

## ACTIVIST RESOLUTIONS

by *Racialicious* special correspondent [Latoya Peterson](#)



What do you hope to accomplish in 2008?

What do you want to do? What do you want to study?  
What actions do you want to take?

We are not yet half way through the month of December, but resolutions are already on my mind. Heavily into self-evaluation, I tend to make resolutions at New Years and promises to myself on my birthday. I also make career goals and life goals on a regular basis.

However, this year is the first year I will be making activist resolutions. Over the course of 2007, I started blogging for *Racialicious*, started to immerse myself in the blogosphere, spent time honing thoughts and ideas, started researching trends in gentrification, discovered hundreds of great sources for information, started attending the various films and discussion groups over at Busboys and Poets and kept up with the changes going on abroad.

Still, even with all I accomplished, I feel like some things are a bit lacking. So far, all my research goes into blog posts - I would like the research to have a farther reaching effect. And while the blogosphere is great fun, and we have built a great community here, I wonder about taking more steps out in the real world. I also realized I have huge gaps in my knowledge base, which I seriously want to rectify. So, I decided to roll these things into action items.

In 2008, I will...

*...work on myself*

\*I will dust off that old paper I did for a business law class and figure out how to best educate people about the roles of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. There is a lot of misinformation floating around about these institutions and they each have had powerful effects on the rise and fall of nations.

\*I am going to stop saying "Africa." Africa is not a country. It is a continent. Talking about the problems in Africa is not as effective as talking about the problems that currently plague individual countries like Malawi, Zimbabwe, Chad, and Sudan.

\*I am going to continue to study the trends of gentrification as it manifests in each individual region, paying particular attention to New Orleans, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. I will also be searching for mixed-income communities around the nation and how urban planners treat social and environmental issues.

*...work on the world*

\* I am going to get more involved in the gaming industry. I am not sure exactly how I will do this - through writing or through some other means - but I feel like the gaming industry is in the unique position to set the tone of entertainment in the next few years. As such, it would be amazing to see gaming break away from the exclusionary model that Hollywood pioneered and make greater strides toward including people of different backgrounds - both behind the scenes and in the actual gameplay.

\*I am going to reconnect with my city council members to find out what is happening in my community, particularly in reference to urban planning. Montgomery County has been going through an ongoing remodel and I want to get an in-depth understanding of what urban planners do and how they make decisions.

\*To get more involved with youth outreach through the arts. I know people who work in three very different areas and I want to help them all in some way. I have one friend who does youth outreach through hip-hop (music and culture), another who works with Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and the head of my yoga studio has just started a foundation to outreach to young women and women in prisons. All worthy causes that I feel compelled to help with in some way.

So, that's what I plan on doing in 2008.

What about you?