



**KNOWING AND HONORING NATHAN HARE:
THINKING AND THUNDERING BLACK**

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DR. MAULANA KARENGA

PART II. It is important to note that Dr. Nathan Hare's intentions and initiatives are emancipatory, i.e., focused on and pursued with the liberation of our people as the central goal, and through this liberational practice, the making of a meaningful contribution to the larger question of liberation of the country and the world. Clearly, this liberation concern grounds his call to struggle on every level of life. Thus, for him, as with Malcolm, Fanon, Cabral, Kawaida and other liberation theorists and theories of the time, this struggle must be waged internally and externally to simultaneously radically transform ourselves and society.

Both in his sociological and psychological works, Dr. Hare puts great emphasis on repairing, rebuilding and renewing the Black family and Black male/female relationships. And he suggests that daring to love in an unfree and oppressive society is indeed a revolutionary, transformative and liberational act. Surely, Dr. Hare and his wife and co-worker, Dr. Julia Hare, have both modelled and crafted messages and means to strengthen, sustain and renew the Black family and male/female relations which offers us some of the greatest problems and most promising prospects. Thus, in this struggle, they urge us to face and confront the problems of living in a racist, sexist and capitalist society. It is for them not enough of talk of golden eras of the past; we must, they tell us, engage not only in *remembrance*, but also in *reconstruction*.

They encourage us to deal in our struggle with both the oppression of Black males and females. For not only did the oppressor enslave and ruthlessly exploit us all, but also "At the same time they endeavored to emasculate the Black male they also sought to defeminize the Black female". This means admitting and struggling against the sexism and patriarchy that exist in our families and male/female rela-

tionships, and recognizing and resisting the targeting of Black youth and men for destruction and "the psychological effects of the social destruction of the inability to earn an acceptable living", especially on the Black male, and not let our oppressor divide and defeat us.

To repair and reinforce our relationships, the Hares suggest we must, as they worked over the years to do, through writings, organizational efforts, and counselling, build the context for bringing into being new men and women committed to mutual respect, equality, shared responsibility and transformative love. This begins with establishing a rites of passage movement, to teach young boys and girls to become the men and women whom they want to love and live and build with; and setting up Black love groups and professional counselling and therapy groups "to begin to elevate Black love groups to the status of a social movement". Indeed, they say, through this working together and the united struggle to free ourselves from all forms of oppression, we can "learn to love again (that is to feel loved, to love ourselves, and therefore one another)" and build the good relations, families, communities, society and world we want and deserve.

Dr. Nathan Hare has clearly exhibited a deep and enduring love for his wife, companion and co-worker, Dr. Julia Hare, with whom he has done much work and writing and who now suffers from end-stage Alzheimer disease. He chose to care for her at home, even though it would have been more "convenient" and less costly to put her in a facility which treats Alzheimer patients. Indeed, it has cost him much for this decision and the home care this requires and he has set up a gofundme.com account under "Let Freedom Ring", Dr. Julia Hare, for those who would like to help in small and large ways. Tiamoyo and I have contributed and will again. Indeed, what greater moral commitment and righteous love can we as persons and a people express than in loving care and kindness

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and active concern for the most vulnerable among us—both those close and those less so.

Dr. Hare's Sixties critique of negative tendencies in the Black church anticipates the church's moving from its progressive and radical history and social justice teachings to its current personal prosperity gospel. He speaks of the passing of the "intimate familiarity", where "the pastor's life once bloomed side by side with his flock, both in and out of church", as they lived, worked and struggled together for the collective good. And he argues for the church to renew itself and its relationship with its members and community. To do this, it must end its prestige pursuit, "the preeminence of the collection plate", shameless political compromising and supporting America's wars, and move beyond "copycat Christianity" borrowed from the dominant society. Instead, it must put forth principles and "strong deeds and sustained action based on a social program of uplift and moral (grounding)".

Finally, Dr. Hare as early as 1970 engaged the question of a Black ecology. He states that "the emergence of the concept of ecology in American life is potentially of momentous relevance to the ultimate liberation of Black people". But it is important that we define it in a particularly Black and holistic way as not simply concerns about conditions of the physical environment, but about all external conditions and influences which affect our lives, shape our psychology and behavior, and thus determine and/or affect our life chances. As he states, the Black and White ecological conditions are different and thus their solutions

must be different. Indeed, White solutions "for the ecological crisis are reformist and evasive of the social and political revolution which Black environmental correction demands".

Dr. Hare speaks not only about chemical pollution of the physical environment of the Black community imposed by the dominant society, but also of social conditions in which "urban Blacks have been increasingly imprisoned in the physical and social decay in the hearts of major central cities". This, in turn, increases pollutions of various kinds, i.e., industrial, insect, housing, noise and psychic pollution. And there is also social pollution engendered by poverty and overcrowding, and the psychic stress, conflict, violence and crime these conditions produce. The real solution to the environmental crisis, he argues, is "the decolonization of the race which translates as liberation, self-determination and economic capacity to solve the ecological crisis". And to achieve this, "Blacks must challenge and confront the very foundations of American society".

This means, Dr. Hare tells us, we must regain our "revolutionary initiative", rebuild "a unity of struggle" and move beyond simply survival thought and practice. He concedes that "given the profound and complex nature of our oppression, it is nothing short of miraculous that we have been able to come this far". But he assures us that "*Survival is only the first level; the other part of struggle is resistance*", a righteous and relentless resistance that leads to liberation and a good life for all of us and everyone.

Dr. Maulana Karenga, Professor and Chair of Africana Studies, California State University-Long Beach; Executive Director, African American Cultural Center (Us); Creator of Kwanzaa; and author of *Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture* and *Introduction to Black Studies*, 4th Edition, www.OfficialKwanzaaWebsite.org; www.MaulanaKarenga.org.