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History 213

**Fighting until Exiled**

The Black Panthers was a group composed of many African American and their biggest fame was being an activist group that resorted to violence if deemed necessary. Picking up the book *Assata* by *Assata Shakur* I learned a lot of the female life in the black panther group, as well as severity it meant to be a *Black Panther* member. JoAnne Deborah Byron better known as Assata Shakur was born in Queens, New York 1947 and lived most of her time there. For some time she lived in North Carolina due to the fact that her parents were going through a divorce. After her parents had figure it out she returned back to New York and later on attended college at Borough of Manhattan Community College and City College of New York. After attending college Assata became a full member of the Black Panther Party (BPP).

The book concentrates mostly on the trial cases she had to endure. Assata Shakur had some charges of robbing banks as well as possession of illegal weapons. The biggest and scariest case was the shooting of a State Trooper. She was charged of 1st degree murder of an officer. Throughout this process Shakur witness hatred within the system, and also lived the harsh struggle of being accused of a crime as a black person in the 1970’s. In the book we see the mistreatment she gets from the whole judicial system. We also see how some of the guards that were black mistreat their own people. Later on Shakur is left alone to work and defend her case with minimal resources. After being locked up for a couple of years, she finally finds a method of escaping, and decided to flee the country. She ends up going to Cuba, where she could get political asylum and not get indicted. Until this day Assata Shakur continues to be in the most wanted list, being accused as a terrorist.

While reading this autobiography, I learned a lot on how she was build as a person and how her up bringing’s really had an affect, which helped her take part in leadership roles. Since early childhood her grandparents brought her up with great morals, and high sense of value of her self. These small anecdotes were fragments of her life that formed a leader. My reason why she is wanted is because she is the face and spokesperson for a demographic of people that demand justice. I believe that she is seemed as a radical for her strong demeanor; however, I believe she has all the right to act the way she is, especially when she is being framed and taking her story and blowing it up out of proportion.