of secrecy on relationships and public health.

Critics argue:

- That the concept perpetuates stereotypes that Black men are inherently dishonest or untrustworthy.
- That the focus on clandestine behaviors oversimplifies complex issues of sexuality and identity.
- That sensationalist narratives can hinder honest discussions about LGBTQ+ experiences and the importance of acceptance.

Conversely, advocates emphasize the need to understand the social pressures that lead individuals to conceal their identities and behaviors, advocating for more nuanced conversations about acceptance and mental health.

Health and Social Implications

HIV/AIDS and Public Health Concerns

One of the most pressing issues linked with "on the down low" behaviors has been the increased risk of HIV/AIDS transmission. Men who engage in secret same-sex encounters without disclosure or protection may inadvertently contribute to higher transmission rates.

Key points include:

- Lack of Testing: Secrecy may discourage regular health check-ups and testing.
- Risk Behaviors: Engaging in unprotected sex due to fear of exposure.
- Impact on Communities: Elevated HIV prevalence in certain communities due to stigmatization and limited access to culturally competent health services.

Public health campaigns have increasingly recognized the importance of destigmatizing sexuality and promoting open dialogues to mitigate these risks.

Psychosocial Effects and Mental Health

The concealment associated with being "on the down low" can have profound psychological effects, including:

- Internalized shame and guilt.
- Anxiety and depression.
- Strain on intimate relationships and social ties.

Support networks, therapy, and community outreach are vital for addressing these mental health challenges, fostering environments where individuals can explore their identities safely.

Broader Cultural and Sociological Perspectives

Intersectionality and Identity Politics

The "on the down low" phenomenon exemplifies the intersection of race, gender, sexuality, and societal expectations. It highlights how marginalized groups navigate complex social terrains, often balancing personal authenticity with community acceptance.

Important considerations include:

- The role of masculinity norms in perpetuating secrecy.
- Racial stereotypes influencing perceptions of Black men's sexuality.
- The importance of culturally sensitive approaches to health and social services.

Changing Narratives and Future Directions

As societal attitudes evolve, so does the conversation around "on the down low." Increasing visibility and acceptance of diverse sexual identities challenge traditional notions of secrecy and concealment.

Emerging trends include:

- Greater openness about sexuality in media and popular culture.
- Community-led initiatives promoting acceptance and health education.
- The importance of intersectional approaches in policy and outreach.

Furthermore, the focus is shifting towards understanding individual agency, promoting honesty, and dismantling harmful stereotypes.

Conclusion: The Complexity of "On the Down Low"

The phrase "on the down low" encapsulates a multifaceted social reality rooted in issues of identity, secrecy, societal judgment, and health. Its origins in African American vernacular reflect a history of navigating marginalization and stigmatization. While media portrayals have often sensationalized the phenomenon, deeper analysis reveals a nuanced landscape where personal choice intersects with societal pressures.

Understanding "on the down low" requires acknowledging the socio-cultural contexts that foster secrecy and concealment, as well as recognizing the importance of promoting openness, acceptance, and health literacy. Moving forward, society must continue to challenge stereotypes, foster inclusive dialogues, and support individuals in embracing their identities without fear of judgment. Only through such efforts can the complex narrative of "on the down low" be fully understood and responsibly addressed.

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Note: This article synthesizes existing research and cultural commentary to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. It aims to foster informed discussions and promote respectful exploration of complex social issues.

[On The Down Low](#)

on the down low: On the Down Low J.L. King, Karen Hunter, 2005-04-05 A bold exposé of the controversial secret that has potentially dire consequences in many African American communities. Delivering the first frank and thorough investigation of life “on the down low” (the DL), J. L. King exposes a closeted culture of sex between black men who lead “straight” lives. King explores his own past as a DL man, and the path that led him to let go of the lies and bring forth a message that can promote emotional healing and open discussions about relationships, sex, sexuality, and health in the black community. Providing a long-overdue wake-up call, J. L. King bravely puts the spotlight on a topic that has until now remained dangerously taboo. Drawn from hundreds of interviews, statistics, and the author’s firsthand knowledge of DL behavior, *On the Down Low* reveals the warning signs African American women need to know. King also discusses the potential health consequences of having unprotected sex, as African American women represent an alarming 64 percent of new HIV infections. Volatile yet vital, *On the Down Low* is sure to be one of the most talked-about books of the year. “A survey by the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta found that nearly a quarter of black HIV-positive men who had sex with men consider themselves heterosexual.” —Essence

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on the down low: Coming Up from the Down Low J.L. King, 2007-12-18 The dramatic follow-up to the controversial bestseller that has all of America talking... In his first book, *On the Down Low*, J. L. King introduced readers to the deceptive underground world of the “down low” (DL), the subculture of men leading straight lives while secretly sleeping with other men. In that first book, King’s own life was exhibit A—he lived for years as a DL man and was able to expose this lifestyle with unique authority. In this blockbuster new book, King takes readers to the next level in his exploration of the down-low world by answering the most common questions from the thousands of people he’s met while traveling the country. He provides more in-depth information about the lives of men on the DL, dispels the most common myths, and addresses the most frequently asked question of all: What are the signs? But more than that, he tells of his own transformation over the last year, as he’s moved into a more honest evaluation of his own life and the lives of other men on the DL who are trying to emerge from their web of deceit. And he courageously points to the urgent problems in our communities that drive men into such dangerous and reckless lives and keep them there. Filled with fascinating stories from the men who have lived on the down low and the women who have struggled through it with them, *Coming Up from the Down Low* shines more light on a phenomenon that has touched the lives of too many. It’s a vital call for greater love, tolerance, and forgiveness in our individual lives and in the lives of our communities, and an inspiration to all of us to embrace the liberating power of the truth. “The source of my expertise on this subject is, quite simply, my own life. I’ve lived this and been struggling down the road of understanding my entire life. Since the publication of the first book I’ve made further progress down that road, helped along by the thousands of you who responded. The insights I’ve gotten have transformed my understanding of this phenomenon and transformed my life. I want to share those insights with you now, to help you better understand the down-low phenomenon, yes, but also to help you better understand the potential liberating power of honesty, acceptance, and healing in our personal lives and in the life of our community.” —from the Introduction

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growth of LGBTQ identities and the interdisciplinary nature of sexuality studies. Now available in a digital ebook format, the fourth edition has been thoroughly updated to include a new chapter on Trans Lives and Theories, and new readings. Authors Deborah T. Meem, Jonathan Alexander, Key Beck, and Michelle A. Gibson provide more discussions of important and current issues in LGBTQ studies such as the emergence of non-binary identities, and issues of race and class, making *Finding Out*, Fourth Edition an even more comprehensive introduction to the field.

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Calafell, Javier Cardona, E. Patrick Johnson, Omi Osun Joni L. Jones, John Keene, Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, D. Soyini Madison, Jeffrey Q. McCune Jr., Andreea Micu, Charles I. Nero, Tavia Nyong'o, Paul Outlaw, Coiya Paz, Charles Rice-González, Sandra L. Richards, Matt Richardson, Ramón H. Rivera-Servera, Celiany Rivera-Velázquez, Tamara Roberts, Lisa B. Thompson, Beliza Torres Narváez, Patricia Ybarra, Vershawn Ashanti Young

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on the down low: Down Low Cartel: The Complete 4 Book Series Solae Dehvine, 2017-12-01
THIS IS THE COMPLETE SERIES OF DOWN LOW CARTEL ****4 Books for 1 Discounted Price**** The toughest gangster you know might be on the DL The Los Sucio Brothers are related by circumstance and not by blood but don't tell them that. They will fight to the death over each other and to keep their secrets hidden, they will kill anyone in their way. But when love comes in the mix it only breeds trouble. Mix that with jealousy and you have the Los Sucio brothers going to war. Read the story of how they become a Cartel all on the down low. Read the Complete Series in the Down Low Cartel Box Set Keywords: Complete Series, Anthology, African American Books, African american urban fiction, urban books, urban box sets, Black books by black authors, hood books, hood love, thug love, thug life, African American Fiction *** TEXT SOLAE TO 313131 for new releases and free books*** Louboutin Ladies: <http://bit.ly/2deZmtd> Secret Life of a Soccer Mom: <http://bit.ly/2ecJnOw> Good Girl Bad Stepbrother: <http://bit.ly/2e0fctY> Stepbrother Alpha Marine: <http://bit.ly/2dA0VTn> Side Chick Exposed: <http://bit.ly/2ct2uGk> I Had His Love First: <http://bit.ly/2bY8cxW> Good Lovin On the Side: <http://bit.ly/2ckarNa> Abducted By Lust: http://bit.ly/GPA_ABL AddICKted: http://bit.ly/GPA_Ad A Side Chick Scorned: http://bit.ly/GPA_SCS Between a Wife and a Side Chick: http://bit.ly/GPA_BWSC Cuffing Season: http://bit.ly/GPA_CS Cost of Love: http://bit.ly/GPA_CoL Hubby Vs. Bae: http://bit.ly/GPA_HvB Live From The Gutter: http://bit.ly/GPA_LFG Love Lock Down 1: http://bit.ly/GPA_LLD1 Main Chick vs Side Bitch 1: http://bit.ly/GPA_MCvSB Main Chick vs Side Bitch 2: http://bit.ly/GPA_MCvSB2 Main Chick vs Side Bitch 3: http://bit.ly/GPA_MCvSB3 Main Chick vs Side Bitch Complete: http://bit.ly/GPA_MCvSBC Pay for Play: http://bit.ly/GPA_P4P Shades of the Projects: http://bit.ly/GPA_SOP Side Chick Memoir: http://bit.ly/GPA_SCM Seduced By a Thug: http://bit.ly/GPA_SBAT Sex and Shade: http://bit.ly/GPA_SS Side Bitch Turned Main Chick: http://bit.ly/GPA_SBTMC What's Done In the Dark 1: http://bit.ly/GPA_WDID1 What's Done in the Dark Compilation: http://bit.ly/GPA_WDIDC

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scholars and activists foregrounds and promotes the many intersections of queer studies in an accessible, clear and engaging style to produce an indispensable tool for scholars and students alike.

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issues that have erupted into panics. These sexual panics spark moral crusades and campaigns, defining and shaping how we think about sexual and reproductive rights. The essays in *Moral Panics, Sex Panics* focus on case studies ranging from sex education to AIDS to race and the down low, to illustrate how sexuality is at the heart of many political controversies. The contributors also reveal how moral and sexual panics have become a mainstay of certain kinds of conservative efforts to win elections and gain power in moral, social, and political arenas. *Moral Panics, Sex Panics* provides new and important insights into the role that key moral panics have played in social processes, arguing forcefully against the political abuse of sex panics and for the need to defend full sexual and reproductive rights. Contributors: Cathy J. Cohen, Diane DiMauro, Gary W. Dowsett, Janice M. Irvine, Carole Joffe, and Saskia Eleonora Wieringa.

on the down low: Care and Disability D. Christopher Gabbard, Talia Schaffer, 2025-02-12 *Care and Disability* is an edited collection offering critical perspectives on representations of care and disability, by emerging and established scholars across multiple periods, regions, and genres of literary studies. The authors demonstrate the range of fields in which care ethics can elucidate alternative cultural and social dynamics, including Indigenous, African American, and Asian texts, and historical eras that predate the modern medical profession. This collection is committed to drawing out the changing racial, gendered, classed, and sexual elements of care, emphasizing how care communities develop as alternatives to the heteronormative couple and the nuclear family. Drawing from the care ethics and disability theory, the work in this volume demonstrates the possibilities inherent in this new cutting-edge field. It will be of interest to all scholars and students of disability studies, care ethics, sociology, narrative medicine, Romanticism, eighteenth-century studies, transatlantic nineteenth-century studies, film, and contemporary race studies.

on the down low: Missing Bodies Monica Casper, Lisa Jean Moore, 2009-07 We know more about the physical body—how it begins, how it responds to illness, even how it decomposes—than ever before. Yet not all bodies are created equal, some bodies clearly count more than others, and some bodies are not recognized at all. In *Missing Bodies*, Monica J. Casper and Lisa Jean Moore explore the surveillance, manipulations, erasures, and visibility of the body in the twenty-first century. The authors examine bodies, both actual and symbolic, in a variety of arenas: pornography, fashion, sports, medicine, photography, cinema, sex work, labor, migration, medical tourism, and war. This new politics of visibility can lead to the overexposure of some bodies—Lance Armstrong, Jessica Lynch—and to the near invisibility of others—dead Iraqi civilians, illegal immigrants, the victims of HIV/AIDS and natural disasters. *Missing Bodies* presents a call for a new, engaged way of seeing and recovering bodies in a world that routinely, often strategically, obscures or erases them. It poses difficult, even startling questions: Why did it take so long for the United States media to begin telling stories about the falling bodies of 9/11? Why has the United States government refused to allow photographs or filming of flag-draped coffins carrying the bodies of soldiers who are dying in Iraq? Why are the bodies of girls and women so relentlessly sexualized? By examining the cultural politics at work in such disappearances and inclusions of the physical body the authors show how the social, medical and economic consequences of visibility can reward or undermine privilege in society.

on the down low: Black Greek-Letter Organizations in the 21st Century Gregory S. Parks, 2008-06-13 “A masterpiece of multidisciplinary scholarship that clearly demonstrates the contemporary relevance of black fraternities and sororities.” —Hasan Kwame Jeffries, author of *Bloody Lowndes* During the twentieth century, black Greek-Letter organizations (BGLOs) united college students dedicated to excellence, fostered kinship, and uplifted African Americans. Members of these organizations include remarkable and influential individuals such as Martin Luther King Jr., Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, novelist Toni Morrison, and Wall Street pioneer Reginald F. Lewis. Despite the profound influence of these groups, many now question the continuing relevance of BGLOs, arguing that their golden age has passed. To foster a greater engagement with the history and contributions of BGLOs, *Black Greek-Letter Organizations in the Twenty-first Century* brings together an impressive group of authors to explore the contributions and continuing possibilities of

BGLOs and their members. Editor Gregory S. Parks and the contributing authors provide historical context for the development of BGLOs, exploring their service activities as well as their relationships with other prominent African American institutions. Both internally and externally, BGLOs struggle to forge a relevant identity for the new century. Internally, these groups wrestle with many issues, including hazing, homophobia, petty intergroup competition, and the difficulty of bridging the divide between college and alumni members. Externally, BGLOs face the challenge of rededicating themselves to their communities and leading an aggressive campaign against modern forms of racism, sexism, and other types of fear-driven behavior. By embracing the history of these organizations and exploring their continuing viability and relevance, *Black Greek-Letter Organizations in the Twenty-first Century* demonstrates that BGLOs can create a positive and enduring future and that their most important work lies ahead.

on the down low: Forgiveness Julia Frazier White, 2010-12-30 *Forgiveness: Learning How to Forgive* by Julia Frazier White is a book for people who have been deeply hurt and caught in a vortex of anger, depression, and resentment. Julia White shares how forgiveness can reduce anxiety and depression while increasing self esteem and hopefulness toward ones future. This fresh new work demonstrates how forgiveness, approached in the correct manner, benefits the forgiver far more than the forgiven. Filled with wisdom and warm encouragement, the book leads the reader on a path that will bring clarity and peace. The act of forgiving is itself an exercise in restoring oneself to wholeness. When a heinous act is committed, sometimes one wonders if forgiveness is even possible. In this ground-breaking book, Dr. White gives us the seven steps that are taken in the forgiveness process. When we forgive, she says, we set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner we set free is us. In an easy-to-read yet astute analysis of the meaning and value of forgiveness, Dr. White teaches the reader that forgiveness is a way of healing. She takes as her model sound biblical principles and outlines the many subtleties involved in forgiveness, such as distinguishing anger from hate, and noting that we only forgive those we blame (including ourselves). Forgetting may be more difficult, but at least *Forgiveness: Learning How to Forgive* can help us along the path toward release and healing.

on the down low: The Routledge Companion to Identity and Consumption Ayalla Ruvio, Russell Belk, 2013-01-04 Tell me what you eat, I'll tell you who you are, said Anthelme Brillat-Savarin. Today, You are what you consume is more apt. Barbara Krueger's ironic twist of Descartes - I shop therefore I am - has lost its irony. Such phrases have become commonplace descriptions of our identity in the contemporary world. In our materialistic world it seems as if there is no debate that our consumption behaviour is fused with our self-identity - shaping it, changing it and often challenging it. The *Routledge Companion to Identity and Consumption* introduces the reader to state-of-the-art research, written by the world's leading scholars regarding the interplay between identity and consumption. The book addresses the diverse issues regarding the ways identity affects our consumption behaviour and vice-versa and in doing so, presents a broad perspective on the dynamics of self-identity and consumption. With chapters discussing the theory, research and practical implications of these dynamics, including the way they change across our life span and their expression within different social, cultural and religious contexts, this book will be a valuable reference source for students and academics from a variety of disciplines.

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