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The Mastery of Form: the blurred line of Black Bourgeoisie & Black Nationalism



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Can we discern the difference between the Black Bourgeoisie & the Black Nationalist?

In July, 2006, I attended ACORNS (Assoc. of Community Organizations, for Reform Now) national convention at the Ohio State University, in Columbus, OH. This was an opportunity for the Democratic Party to build momentum for the upcoming midterm elections, held on Nov. 7th. (As a result of the turn out for this election the balance of power has shifted in favor of the Democrats.) Several political luminaries were invited to speak. One in particular was a certain reverend. While sitting in the banquet hall listening to his speech I could not help but remember a period in the mid 1980s' where he (with bull horn in hand) lambasted the so called Black middle class for its' political irresponsibility, its' materialistic consumerism and its' all too often narrow mindedness when it came to the Human Rights struggle. Because of his ability to speak to the base of suffering for African Americans: racial discrimination, sociopolitical and socioeconomic disenfranchisement. He has reached the pinnacle of National leadership status

(running, as a Democrat, for the '04 Presidential election).

But here's the kicker he, now, benefits from the same political, economic and social capital that he once persecuted fellow Black Bourgeoisie's for pursuing. He basks in the attention of the national spotlight and the weltanschauung that accompanies it. One posits that this is what Fanon meant when he wrote that the militant becomes an informer for the state.

Are the Black Bourgeoisie & the Black Nationalist one and the same?

On one hand the *modus operandi* (italics mine) for the Black Bourgeoisie is to gain entry into mainstream society by way of integration. And when entry is denied in the form of racial discrimination these Negroes remember, revel and return to their Black roots. (More so for self/group preservation than for group identity). The danger is that once civil rights have been restored those in the

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The Mastery of Form: the blurred line of Black Bourgeoisism & Black Nationalism

By Carlton Mc Gee

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*"... we are bombarded
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Carlton Mc Gee*

group immediately return to their ideological position: protect and maintain the status quo-the existing state of affairs. For its' troubles the Black Bourgeoisie is an enigma wrapped in a riddle: What group exist in a state of isolation? Rejected by whites whose behavior they adore while rejecting their black brothers and sisters whose behavior they abhor.

While on the other hand the Black Nationalists agenda is to function independently under systemic oppressive conditions, i.e., control of its' economic, political and social capital. A sort of uncompromising co-opt. But some Black Nationalist practices what Spencer calls the *mastery of form*-displaying an outer Black Nationalism while salvaging an inner Black Bourgeoisism. This is more dangerous than the Black Bourgeoisies' fakeness because some Black Nationalist speak the language of the oppressed; they seem to understand the trauma of racial hatred, the hardship of economic exploitation and the embarrassment of social degradation. But sadly we do not get solutions from

some of our nationalistic scholars. Instead we are bombarded with speeches that emotionally rile up the Black populace and four hour lectures at \$50.00 a pop, on African history. (One is not writing that Black Nationalist can not earn a buck, but when did our history become a commodity? Forgive my cynicism I know the money is going towards the funding of independent schools.) And unfortunately for some of our Black Nationalists their historical contribution emerges in the form of rhetorical masturbation-it sounds good, and it makes one feel good but in the final analysis nothing of substance has come of it.

In Conclusion

It seems that more African Americans are buying into the persuasive funkiness of multiculturalism thus making it difficult to discern the difference between the Black Bourgeoisie and the Black Nationalist. But in spite of this we can take solace in the fact that our history, African history holds the answers to dissecting and detecting the truth. But we must study.

And in doing so we learn that the true African Nationalist is beyond narrow mindedness, beyond scholarly arrogance and beyond intellectual masturbation; the true African Nationalist looks at the oppressive condition of African and New World African (African Americans) people and he/she feels that it is their responsibility to discover, develop and implement solutions to ameliorate the condition of African people, by any means necessary.

Carlton Mc Gee is the Founder/C.E.O. of the African Images Institute, Inc. He is the author of Conversations @Ujumaa: Essays of Politics, Classism, Black Nationalism (Adams Press, 2005) & he is also an International Human Rights Activist. He is a guest columnist for the Human Rights Review.



Al Sharpton (right)

Afrikan Restoration by Nko Uhuru

Volume 1

AFRIKAN RESTORATION
(A HUMAN RIGHTS CONCEPT)

AFRIKAN RESTORATION IS NOT A SUBJECT THAT IS DISCUSSED ENOUGH. SO THAT ALL THOSE THAT HEAR IT WILL HAVE AN EQUAL LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING. WHAT I MEAN IS, IT WOULD BE HARD TO AGREE ON WHAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS ARE IN THE AFRIKAN COMMUNITY. WHEN I SAY AFRIKAN COMMUNITY I MEAN HERE IN AMERICA, ON THE CONTINENT AND WORLD WIDE.

SO WE MUST LOOK AT THE WHOLE SITUATION, FROM BEGINNING TO END. WHAT TYPE OF LIFE DID OUR ANCESTORS HAVE IN AFRICA? WERE THEY HAPPY, HEALTHY AND WELL FED.? DID THEY HAVE EDUCATION SYSTEMS? DID THEY HAVE HOMES. DID ALL AFRIKANS PARTICIPATE IN THE SLAVE TRADE OR JUST A FEW? HOW WERE THE SLAVES IN AFRIKA TREATED, WERE THEY TORTURED, RAPED OR HUNG? OF MOST IMPORTANTANCE IS DID WE AFRIKANS HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CREATOR OF ALL. WHAT DID WE KNOW?

WITHOUT SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND WHO WE AS AFRIKANS ARE, WHAT HAPPENED TO US AND WHAT'S GOING ON TODAY? WE START TO HAVE WRONG CONCEPTS ABOUT OUR SOLUTIONS.

WE KNOW THAT AFRIKAN PEOPLE HAVE COME UP WITH SOLUTIONS BEFORE NOW, BUT IT WAS THE ONES THAT GOT IMPLEMENTED. THAT WAS THE PROBLEM.

SO LET'S GO BACK TO THE EARLY 1800'S. WHILE NAT TURNER WAS FIGHTING A WAR IN VIRGINIA. NEGRO RACE FIRST PEOPLE WERE HAVING CONVENTIONS AND CELEBRATIONS. THE TWO GROUPS HAD TWO DIFFERENT SOLUTIONS, WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK WORKS THE BEST. HOW ABOUT MARCUS

GARVEY AND BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, OR MARTIN AND MALCOLM.

WE CAN ONLY BEGIN TO RESTORE OURSELVES. WHEN WE ALL TAKE A PART IN WANTING TO KNOW WHO WE ARE.

WHAT INFORMATION DO WE HAVE ON THEIR DAY THAT WILL HELP US MAKE BETTER DECISIONS TODAY? NOW, IF WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT THOSE BROTHERS AND ALSO THE MANY SISTERS, WHO PAVED THE WAY. WHAT THEY FOUGHT FOR. WHAT WERE THEIR GOALS? DID THEY ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS? IF NOT, WHAT HAPPENED TO STOP THEIR GOALS?

THIS IS WHEN YOU START TO DISCOVER THAT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG. FIRST: AFRIKAN PEOPLE WERE HERE BEFORE AND WHEN THE EUROPEANS GOT HERE. AGREEMENTS WERE MADE AND THE EUROPEANS (WHITES) BROKE THEM. AFRIKAN PEOPLE WORKED HARD AS SLAVES WHICH MADE AMERICANS RICH. WE STILL GOT WHIPPED, RAPED, KILLED AND NO PAY. AFRIKAN PEOPLE FOUGHT IN EVERY WAR AND ON EVERY EUROPEAN SIDE (SPANISH, FRENCH, ENGLISH AND AMERICAN) UP TO THIS DAY AND STILL GETS NO RESPECT. 39 SHOTS IN A HALL WAY. 50 SHOTS IN A CAR.

WHAT DO WE GET FOR OUR BLOODSHED? MORE POVERTY AND DEATH. WHAT DO WE GET FOR OUR TAXES: MORE POVERTY AND DEATH? WE ASK WHY.

THE ANSWER IS THEY DON'T RESPECT US AS HUMAN BEINGS. ONE, BECAUSE THEY NEVER HAD TO. TWO, WE NEVER CAME TOGETHER TO MAKE EM RESPECT US. SO WHY DON'T WE COME TOGETHER.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS. MORE NEXT TIME.

ZALANGO,

NKO UHURU

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BET's Bob Johnson Slips Deeper In Bed With New World Order

- by Del Jones aka Nana Kuntu, The War Correspondent

Ancestor Del
Jones aka
Nana Kuntu and
Sistah Q



*"The leadership of
the group are
members of secret
orders that operate
the NWO. Senior
Bush alone belongs
to "Skull and
Bones" — Del Jones*



Former owner of BET tv
station, Bob Johnson

Bob Johnson former owner and CEO of Black Entertainment Television has become involved with the deadly Carlyle group that is a major player in deadly genocidal New World Order (NWO).

The Group is headed by former members and Washington Insiders who are making billions from the war in Iraq and the crimes that are causing the lives and exploitation of the people of this planet. Who are some of their key figures that help guarantee the hustle of the world resources continue?

Leading the pack is President Bush's father who is former United States President, Vice President and Former Director of the CIA George Bush Sr. (how's that for an inside track on contracts etc.)? But they also have

In their piece "The ex-presidents' club" printed in The Guardian Oliver Burkeman and Julian Borger had this to say about Carlyle:

It is hard to imagine an address closer to the heart of American power. The offices of the Carlyle Group are on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC, midway between the White House and the Capitol building, and within a stone's throw of the headquarters of the FBI and numerous government departments. The address reflects Carlyle's position at the very center of the Washington establishment ... But since the start of the "war on terrorism", the firm - unofficially valued at \$13.5 billion - has taken on an added significance. Carlyle has become the thread which indirectly links American military policy in Afghanistan to the personal

financial fortunes of its celebrity employees, not least the current president's father. And, until earlier this month, Carlyle provided

another curious link to the Afghan crisis: among the firm's multi-million-dollar investors were members of the family of Osama bin Laden.

Now Bob Johnson is a insider controlled by Carlyle Group. He can not be their friend and yours too. the powerful group is at the center of Amerikkka's power base and operate in a fashion consistent to the aims of the NWO. All of this can explain the programming at BET under Johnson, which damaged and undermined the needs of his people.

Let me explain this. the Culture Bandits key weapon against us is the destruction and control of our culture and our image both globally and our self image. BET always perpetuated the negative aspects of our culture with weapon such as their backward sex orientated videos for our children and the negative shows like "Comicview" the kept Black humor in the gutter as it created a whole legion of backward childish comics to dumb us all down.

In addition, the perpetuation of slimmey middle class values and antiquated civil rights theme', news perspectives as the people in the 'Hood were being plowed under by white supremacy. None of these criticisms are new to Bob Johnson, however they roll of his back as he continue to use BET and the Bobcats NBA basketball franchise to boost his image when in fact he is a deadly sources operating with the enemies of our people. Let's look deeper into the Carlyle Group. In 2002 Dan Briody author of "The Iron Triangle" a book the group wrote this in a article called "Carlyle's Way:"

Like everyone else in the United States, the group stood transfixed as the events of September 11 unfolded. Present were former secretary of defense Frank Carlucci, former

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secretary of state James Baker III, and representatives of the bin Laden family. This was not some underground presidential bunker or Central Intelligence Agency interrogation room. It was the Ritz-Carlton in Washington, D.C., the plush setting for the annual investor conference of one of the most powerful, well-connected, and secretive companies in the world: the Carlyle Group. And since September 11, this little-known company has become unexpectedly important...

And as the Carlyle investors watched the World Trade towers go down, the group's prospects went up. In running what its own marketing literature spookily calls "a vast, interlocking, global network of businesses and investment professionals" that operates within the so-called iron triangle of industry, government, and the military, the Carlyle Group leaves itself open to any number of conflicts of interest and stunning ironies. For example, it is hard to ignore the fact that Osama bin Laden's family members, who renounced their son ten years ago, stood to gain financially from the war being waged against him until late October, when public criticism of the relationship forced them to liquidate their holdings in the firm. Or consider that U.S. president George W. Bush is in a position to make budgetary decisions that could pad his father's bank account. But for the Carlyle Group, walking that narrow line is the art of doing business at the murky intersection of Washington politics, national security, and private capital; mastering it has enabled the group to amass \$12 billion in funds under management.

These are the people Bob Johnson now is in bed with or is this just another assignment for Johnson. The leadership of the group are members of secret orders that operate the NWO. Senior Bush alone belongs to "Skull and Bones" and David Rockefeller's deadly "Trilateral Commission" both enemies of African people. Dan Wilchins and Michael Flaherty offered this through Reuters News Agency:

Robert Johnson, founder of Black Entertainment Television, said on Tuesday he was forming a private equity fund manager with Carlyle Group, the latest step in Johnson's efforts to build the largest African-American owned asset management company in the United States. Private equity is an increasingly crowded field... And African-American asset managers that perform well could be able to win more and more business from investors and public pension funds looking for minority fund managers, Johnson said.

The fund will be a long-term venture and will be managed by one of the largest teams of African-American professionals in the private equity community, Johnson said. "My philosophy is when I see business sectors not yet effectively penetrated by African Americans, I ask myself why is that, and how can I change it," he said. RLJ Cos., Johnson's holding company, has signed a letter of intent with Carlyle, the world's largest private equity firm, to invest in mid-sized private companies in the media, financial services and business services industries. Carlyle-RLJ's first fund aims to be more than \$500 million, and will make investments in the \$10 million to \$40 million range, Johnson said. Carlyle will provide seed capital for RLJ.

Some Negroes will applaud Johnson and his inter-connections and inter-actions with the same business apparatus that brought us slavery and now genocide as the Black Holocaust continues. But those of us who know better over-stand that Johnson's collaboration with our exploiters is an act of treason. There is a major difference between self-determination and economic liberation and being the minority front man for the New World Order. Johnson isn't finished, the Reuters' piece also revealed that:

Last month, Johnson said he planned to form a company with Deutsche Asset Management that would develop funds of hedge funds. Deutsche Asset Management is Deutsche Bank AG's fund management arm.

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"Johnson is the status quo, now you should understand why BET was such a poor excuse for a Black station."—Del Jones

Johnson sold BET to Viacom Inc. in 2001 for \$3 billion. His holding company owns a hotel real estate investment company, the Charlotte Bobcats professional basketball team, and Rollover Systems, which provides retirement plan rollover services.

Johnson is the status quo, now you should understand why BET was such a poor excuse for a Black station. He demonstrated to the bigboys that he was harmless and ready and willing to be used as their minority front man. Last man we seen so entangled publicly with our enemies was Ron Brown and they blew his ass up... Holla!

Del Jones (Nana Kuntu) — the War Correspondent
www.whattheproblemis.com

A Strong Black Cup of Coffee

By Kim E. Gordon

"...Malcolm X used café au lait as an ... by stating that when coffee is too black, or too strong, you integrate it with cream...and what used to wake you up now puts you to sleep..." Kim E. Gordon

Café, mocha, java, cappuccino, perk, demitasse, mud, ink, latte, café au lait. "A dark-brown, aromatic drink made by brewing in water the roasted and ground beanlike seeds of a tall tropical shrub (genus *Coffea*) of the madder family."¹ Coffee. A simple plant that is "...the world's second most valuable exported legal commodity on earth (after oil), providing the largest jolt of the world's most widely taken psychoactive drug."² There is no doubt about the tremendous impact this pungent drink has had on the world, especially to those of us who just can't

get going until we have that first cup of joe. But, with its long history, is there more to coffee than meets the eye? What about the word, itself? Could it provide a clue to aid a researcher in Black genealogy?

Noted African-American historian, J. A. Rogers, summed it up by saying, "The word, 'coffee,' comes from Caffa (Kaffa), Ethiopia, where it was first used and where it still grows wild."³ Most histories of the beverage readily acknowledge its African roots.

In fact, the most common story told is that of a 9th century C.E. Ethiopian goatherd named Kaldi who

discovered coffee. But, with its long history, is there more to coffee than meets the eye? What about the word, itself? Could it provide a clue to aid a researcher in Black genealogy? Simply put, the coffee bean comes from Ethiopia, and the similarity of the words "coffee" and "Caffa" or "Kaffa" would indicate that the plant took its name from the place of its discovery.

So, let's turn to some popular dictionaries and see what Mr. Webster and friends have to say about the matter. The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary,⁴ typical of most dictionaries, says "coffee" is derived from the Italian word, *caffè*, which is



A Strong Black Cup of Coffee

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derived from the Turkish word, *kahve*, which is derived from the Arabic word, *qahwa*...all of which mean, well, “coffee.” No deeper meaning; no original meaning is found. Three choices, none of them related to Ethiopia; leaving one to think that Africans discovered it while others named it. Webster’s 9th Collegiate Dictionary.⁵ which also gives the date a word first came into usage, provides us with the same three choices but it does give us a date the word first appeared in printed records: 1598 C.E. And one older dictionary even suggests the word “coffee” comes from the French word, *café*, which is a place where coffee is served.

At last, in the new millennium, Webster’s New World College Dictionary gives a passing nod to what J. A. Rogers knew. This time, the Italian, Turkish, and Arabic words are followed by a note: “...said to be (named) after Kaffa, area in Ethiopia, home of the plant.”⁶

So, what does any of this have to do with the price of tea in China? Well, for the next piece of the puzzle, we turn to another historian, Cheikh Anta

Diop. In Precolonial Black Africa, Diop does much to document and explain the customs, traditions, politics and social structure of ancient Africa. It is here that we find an explanation of naming practices, caste systems, and finding one’s place in the ancient world. In African society, one’s place seems to have been pre-determined by birth, as the division and specialization of labor led to the hereditary passing down of trades among clans and kin-groups. Looking at totemic names, “...all those who practice the same trade, all those who belong to the same caste, are of the same totemic clan.”⁷

In older, powerful city-states such as Mali and Songhay (whose capital was Timbuktu), a person’s clan name told about his or her future in that it showed the particular trade or skill the person had chosen to be born into. And agriculture, above all, was considered “...a sacred activity.”⁸ “According to the current beliefs, a subject from outside a trade, even if he acquired all the skills and science of a calling which was not that of his family, would not be able to practice it efficiently, in the mystical sense, because it was not his ancestors who

concluded the initial contract with the spirit who had originally taught it to humanity.”⁹

In other words, the fact that you were born into a family of silversmiths, for example, would indicate your eventual destiny as a silversmith, and your clan name would reflect not only your fated occupation, but your social standing as well. It would be unthinkable to select a different occupation as your name would show your soul selected this family for the express purpose of becoming a silversmith. This was your lineage; you possessed the innate talent for such a career.

Putting this all together, could it be that the word “coffee,” coming as it did from Kaffa, was used as a totemic name reflecting the local clan’s occupation as coffee-growers and coffee-tenders in ancient Ethiopia? And is it possible this name was carried on slave ships across the ocean, managing to survive in the Americas as the variations of Coffey, Coffie, Cuffe, Cuff, and similar names? One of the great frustrations in researching African-American roots has always been the belief that all cultural ties to Africa were severed with the centuries-

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long practice of slavery. Those researching Native American roots run into the same problem. Yet, if you scratch the surface of our amalgamated nation, you'll find many examples of ethnic words, names, customs, and traditions that have endured and are woven into the brilliant tapestry of our world. You just have to be willing to look beyond the ordinary, to question the "authorities," and to do your research.

I must mention that there is an Irish surname of Coffey which derives from the Irish name, O' Chobhthaigh, but this is not an adequate explanation for the number of people of African-American descent who hold the name. And while some newly-freed slaves did take their former masters' surnames, and could have taken the Irish Coffey name, there are numerous instances in which the appearance of the name was a complete mystery, especially as it occurred prior to Emancipation. In fact, the name Cuff (Cuffe) was a popular one during slavery. This has caused some truly bizarre speculations as to the origin of the name, such as the ridiculous notion that the person was named Cuff because he was handcuffed a lot.

The phrase, "a strong, black cup of coffee," has become a popular metaphor for an invigorating experience; something that delivers a powerful jolt of comprehension,

*"the Lynch speech was
popularized at the
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DC) on October 16,
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Louis Farrakhan." —
Mammi Ampim*

awakening one to the truth. Malcolm X used café au lait as an analogy for the introduction of Caucasians into the "Negro Revolution" (thereby diffusing some of its militancy) by stating that when coffee is too black, or too strong, you integrate it with cream...and what used to wake you up now puts you to sleep.¹⁰ This humble bean that holds so much of the globe in its powerful grasp and has played such an important role in the political and economic development, even enslavement, of nations, has been known by many different names throughout the world. Yet, there remains only one word that is at the core. Therefore, while the Russians might call it *kófe* because they were introduced to it by the Germans who call it *chaube* because they were introduced to it by the French who call it *café*, and so forth, eventually the pot boils down to its primary ingredient. This brings us back to the bean's place of origin and the people who discovered it.

So, if you are a Coffey, Coffie, Cuffe, or Cuff, you just might have a clue as to your ancestors' trade in Africa, as well as a potential area from which your ancestors came. Could you trace your lineage to that noble profession of coffee-growers in the cradle of civilization, Ethiopia? It's possible. At least this produces some grounds for speculation.

And, if you're not a Coffey, don't despair. After all, if one name could survive the culture-stripping horrors of slavery, couldn't there be more? Look to the surnames in the branches of your own family tree. You never know what tasty treats you just might find hanging there!

Notes:

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- ¹ Webster's New World College Dictionary, 4th Edition, Webster's New World, May, 2000.
- ² Pendergrast, Mark, Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How it Transformed Our World, Basic Books, 1999, p. xv.
- ³ Rogers, J. A., 100 Amazing Facts About the Negro. With Complete Proof, Helga M. Rogers, 1995, pp. 11, 26.
- ⁴ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th Edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1993.
- ⁵ Webster's 9th Collegiate Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1990.
- ⁶ Webster's New World College Dictionary, 4th Edition, Webster's New World, May, 2000.
- ⁷ Diop, Cheikh Anta, Precolonial Black Africa, Lawrence Hill Books, 1987, p. 7.
- ⁸ Ibid, p. 1.
- ⁹ Ibid, p. 8.
- ¹⁰ Malcolm X, "Message to the Grassroots," speech delivered on November 10, 1963 in Detroit, MI

- - - Kim E. Gordon



Death of the Willie Lynch Speech

By Professor Manu Ampim

Since 1995 there has been much attention given to a speech claimed to be delivered by a "William Lynch" in 1712. This speech has been promoted widely throughout African American and Black British circles. It is re-printed on numerous websites, discussed in chat rooms, forwarded as a "did you know" email to friends and family members, assigned as required readings in college and high school courses, promoted at conferences, and there are several books published with the title of "Willie Lynch." [1] In addition, new terminology called the "Willie Lynch Syndrome" has been devised to explain the psychological problems and the disunity among Black people.

Further, it is naively assumed by a large number of Willie Lynch believers that this single and isolated speech, allegedly given almost 300 years ago, completely explains the internal problems and divisions within the African American community. They assume that the "Willie Lynch Syndrome" explains Black disunity and the psychological trauma of slavery. While some have questioned and even dismissed this speech from the outset, it is fair to say that most African Americans who are aware of the speech have not questioned its authenticity, and assume it to be a legitimate and very crucial historical document which explains what has happened to African Americans.

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However, when we examine the details of the “Willie Lynch Speech” and its assumed influence, then it becomes clear that the belief in its authenticity and widespread adoption during the slavery era is nothing more than a modern myth. In this brief examination, I will show that the only known “William Lynch” was born three decades after the alleged speech, that the only known “William Lynch” did not own a plantation in the West Indies, that the “speech” was not mentioned by *anyone* in the 18th or 19th centuries, and that the “speech” itself clearly indicates that it was composed in the late 20th century.

SILENCE ON LYNCH SPEECH

The “Willie Lynch Speech” is not mentioned by *any* 18th or 19th century slavemasters or anti-slavery activists. There is a large body of written materials from the slavery era, yet there is not one reference to a William Lynch speech given in 1712. This is very curious because both free and enslaved African Americans wrote and spoke about the tactics and practices of white slavemasters. Frederick Douglass, Nat Turner, Olaudah Equino, David Walker, Maria Stewart, Martin Delaney, Henry Highland Garnet, Richard Allen, Absalom Jones, Frances Harper, William Wells Brown, and Robert Purvis were African Americans who initiated various efforts to rise up against the slave system, yet none cited the alleged Lynch speech. Also, there is not a single reference to the Lynch speech by any white abolitionists, including John Brown, William Lloyd Garrison, and Wendell Phillips. Similarly, there has been no evidence found of slavemasters or pro-slavery advocates referring to (not to mention utilizing) the specific divide and rule information given in the Lynch speech.

Likewise, none of the most credible historians on the enslavement of African Americans have ever mentioned the Lynch speech in *any* of their writings. A reference to the Lynch speech and its alleged divide and rule tactics are completely missing in the works of Benjamin Quarles, John Hope Franklin, John Henrik Clarke, William E.B. Du Bois, Herbert Aptheker, Kenneth Stampp, John Blassingame, Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, Darlene Clark-Hine, and Lerone Bennett. These authors have studied the details and dynamics of Black social life and relations during slavery, as well as the “machinery of control” by the slavemasters, yet none made a single reference to a Lynch speech.

Since the Willie Lynch speech was not mentioned by any slavemasters, pro-slavery advocates, abolitionists, or historians studying the slavery era, the question of course is when did it appear?

FIRST REFERENCE TO LYNCH SPEECH

The first reference to the Willie Lynch speech was in a late 1993 on-line listing of sources, posted by Anne Taylor, who was then the reference librarian at the University of Missouri at St. Louis (UMSL). [2] She posted ten sources to the UMSL library database and the Lynch speech was the last item in the listing. Taylor in her 1995 email exchanges with the late Dr. William Piersen (Professor of History, Fisk University) and others interested in the origin of the Lynch speech indicated that she keep the source from where she received the speech anonymous upon request, because he was unable to establish the authenticity of the document. On October 31, 1995, Taylor wrote:

“Enough butt-covering, now it’s time to talk about where I got it. The publisher who gave me this [speech] wanted to remain anonymous...because he couldn’t trace it, either, and until now

Death of the Willie Lynch Speech

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I've honored his wishes. It was printed in a local, widely-distributed, free publication called *The St. Louis Black Pages*, 9th anniversary edition, 1994*, page 8."

[*Taylor notes: "At risk of talking down to you, it's not unusual for printed materials to be 'post-dated' – the 1994 edition came out in 1993]. [3]

The Lynch speech was distributed in the Black community in 1993 and 1994, and in fact I came across it during this time period, but as an historian trained in Africana Studies and primary research I never took it serious. I simply read it and put it in a file somewhere.

However, the Lynch speech was popularized at the Million Man March (held in Washington, DC) on October 16, 1995, when it was referred to by Min. Louis Farrakhan. He stated:

We, as a people who have been fractured, divided and destroyed because of our division, now must move toward a perfect union. Let's look at a speech, delivered by a white slave holder on the banks of the James River in 1712... Listen to what he said. He said, 'In my bag, I have a foolproof method of controlling Black slaves. I guarantee everyone of you, if installed correctly, it will control the slaves for at least 300 years'... So spoke Willie Lynch 283 years ago."

The 1995 Million Man March was broadcast live on C-Span television and thus millions of people throughout the U.S. and the world heard about the alleged Willie Lynch speech for the first time. Now, ten years later, the speech has become extremely popular, although many historians and critical thinkers questioned this strange and unique document from the outset.

*"it may be a
simple play on
words: "Will
Lynch," or
"Will he
Lynch.""" —
Manu Ampim*

Full Text of the alleged Willie Lynch Speech, 1712:

"Gentlemen, I greet you here on the bank of the James River in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and twelve. First, I shall thank you, the gentlemen of the Colony of Virginia, for bringing me here. I am here to help you solve some of your problems with slaves. Your invitation reached me on my modest plantation in the West Indies where I have experimented with some of the newest and still the oldest methods of control of slaves.

Ancient Rome would envy us if my program were implemented. As our boat sailed south on the James River, named for our illustrious King, whose version of the Bible we cherish, I saw enough to know that your problem is not unique. While Rome used cords of woods as crosses for standing human bodies along its highways in great numbers you are here using the tree and the rope on occasion.

I caught the whiff of a dead slave hanging from a tree a couple of miles back. You are not only losing a valuable stock by hangings, you are having uprisings, slaves are running away, your crops are sometimes left in the fields too long for maximum profit, you suffer occasional fires, your animals are killed.

Gentlemen, you know what your problems are: I do not need to elaborate. I am not here to enumerate your problems, I am here to introduce you to a method of solving them. In my bag here, I have a fool proof method for controlling your Black slaves. I guarantee everyone of you that if installed correctly it will control the slaves for at least 300 hundred years [sic]. My method is simple. Any member of your family or your overseer can use it.

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I have outlined a number of differences among the slaves: and I take these differences and make them bigger. I use fear, distrust, and envy for control purposes. These methods have worked on my modest plantation in the West Indies and it will work throughout the South. Take this simple little list of differences, and think about them.

On top of my list is 'Age', but it is there only because it starts with an 'A': the second is 'Color' or shade, there is intelligence, size, sex, size of plantations, status on plantation, attitude of owners, whether the slave live in the valley, on hill, East, West, North, South, have fine hair, coarse hair, or is tall or short. Now that you have a list of differences. I shall give you an outline of action-but before that I shall assure you that distrust is stronger than trust and envy is stronger than adulation, respect, or admiration.

The Black slave after receiving this indoctrination shall carry on and will become self re-fueling and self generating for hundreds of years, maybe thousands. Don't forget you must pitch the old Black male vs. the young Black male, and the young Black male against the old Black male. You must use the dark skin slaves vs. the light skin slaves and the light skin slaves vs. the dark skin slaves. You must use the female vs. the male, and the male vs. the female. You must also have your white servants and overseers distrust all Blacks, but it is necessary that your slaves trust and depend on us. They must love, respect and trust only us.

Gentlemen, these kits are your keys to control. Use them. Have your wives and children use them, never miss an opportunity. If used intensely for one year, the slaves themselves will remain perpetually distrustful. Thank you, gentlemen."

*"It is ludicrous
to give god-like
powers to one
white man..."—
Manu Ampim*

WHO WAS WILLIE LYNCH ?

The only known "William Lynch" who could have authorized a 1712 speech in Virginia was born 30 years after the alleged speech was given. The only known "William Lynch" lived from 1742-1820 and was from Pittsylvania, Virginia. It is obvious that "William Lynch" could not have authored a document 30 years before he was born! This "William Lynch" never owned a plantation in the West Indies, and he did not own a slave plantation in Virginia.

DIVIDE & RULE

The Lynch speech lists a number of *divide and rule* tactics that were not important concerns to slaveholders in the early 1700s, and they certainly were not adopted. The anonymous writer of the Lynch speech states, "I have outlined a number of differences among the slaves: and I take these differences and make them bigger." Here is the list provided in the Lynch speech: age, color, intelligence, fine hair vs. coarse hair, tall vs. short, male vs. female.

However, none of these "tactics" were concerns to slaveholders in the early 1700s in the West Indies or colonial America. No credible historian has indicated that any of the items on the Lynch list were a part of a *divide and rule* strategy in the early 18th century. These are current 20th century divisions and

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concerns. Here are the Lynch speech tactics versus the real *divide and rule* tactics that were actually used in the early 18th century:

DIVIDE & RULE TACTICS

LYNCH SPEECH vs. HISTORICAL FACTS

Age	Ethnic origin & language
Color (light vs. dark skin)	African born vs. American born
Intelligence	Occupation (house vs. field slave)
Fine hair vs. coarse hair	Reward system for "good" behavior
Tall vs. short	Class status
Male vs. female	Outlawed social gatherings

It is certain that "Willie Lynch" did not use his *divide and rule* tactics on his "modest plantation in the West Indies."

20th CENTURY TERMS IN LYNCH SPEECH

There are a number of terms in the alleged 1712 Lynch speech that are undoubtedly *anachronisms* (i.e. words that are out of their proper historical time period). Here are a few of the words in the speech that were not used until the 20th century:

Lynch speech: "In my bag here, I have a **fool proof** method for controlling your **Black** slaves."

Anachronisms: "Fool proof" and "Black" with an upper-case "B" to refer to people of African descent are of 20th century origin. Capitalizing "Black" did not become a standard from of writing until the late 1960s.

Lynch speech: "The Black slave after receiving this indoctrination shall carry on and will become **self re-fueling** and self generating for hundreds of years."

Anachronism: "Re-fueling" is a 20th century term which refers to transportation.

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OTHER STRANGE FEATURES

- William Lynch is invited from the “West Indies” (with no specific country indicated) to give only a short eight-paragraph speech. The cost of such a trip would have been considerable, and for the invited speaker to give only general remarks would have been highly unlikely.
- Lynch never thanked the specific host of his speech, he only thanked “the gentlemen of the Colony of Virginia, for bringing me here.” Here, he is rude and shows a lack of etiquette. Also, no specific *location* for the speech was stated, only that he was speaking “on the bank [sic] of the James River.”
- Lynch claims that on his journey to give the speech he saw “a dead slave hanging from a tree.” This is highly unlikely because lynching African Americans from trees did not become common until the late 19th century.
- Lynch claims that his method of control will work for “at least 300 hundred years [sic].” First, it has gone unnoticed that the modern writer of the “speech” wrote three hundred twice (“300 hundred years”), which makes no grammatical sense. It should be “300 years” or “three hundred years.” Second, the arbitrary choice of 300 years is interesting because it happens to conveniently bring us to the present time.
- Lynch claims that his method of control “will work throughout the *South*.” This statement clearly shows the modern writer’s historical ignorance. In 1712, there was no region in the current-day U.S. identified as the “South.” The geographical region of the “South” did not become distinct until a century after the alleged speech. Before the American Revolutionary War vs. Britain (1775-1783) the 13 original U.S. colonies were *all* slaveholding regions, and most of these colonies were in what later became the North, not the “South.” In fact, the region with the second largest slave population during the time of the alleged William Lynch speech was the *northern* city of New York, where there were a significant number of slave revolts including the rebellion in 1712.
- Lynch fails to give “an outline of action” for control as he promised in his speech. He only gives a “simple little list of differences” among “Black slaves.”

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- Lynch lists his differences by alphabetical order, he states: "On top of my list is 'Age', but it is there only because it starts with an 'A'." Yet, after the first two differences ("age" and "color"), Lynch's list is anything but alphabetical.
- Lynch spells "color" in the American form instead of the British form ("colour"). We are led to believe that Lynch was a British slaveowner in the "West Indies," yet he does not write in British style.
- Lastly, the name *Willie Lynch* is interesting, as it may be a simple play on words: "Will Lynch," or "Will he Lynch." This may be a modern psychological game being played on unsuspecting believers?

WHO WROTE THE LYNCH SPEECH?

It is clear that the "Willie Lynch Speech" is a late 20th century invention because of the numerous reasons outlined in this essay. I would advance that the likely candidate for such a superficial speech is an African American male in the 20s-30s age range, who probably minored in Black Studies in college. He had a limited knowledge of 18th century America, but unfortunately he fooled many uncritical Black people.

Some people argue that it doesn't matter if the speech is fact or fiction, because white people did use tactics to divide us. Of course tactics were used but what advocates of this argument don't understand is that African people will not solve our problems and address the real issues confronting us by adopting half-baked urban myths. If there are people who know that the Lynch speech is fictional, yet continue to promote it in order to "wake us up," then we should be very suspicious of these people, who lack integrity and will openly violate trust and willingly lie to our community.

Even if the Willie Lynch mythology were true, the speech is focused on *what white slaveholders were doing, and there is no plan, program, or any agenda items for Black people to implement*. It is ludicrous to give god-like powers to one white man who allegedly gave a single speech almost 300 years ago, and claim that this is the main reason why Black people have problems among ourselves today! Unfortunately, too often Black people would rather believe a simple and convenient myth, rather than spend the time studying and understanding a situation. Too many of our people want a one-page, simplified Ripley's Believe It or Not explanation of "what happened."

WILLIE LYNCH DISTRACTION

While we are distracted by the Willie Lynch urban mythology, the real issues go ignored. There are a number of authentic first-hand written accounts by enslaved Africans, who wrote specifically about the slave conditions and

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the slavemasters' system of control. For example, writers such as Olaudah Equiano, Mahommah Baquaqua, and Frederick Douglass wrote penetrating accounts about the tactics of slave control.

Frederick Douglass, for instance, wrote in his autobiography, *Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass*, that one of the most diabolical tactics of the American slaveholders was to force the slave workers during their six days off for the Christmas holiday to drink themselves into a drunken stupor and forget about the pain of slavery. Douglass wrote, "It was deemed a disgrace not to get drunk at Christmas; and he was regarded as lazy indeed, who had not provided himself with the necessary means, during the year, to get whiskey enough to last him through Christmas. From what I know of the effects of these holidays upon the slave, I believe them to be the most effective means in the hands of the slaveholder in keeping down the spirit of insurrection. Were the slaveholders at once to abandon this practice, I have not the slightest doubt it would lead to an immediate insurrection among the slaves.... The holidays are part and parcel of the gross fraud, wrong, and inhumanity of slavery." [4]

Also, many nineteenth century Black writers discussed the specific tactics of the white slaveowners and how they used Christianity to teach the enslaved Africans how to be docile and accept their slave status. The problem with African American and Black British revelry during the Christmas holidays and the blind acceptance of the master's version of Christianity are no doubt major issues among Black people today. It is certain that both of these problems were initiated and perpetuated during slavery, and they require our immediate attention.

Many people who embrace the Willie Lynch myth have not studied the period of slavery, and have not read the major works or first-hand documents on this issue of African American slavery. Further, as indicated above, the Lynch hoax is so widespread that this fictional speech is amazingly used as required reading by some college instructors. While we are being misled by this fantasy, the real historical data is being ignored. For example, Kenneth Stampp in his important work on slavery in the American South, *The Peculiar Institution* (1956), uses the historical records to outline the 5 rules for making a slave:

1. Maintain strict discipline.
2. Instill belief of personal inferiority.
3. Develop awe of master's power (instill fear).
4. Accept master's standards of "good conduct."
5. Develop a habit of perfect dependence. [5]

Primary (first-hand) research is the most effective weapon against the distortion of African history and culture. *Primary research* training is the best defense against urban legends and modern myths. It is now time for critical thinkers to bury the decade-old mythology of "William Lynch."

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NOTES

1. For example, see: Lawanda Staten, *How to Kill Your Willie Lynch* (1997); Kashif Malik Hassan-el, *The Willie Lynch Letter and the Making of a Slave* (1999); Marc Sims, *Willie Lynch: Why African-Americans Have So Many Issues!* (2002); Alvin Morrow, *Breaking the Curse of Willie Lynch* (2003); and Slave Chronicles, *The Willie Lynch Letter and the Destruction of Black Unity* (2004).
2. See: www.umsl.edu/services/library/blackstudies/narrate.htm
3. For this quote and the general Anne Taylor email exchanges regarding the authenticity of the Willie Lynch speech, see: www.umsl.edu/services/library/blackstudies/winbail.htm
4. Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845), p. 84.
5. Kenneth Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (1956), pp. 144-48.

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**The Human
Rights Radio
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Mbanna Kantako: Closing Comments

It's amazing the number of people that claim to be about the business of our revolutionary teacher Malcolm X, but yet few are stressing Human Rights. And many may ask why worry about Human Rights? That question in it of itself speaks directly to the problem. We have lost the very basic understanding that all things in the creation belong to our almighty creator, that includes us.

As smart as some have claimed they are no one has built a machine that could equal in performance the functioning of the human heart. Beating on the average 100,000 times a day pumping blood through 60,000 miles of capillaries, blood vessels, and veins. This simple knowledge should humble us. We should know that all that happens is allowed to happen by our almighty creator. And all that happens is made possible by our creator's law. Our willingness to bow to our creator's law will bring us at harmony with all in the creation. And if we dare to bow to our

creator's law we will get without delay our Human Rights.

Uncle Sam has made it clear to us what he would call the law if it was up to him in the time he was given to rule. His law said Article 1 Section 2 clause 3 in his Constitution that we were no longer in the human race. Article 1 section 9 clause 1 made it lawful to steal us, and slave us in this land. Article 4 section 2 clause 3 said we had no right to run away. Article 1 section 8 clause 15 said we had no right to fight back. Article 1 section 8 clause 9 established in the court system a special program for us where we never receive a trial but may be granted a hearing. Article 5 said there

was to be no discussion of this crime for another 20 years.

If you accept the story of the pilgrims then by the time this constitution was written the enslavement of your people, descendants of Mother Africa, had went on for 178 years in this land. There was not a quorum present to make the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendment binding even though they may have been passed. And you are the only people in this land who have to have your right to vote recertified every so often. So the real question is why civil rights? When the choice is uncle sam's law, or our creators law.

—Mbanna Kantako



*This first issue of the Human Rights
Review is Dedicated to Ancestors
Senseia Kankaji and Del Jones aka Nana*

