

# Author Delves Deep in Family History for New Book

By Stacy M. Brown

Part of the challenge facing young African-Americans today is that they're unaware of where they came from, according to author Wayne Rudolph Davidson.

Further, young blacks are mostly not sure of who their grandparents are, or, in other cases, they don't know their parents and are being raised by relatives who did not give birth to them.

"In today's society, there are a lot of black males and females incarcerated, so the young ones are being raised by family members and everyone is in survival mode," said Davidson, who has released the book. "Discombobulation: When Clans Collide under the Influence of Urban Renewal, Baby Boomers, Knuckleheads, and Stupidville."

Inside the 508-page book, available at most major retailers like amazon.com, Davidson delves into his family history, which began with his first book in 2013, "When Clans Collide."

"The first book was about my genealogy, where I discovered who and where I came from via my surname and I was able to trace my family tree," Davidson said. "That experience provided me with empowerment because I now knew where I came from."

Davidson traced his roots to the Ashanti people of Ghana. To the Ashanti, the family and the mother's clan are most important, according to Davidson.

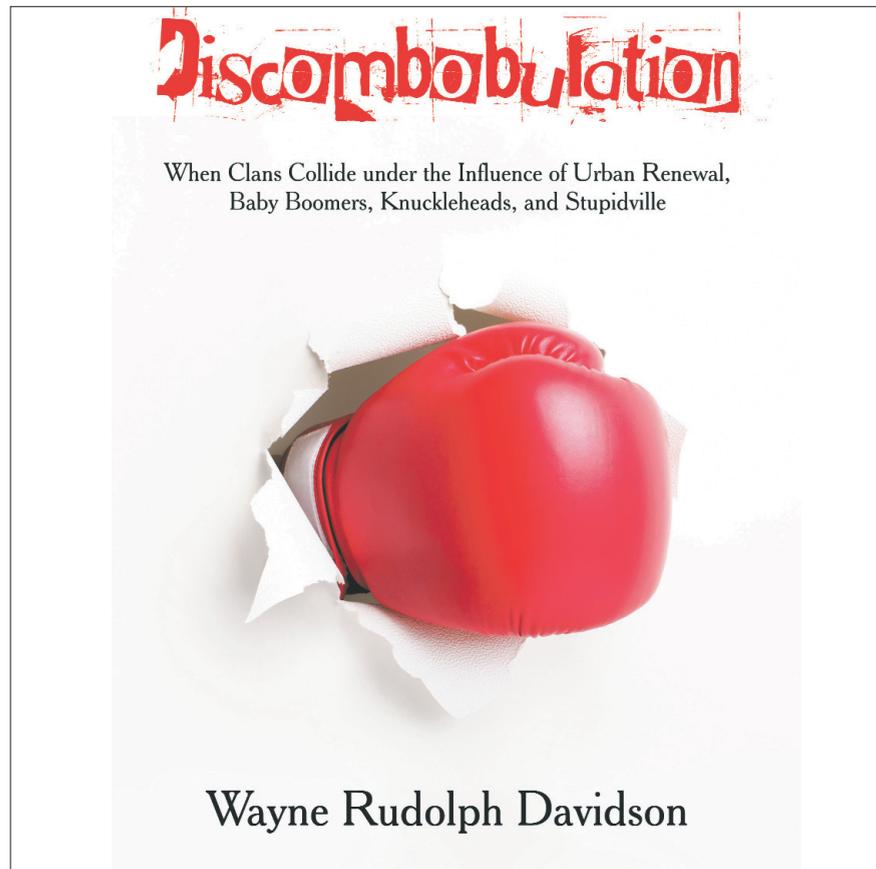
"It's a matriarch driven culture where the mothers control or have a say in everything. Here, in America, it's a patriarch or paternal driven culture, where man dominates the economy and all the decisions," he said.

Those facts are what Davidson says he was deprived of growing up in the Baby Boomer Generation and serving in the United States Army. Now, Davidson better understands his life as an African-American male born in the post-World War II era who was caught in a firestorm of extraordinary social change, civil disturbance and a burgeoning drug culture.

In the book, Davidson describes his life during the migration of African-



Author Wayne Rudolph Davidson



Americans from the rural south to urban centers in the north and many historic events. He blends his family genealogy and his own mistakes and triumphs with

American history, according to one review of his new book.

"I was able to understand how I ended up in the north in places like Cleveland

and Detroit and how my parents had southern values but, at that time, I wasn't able to connect to them," said Davidson, a former autoworker. "It was the industrial age and it was pretty rough. Everything for young black males was geared to becoming bigger and stronger so that we'd become part of the industrial labor force. Everything centered on your being able to go work in the factory."

Davidson writes that understanding the institution of family is important, but for African-Americans to achieve the American dream there must be a shift from a collective focus to an individual focus.

"Once there is discovery of one's own talent, gift or aspiration then share the harvest of discovery with the African-American community so it too can prosper and contribute to the global community," he said.

Davidson also recounts a moment of "discombobulation" after a classmate socked him on the jaw, leaving him bewildered and angry.

These two feelings went on to comprise most of his reactions to events in his life, including his involvement in a neighborhood he dubs "Stupidville," where drugs ran rampant and danger lurked.

Kirkus Reviews notes that Davidson offers abstract descriptions of his interactions in Stupidville, rather than recounting his substance abuse in detail, but his reckless ways led him to blow paychecks earned during stints as a line-man in Detroit car factories and as a general laborer and made him miss the birth of his first daughter.

Davidson finally escaped Stupidville, if not all the habits he learned there, when he joined the military in 1979 at the age of 28.

Later, Davidson earned a Ph.D., became a teacher, and joined the Toastmaster's Club in order to become a practiced public speaker. "Hopefully, the book will be an encouragement to young ones today," he said.