

No Common Ground Left: *Freedomways*, Black Communists vs. Black Nationalism/Pan-Africanism

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Abstract

Birthered by Shirley Graham Du Bois and other Black Leftists, Freedomways magazine (1961-1985) has always occupied a curious position in the history of American quarterly literary magazines, also known as “little magazines.” It was a Black intellectual magazine, published by Black Communists and funded by white Communists, that promoted an official Marxist-Leninist philosophy in a time period of significant liberal Civil Rights Movement gains domestically and a revival of Black nationalism and Pan-Africanism domestically and internationally. Among the founding contributors to Freedomways magazine was John Henrik Clarke (1915-1998), the Harlem-based Pan-Africanist historian. This article discusses a 1982 public dispute Clarke had with a leader of the Black Communist Party USA, James E. Jackson, whose wife, Esther Cooper Jackson, was a Freedomways founding editor. It led to Clarke's public resignation from the magazine in 1983. The dispute, the authors argue, was an outgrowth of the editorial conflict within Freedomways between Pan-Africanism and Marxism, a perspective largely ignored by existing scholarship concerning the periodical and the “Popular Front” ideology of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA).

Prologue: The Split

John Henrik Clarke (1915-1998), who by October 1982 had trained a generation of Black historians, edited nearly a dozen books and had at least three decades of what the late Black press scholar Roland Wolsey called “scholarly journalism”¹ under his belt, was not the focus of the article about a Harlem event published in the Harlem Weekly, a small weekly newspaper, on October 22-28, 1982. However, he was a prominent part, with his comments taking up a whole column of the three-column article written by Janice Cummings.

Clarke, an African World History professor in the department of Black & Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College in Manhattan, spoke to 24 War College graduates at the Harlem YMCA on October 12, 1982. It was a weird pairing: a radical Pan-Africanist speaking to future leaders of America's military-industrial complex, one Clarke and others on the left would clearly label imperialist.

In the article, which quotes Clarke liberally (and mentions other Harlem dignitaries who were there), he talked about Africa's needs and how Black Americans can be sent to the continent to help.

Under the sub-head "America and Russia," he was quoted as saying this:

"America is in a better position to assist third world nations than Russia," Dr. Clarke said. "Both the U.S. and Russia may be wrong in this rivalry. Maybe it should be thought out more. America has greater engineering intelligence than Russia because Americans have done such things more.

"Russia's recent construction of a dam in Egypt, for instance, ran into millions of dollars. Initially, Egypt asked the U.S. to build the dam but was refused; so Russia built it because they were anxious to establish 'good will.' The dam, however, was built in the wrong place and as a result water began to seep under the pyramids.

"When you work in a hurried, anxious manner as Russia did in building that dam, you don't have time to explain to the people what they need to do as a result of such technological changes. Plus, what may be applicable to one African country many not necessarily be applicable to another.

"Karl Marx left a terrible legacy about the culture of non-western people that is simply not true. No 'primitive' mind could have dreamed up the complexities of an African kinship system or the pyramids. A serious study of non-western societies and a wedding between them technically would generate a sound relationship. Then this country would not have to worry about what Russia is going to do because communists are moving toward capitalism, anyway."²

Clarke's comments about the Soviet Union caused a firestorm among Communists because he was an associate editor of Freedomways magazine (1961-1985), a "Quarterly Review of the Negro Movement."³ By 1982, the Communist Party USA (CPUSA), the behind-the-scenes sponsors of the magazine, had allowed Freedomways editors, including Clarke, to produce several book anthologies in the 1960s and 1970s. (The magazine was funded either directly by the CPUSA and/or indirectly by the Communist parties in the Soviet Union and China.⁴) And now it seemed Clarke was biting the hand of the Communists who printed him! "I had made a speech, a tongue-in-cheek speech, to the people from the War College visiting the Harlem Y," said Clarke in an oral history interview about his tenure with Freedomways.⁵

“The speech was on the peacemaker, ‘The Warrior as Peacemaker.’ It was tongue-in-cheek because I knew people in the War College were CIA and FBI agents. They came to America to be trained so that they could dominate their own people for America. So I stood before them, son of a sharecropper from Alabama, ... I’m literally laughing at them. I knew damn well that they don’t give a damn about what I am saying.”⁶

James E. Jackson (1914-2007), however, did. He was a member of the Communist Party CPUSA’s political bureau. Jackson was also an occasional contributor to Freedomways (but deeply connected to it because his wife, Esther Cooper Jackson, was the founding managing editor, making him a de-facto founder himself). He was publicly livid about Clarke’s quoted remarks. Apparently using only the information from the Harlem Weekly article, he wrote a column in The Daily Worker, the newspaper organ of the CPUSA, directly and openly attacking his longtime colleague. The column, which printed on November 12, 1982, was headlined “John Henrik Clarke: Advises CIA and joins ‘Beat the Russians’ band.”

All of Clarke’s “advice” was cast in the frame of an ardent cold-war advocate of U.S. imperialist penetration of Africa, to gain Africa for the U.S. and keep out any Soviet influence or aid in development placement.

No word was passed about Reagan’s newly proclaimed alliance partner of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Neither were the liberation cause of Namibia, the security of Angola and Zimbabwe, the genocidal crusade against the Palestinian people, nor the unrequited aggression against Beirut and all of Lebanon and Syria on the agenda of the brunch eaters.

John Henrik Clarke has moved from duplicity to brazen flaunting of his role as guidance counselor to the Pentagon and safari scout for the CIA in the Harlems of the U.S. and Africa.

Let him reflect on the path he has taken. It is the road to ruin that [black former leftist radicals-turned-Reagan conservatives] Roy Innis and Eldridge Cleaver took. You cannot clasp hands with the Pentagon and CIA without pocketing pieces of Judas silver. The only pot of gold to be found at the end of such a rainbow trail as Clarke has taken is but the tarnished glitter of Fool’s Gold [,] which will have all the value of Confederate money for buying a seat in history, [one] on the knee of Master Charlie.⁷

Fourteen years later, Clarke was still hurt by the accusation, the wound still fresh. “My God, if I have nothing else, I have integrity. I’ve never been in anybody’s pay, because I’ve never been bought off by anybody.”⁸

After the speech, the staff met, Clarke recalled. “The staff was united against me. I let them know that if they wanted my resignation, they could get it.”⁹ Esther Cooper Jackson made her position clear, as did Freedomways associate editors Jean Carey Bond, J.H. “Jack” O’Dell and, “to a certain extent” Keith Baird.¹⁰

While recovering in a hospital, Clarke, on Hunter College stationery, wrote a public response to the public accusation. It saw print in the Harlem Weekly.

James E. Jackson’s article,...which was brought to my attention a week after its publication, came as a surprise to me, my students, colleagues and friends who know that for most of my life I have been honorably involved in the struggle for the freedom and nationhood of African people. This article [by Jackson], which was written both from hearsay and information taken from the October 22 issue of the *Harlem Weekly*, is an assassination of my character and a misrepresentation of my role in the Black struggle.

.....Ironically, my relationship to the CIA and FBI is the same as Mr. Jackson’s relationship, one of persecution, false accusation, character assassination. Unfortunately, it seems Mr. Jackson has not learned that we are being persecuted by the same evil forces.¹¹

Clarke stated that he said in the speech that the only solution for Africa’s problems was socialism, and he was describing what role Black Americans should play. He then explained the ideological differences between him and Jackson:

While both James Jackson and I are politically to the left and committed to socialism, we have a strong difference of opinion on the relationship of socialism to the liberation of African people. I am an African world nationalist, a Pan-Africanist and a socialist, and I see no contradictions in being all three simultaneously.¹²

Clarke’s resignation was briefly acknowledged in Freedomways.

We wish to inform our readers that John Henrik Clarke has resigned from his position as an Associate Editor of Freedomways for personal reasons. Dr. Clarke was associated with Freedomways for 21 years. He plans to contribute to our efforts in the form of fiction, book reviews and occasional articles in the future.¹³

Those future contributions never came. Twenty-one years of his tenure at Freedomways, from 1962 to 1983, had ended with a public resignation over a public ideological struggle between organic Black nationalism/socialism/Pan-Africanism and CPUSA Communism.¹⁴

Said Clarke in 1996: “To see people I thought were my friends, despite our differences, turn on me, it caused me to have a stroke.”¹⁵ These were not just editors to Clarke: they were friends, fellow African-American radical activists, for whom he signed bank notes for and helped mediate their marriages, he recalled. “They didn’t attack the ideas in my speech,” he said, they “came after me.”¹⁶ Clarke claimed it was this split that led to his several physical ailments, including his loss of his eyesight from glaucoma. Twenty-one years of his tenure at Freedomways from 1962 to 1983, had ended with a public resignation over a public ideological struggle between organic Black nationalism/socialism/Pan-Africanism and CPUSA Communism.¹⁷

Freedomways: A Unique Periodical

The conflict between Clarke and Jackson was a climatic outgrowth of the peculiar nature of Freedomways magazine. It has occupied a curious position in the history of 20th century Black periodicals. In an atmosphere dominated by Johnson Publications’ Ebony and Jet and their rivals, all mass market circulation magazines, Freedomways was a “little magazine”—a literary forum for intellectuals, in the tradition of The Crisis and Opportunity (the organs for, respectively, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Urban League) or, in white mainstream periodical history, perhaps The Paris Review.¹⁸ A distinct difference is that Freedomways was edited and published by Black communists and Black nationalists out of New York City. Shirley Graham Du Bois was one of the founders of the magazine, as well as Louis Burnham, a Black communist who worked on Paul Robeson’s Freedom newspaper. Other founding editors included the Jacksons, two Black communists who were former leaders and organizers of the Southern Negro Youth Congress, a leftist organization affiliated with Communists.

The magazine was founded in 1961, in the midst of African nations gaining independence from the Western Colonial powers, the stirrings of what would become the Black Power Movement and at the start of the Black artistic drives which would by the end of the decade become the Black Arts Movement. Clarke was one of the new magazine’s associate editors. A former editor at Harlem Quarterly, a short-lived literary magazine, Clarke was a Black bibliophile and freelance writer who had read comprehensively on the history of Africa and who had extensive contacts among African leaders and thinkers.

During Freedomways 24-year publishing history, the magazine published articles and artwork by the following: Kwame Nkrumah, Julius K. Nyerere, Jomo Kenyatta, Paul Robeson, Lorraine Hansberry, C.L.R. James, James Baldwin, Alice Walker, Nikki Giovanni, Jacob Lawrence, Romare Bearden, and Elizabeth Catlett.¹⁹

Freedomways published many “special issues”—issues that focused on a particular theme or topic. Clarke created several book anthologies out of the special issues he edited, and Esther Cooper Jackson and Earnest Kaiser created others they edited. The “special issues” reflect the specific political perspective of the special’s editor(s).

The purpose of our brief essay is to openly discuss the *editorial* conflict between the Communists and the Pan-Africanist (Clarke) at Freedomways —a conflict that ended with the open attack by Jackson and open rebuttal/resignation by Clarke. This paper emphasizes Clarke’s role and viewpoint because he has written and spoken on this conflict over the War College speech, while the Jacksons, according to our research, have not.²⁰ With the notable exception of Harold Cruse’s classic critique, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, the sparse scholarship on Freedomways does not emphasize the fragile relationship among the Black Left. Using primary sources—examples from the print run of Freedomways as well as the collected papers of the Jacksons and Clarke—we want to show how the political reflected the editorial and, ultimately, the personal.

The History of and Conflict within Freedomways (From John Henrik Clarke’s Point-of-View)

Freedomways was going to be edited by Louis Burnham, who had been involved with Freedom newspaper. But he died from a heart attack before the magazine was formed.²¹ The planning session was at Graham Du Bois’s house in Brooklyn.²² Esther Cooper Jackson, the activist Shirley Graham Du Bois, the activist and intellectual W. Alphaeus Hunton, and the writer and fine artist Margaret Burroughs comprised the first issue’s masthead, with Graham Du Bois (not using her husband’s surname) as editor, Jackson as managing editor, Hunton as associate editor and Burroughs as art editor.²³ Recalled Clarke: “Nobody thought it would last....We had to beg the magazine into existence.”²⁴

Scholar Mary Helen Washington wrote that in her oral history interview with Esther Cooper Jackson, she talked about how important it was to the group to have Black editorial control—so important they alienated Herbert Aptheker, a leading white Communist writer and historian, by refusing to invite him onto the editorial board. He refused to subscribe to or read Freedomways because of that perceived slight.²⁵ Freedomways was something new for the Communist Party and its Black members. “While the journal was dedicated to continuing the internationalist-socialist aims of Freedom,” wrote Washington, “it also reflected a spirit of Black radicalism that allowed them to remain engaged with the Left and give priority to the Black struggle.”²⁶

At the time of Freedomways’ early existence, John Henrik Clarke was director of the African Heritage Program of HAR-YOU (Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited) ACT, an anti-poverty agency.

He said he would do HAR-YOU-ACT work in his office in the early morning and at night, while soliciting articles for Freedomways (and, perhaps, writing one of his 37 articles and/or book reviews about African or African-American history for the magazine) during the day. Clarke said he didn't do the final edit of the articles he solicited, and explained that J.H. "Jack" O'Dell and Esther Cooper Jackson wrote most of the editorials.²⁷

The magazine's special issues, according to Clarke, "got Freedomways deeply in debt...[but] it gave the magazine a presence it never would have had," he said. "We were doing something that nobody was doing: taking a subject, and focusing on that subject from different angles."²⁸

Before he joined the academy in the late 1960s and began his teaching and Africana Studies curriculum work, Clarke was the de-facto managing editor on several of Freedomways' special issues during the 1960s, including ones on: Harlem (Summer, 1963); Africa (Fall 1962); the Southern Freedom Movement (Winter 1964); Paul Robeson, W.E.B. Du Bois (Winter, 1965) and on the Caribbean (Summer 1964).²⁹ He used his contacts in African liberation movements to get Jomo Kenyatta, the future president of Kenya, to send a special message to African-Americans for the Freedomways' Africa special issue, and for Kwame Nkrumah, the prime minister of Ghana and a longtime friend of Clarke, to publicly mourn Du Bois.³⁰

He claimed that as an editor, "I didn't try to bend everybody to my will or my calling. If you wrote well, you didn't have to be a Left to me. Nor did you have to agree with it."³¹ He said that the other editors had to bend every article toward the Left.³² He gave an example of an article by James E. Jackson "imposed" on him by Jackson and the editors for the Du Bois memorial issue. That article was part of a chorus of voices commenting on Du Bois. In the article, Jackson gave his thoughts of the long intellectual road that Du Bois went down before joining the Communist Party in 1961 at the age of 93. James gives the impression, in recalled anecdotal conversations with him and using historical facts and dates, that Du Bois was *always* drawn to Communism.³³ Clarke disliked the article because he believed it gave the false impression that Du Bois was *consistently* a Communist, when, in fact, Clarke argued, Du Bois was critical of the Communist Party during his life, particularly its leading role during the Scottsboro false rape accusation case.³⁴

Clarke said he felt professionally slighted by his former friends, because he believed that they did not give him enough credit for the magazine's collective success. "They tried to downplay the role I played because I dared to differ and to say that the Left had no realistic program in relationship to Black liberation."³⁵

Eventually, Clarke's duties at Hunter College, his many anthologies and his role in creating Africana Studies curriculum took up much of the time he used to spend with Freedomways. By 1974, he was still on the masthead as an associate editor, but he was, in reality, just an occasional contributor up until his public resignation.

Clarke said the magazine also sponsored public political events under the banner of “The Freedomways Forum,” but “the participants they chose were old hack Communists that I didn’t particularly like because they weren’t saying anything, [just] repeating Marxist jargon.”³⁶ He also claimed a “deliberate” snub by his non-inclusion in the “Freedomways Speakers’ Bureau” that was advertised in the magazine.³⁷

Whether all of Clarke’s 1996 assertions, recollections and opinions are true, what is clear is that he had a different worldview and opinions than his fellow Freedomways editors. And, ultimately, it was the Freedomways Communist editors and the Black Communists, who controlled the magazine and its parent company, Freedomways Associates, Inc. These ideological differences that Clarke—a major, but not a central, character in Freedomways’ development over his 21-year tenure—felt with Black Communists were exacerbated with the 1982 War College incident.

Scholarly Criticism of Freedomways

There is not much scholarly criticism on Freedomways as an institution. Perhaps the most well-known critique of Freedomways comes from Harold Cruse in his contrarian classic from 1967, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual: A Historical Analysis of the Failure of Black Leadership*. The magazine was only six years old when Cruse’s critique of Black leadership’s failure to produce a Black aesthetic, an independent course, was released. He said Freedomways was “allowed” to be created because the CPUSA was being rendered obsolete by the new ideas represented by the growing Civil Rights Movement in the South and the rise of Malcolm X in Harlem. The Party needed something to replace *Freedom* newspaper, which was run partially by Paul Robeson. They needed a forum to understand the Black movements being created around them. So, with the “remainder of the ruling clique from Freedom newspaper launched” Freedomways.³⁸ It existed “for the express purpose of exploring issues pertaining to the Negro movement and the *hidden* purpose of reestablishing the leftwing hegemony over the new wave.”³⁹ Wrote Cruse: “Now, after more than forty years, the political trend that had always insisted that it had all the answers admitted in print that the Negro question had to be explored.”⁴⁰ He claimed that the magazine was able to put on an intellectually independent face, but was clearly not: “This is because its founders, with or without Communist Party ties, have no independent political and cultural philosophy of their own and no real Black community base.”⁴¹ Under Freedomways Black Communists were now given permission by the CPUSA to discuss racial issues openly, a power they did not have before: “Now there was a rich harvest of new customers on the scene—eager for direct action, full of verve, spirit and open minds. Freedomways was established to cash in on this promising young market.”⁴²

But it had not lived up to its potential because, Cruse argued, it would have to break from Marxist writing to do so, allowing intellectually and culturally organic discussion of the problems of the Black community and white supremacy.⁴³ Cruse, pointing out that “the entire Negro elite speaks through Freedomways’ pages,⁴⁴ derided Freedomways a “marriage of leftwing ideology with integrationism.”⁴⁵ Clarke, in his magnum opus of historical commentary, agreed with some of Cruse’s criticisms and comments, but added his own:

I was associated with Freedomways for twenty-one years of its twenty-five years [sic] of existence and was a participant in the most useful years of its development. In my opinion, the publication declined when it became a one-dimensional, political-left-oriented magazine, as against its earlier years, when its approach was much wider and it used a greater variety of writers, the prime requirement being that they wrote well and honestly about their subject matter.... To a great extent Freedomways did deal realistically with Black and white relationships although they failed miserably in dealing with nationalism and Pan-Africanism and the inability of the American left to understand the issue of African people throughout the world. Principally, they will not admit what is most apparent, the fact that for 500 years the world was ruled by white nationalism, and that Marxism, with all its potential for the working class of the world [,] is also white-nationalism, because it is the intent of the white nationalist and the Marxist to dominate the world of the new social order that they are advocating.⁴⁶

Another scholar takes a view of Freedomways that is more in line with Cruse’s (and, noticeably, doesn’t contradict Clarke’s), but with a substantively less negative perspective. Ian Rocksborough-Smith describes Freedomways as a “radical integrationist” product reminiscent of the CPUSA’s “Popular Front” approach during the 1930s and 1940s—the idea that the Party could combine forces with other groups to oppose fascism. This means that Freedomways was a journalistic and literary product that was heavily, and un-apologetically, influenced by the Jacksons’ work with the Southern Negro Youth Congress and their allies at the National Negro Congress, along with other radical groups.⁴⁷ Many of these Communist-affiliated activists came to New York City and helped founded Freedom and, subsequently, Freedomways.⁴⁸ The radical leftist activists saw Freedomways as a *liberal* magazine to draw the Black community into the leftist camp. So, as Rocksborough-Smith points out, it stayed away from the “militant separatism” of the Nation of Islam and Malcolm X while emphasizing establishment, but politically progressive, groups such as Martin Luther King’s Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Jesse Jackson’s People United to Save Humanity.⁴⁹

Epilogue: The Need for More Ideological and Structural Black Media Studies

As usual with the use of Black media in scholarship, Freedomways is, understandably, used for its specific content but never discussed as *its own entity*. It is used to describe the views of its contributors and the times in which they wrote, but not as an institution in itself. We need much more scholarship on how Freedomways was created, as well as how Graham-Du Bois, and later the Jacksons, *ideologically constructed* both the magazine's content and the two books that came out of them from the Communist majority.⁵⁰ The various viewpoints of Freedomways' critics, which include Clarke and Cruse, are well documented. We need full biographies of the Jacksons that explain in detail Freedomways the way David Levering Lewis, in his two-volume biography of "scholarly journalist" W.E.B. Du Bois, explained Du Bois's editorship of *The Crisis*.⁵¹

Unknown, perhaps buried in the files of the Jacksons or Clarke, or in a yet-to-be transcribed or read oral history of the Jacksons or Graham-Du Bois in their respective collected papers, are the viewpoints of the magazine's top editors on how they saw, in detail, the ideological and practical operation of their periodical. Until that material emerges, all we have are the end products: the twenty-four years of feature articles, artwork and editorials—material that has only begun to be seen as a whole.

NOTES

¹ Wolseley uses the term in his seminal but flawed work *Black Press, U.S.A.*, Second and Revised Edition (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press), 1990.

² Janice Cummings, "War College Visits Harlem," *Harlem Weekly*, October 22-28, 1982, page unknown.

³ The word "Negro" was removed from the magazine's motto/subtitle starting with the Summer 1968 issue.

⁴ Exactly which world division of the Communist Party funded Freedomways is currently unverified. For one version, see Cliff Kincaid, "Freedomways: Soviets Funded Black 'Freedom' Journal." *Accuracy in Media*, May 4, 2012. <http://www.aim.org/aim-column/soviets-funded-black-freedom-journal/>. Retrieved August 6, 2014.

⁵ John Henrik Clarke oral history interview by co-author Burroughs. New York City, January 5, 1996. Audio of the entire interview can be found here: “Dr. John Henrik Clarke On Freedomways w Dr. Todd Burroughs, “[imixwhatilike.org. https://soundcloud.com/imixwhatilike/dr-john-henrik-clarke-on](https://soundcloud.com/imixwhatilike/dr-john-henrik-clarke-on) . Retrieved on August 6, 2014.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ James E. Jackson, “John Henrik Clarke: Advises CIA and joins ‘Beat the Russians’ band,” The Daily Worker, November 12, 1982, pp. 9.

⁸ Clarke oral history.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ John Henrik Clarke, December 2, 1982. “Response to James E. Jackson’s Article In the November 12, 1982 Issue of The Daily World” [SIC], Box No. 21, Folder 42, James E. Jackson and Esther Cooper Jackson Papers.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Untitled item at the end of the “The Time Is Now” editorial, Freedomways, First Quarter, 1983, pp. 5.

¹⁴ We did not find a resignation letter from Clarke *per se* to the Freedomways editors in our research, so we must assume the public statement served as that. Both the collected files of John Henrik Clarke and Esther and James Jackson have the identical three items on this issue: the Cummings Harlem Weekly article, the Daily Worker column by Jackson and the Clarke rebuttal. Neither Clarke nor the Jacksons have any discussion of this incident in their collected papers other than the three items (article, column, response column) discussed. Both collections had the three items.

¹⁵ Clarke oral history.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ We did not find a resignation letter from Clarke per se to the Freedomways editors in our research, so we must assume the public statement served as that. Both the collected files of John Henrik Clarke and Esther and James Jackson have the identical three items on this issue: the Cummings *Harlem Weekly* article, the *Daily Worker* column by Jackson and the Clarke rebuttal. Neither Clarke nor the Jacksons have any discussion of this incident in their collected papers other than the three items.

¹⁸ Esther Cooper Jackson, in her (and Constance Pohl's) Freedomways anthology, Freedomways Reader: Prophets in Their Own Country (New York: Westview Press, 2000), said that Freedomways started "with a press run of only 2,000 copies but went up to 15,000 copies, particularly for special issues, which were read by many thousands more" (pp. xxii). A cursory glance of Freedomways' circulation figures throughout the mid- to late-1960s shows that the magazine averaged a press run of approximately 6,000 issues every issue.

¹⁹ For a talk on the founding of Freedomways, see a written version of an address from former Freedomways editor Jean Carey Bond, "Freedomways Magazine and the Roots of the Fight For Rights," Black Agenda Report, October 31, 2006.

<http://www.blackagendareport.com/?q=content/freedomways-magazine-and-roots-fight-rights>. Retrieved August 7, 2014. Esther Jackson can be found on youtube.com discussing Freedomways in front of an audience. "Esther Cooper Jackson on Freedways [SIC] Magazine," published on March 24, 2014, youtube.com, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_VTBuYo3-w. Retrieved on August 22, 2014.

²⁰ See Ahati N.N. Toure, John Henrik Clarke and The Power of Africana History: Africaological Quest For Decolonization and Sovereignty. (Trenton: Africa World Press), 2009. Toure, one of the many Black nationalist-oriented scholars who have produced work on Clarke, may be the only author to discuss the split in a major scholarly work on the often-revered late scholar/activist. Although the focus of Toure's book is on Clarke's Africana Studies curriculum work, Toure also gives great detail on Clarke's "scholarly journalism career" in text and charts.

²¹ Clarke oral history. See also Earnest Kaiser, "Five Years of Freedomways," Freedomways, Spring 1966, pp.103-117.

²² Clarke oral history.

²³ In addition to Freedom, it could also be argued that Freedomways was also the successor to *Harlem Quarterly* (1949-1950), a short-lived literary magazine of which Clarke was one of the editors. It is also interesting to note that the same year Freedomways premiered, Johnson Publications, the publisher of the mass-market Ebony and Jet magazines, decided to revive the defunct Negro Digest, the company's first and most intellectual Black magazine, under the Black intellectual Hoyt Fuller.

Later, in 1970, at the height of the Black Power movement, it would become Black World, a more Black nationalist and Pan-Africanist-oriented alternative to Freedomways. A spiritual “grandmother” to Freedomways could also be The Messenger (917-1928), the socialist magazine founded by A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen.

²⁴ Clarke oral history. He said the magazine never covered its expenses, and the editors were paid token salaries. (He did not mention how the magazine’s expenses were covered.) Early in the magazine’s history, he recalled, the writers were paid \$35 to \$50, but then that money ran out. So even the writers for the “special issues” were unpaid.

²⁵ Mary Helen Washington, The Other Blacklist: The African American Literary and Cultural Left of the 1950s (New York: Columbia University Press), 2014, pp. 298, n25.

²⁶ Washington, pp. 146.

²⁷ Clarke oral history.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Many of Clarke’s edited anthologies come out of “special issues” of Freedomways. They are: Harlem: A Community in Transition (New York: Citadel Press, 2nd ed., 1969); Harlem, USA (New York: Collier), 1971, Black Titan: W.E.B. Du Bois (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970) and Paul Robeson: The Great Forerunner (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co.), 1978. Please note that in these books, the *lead* editor is Clarke, but other Freedomways editors are mentioned as co-editors. (Some editions of some of these books have under its author name the “Editors of Freedomways,” with Clarke credited as the lead editor of the book. Because of his experience with Freedomways, he became a well-published editor of Black history and Black literature book anthologies.

³⁰ Jomo Kenyatta’s September 4, 1962 letter is on page 358 of the issue, with the issue theme being “The New Image of Africa.” In the letter, addressed to the Associate Editor (assumably, to Clarke), he praises Freedomways as “a free forum for people of African descent who are engaged in the noble cause of fighting for freedom and dignity throughout the world.” In the Du Bois memorial issue (First Quarter, 1965), Kwame Nkrumah said Du Bois was “not only a champion of the oppressed, but also a source of inspiration in our struggle for freedom and the right of the African to govern himself” (pp. 7). Between these special issues and Clarke’s many book reviews on African topics for Freedomways, he established the periodical as a serious Black-controlled editorial forum for African affairs.

³¹ Clarke oral history.

³² Ibid.

³³ “James E. Jackson,” pp. 20-23. We disagree with John Henrik Clarke here. The Jackson article does give the impression that W.E. B. Du Bois was always thinking about Communism as an option, but it doesn’t say he was always a Communist. As a Pan-Africanist historian, Clarke consistently places individuals into that ideology who, if applying precise ideological criteria, would significantly fail to fit (for example, the proto-conservative accomodationist Booker T. Washington, whom Clarke places in the Pan-Africanist camp because Clarke is trying to make a point about Washington’s self-sufficiency example being key to Black/African nationhood). Clarke could have given Jackson the same leeway he himself would use. (And perhaps had Jackson not publicly attacked him as a “guidance counselor to the Pentagon and safari scout for the CIA,” Clarke would have.) But the argument between Clarke and the Freedomways editors about ideology is still present: Just two years after W.E.B. Du Bois’ death, the intellectual battle over the framing of his legacy was joined: should W.E.B. Du Bois be remembered by Black progressive people as a Pan-Africanist who also became a Communist (Clarke’s view), or as a leftist who slowly evolved into a Communist (Jackson’s view)?

³⁴ Clarke oral history.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Harold Cruse, Crisis of the Negro Intellectual: A Historical Analysis of the Failure of Black Leadership (New York: Quill), 1984 ed. (Original publisher: New York: Morrow), 1967, pp. 242.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 244.

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 247.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 248.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 249.

⁴⁶ John Henrik Clarke, Africans at the Crossroads: Notes for an African World Revolution (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press), 1991, pp. 376-377.

⁴⁷ We find it important to note that none of the articles by the magazine's editors on the founding of Freedomways, in either the magazine's anniversary issues or in anthologies, mention the Communist Party USA as its funders or supporters. Esther Cooper Jackson, in her introduction to her (and Constance Pohl's) Freedomways anthology, Freedomways Reader: Prophets in Their Own Country (New York: Westview Press), 2000, mentions that the "unique qualities of *Freedomways* flowed from the political philosophies of two extraordinary figures: Paul Robeson and W.E.B. Du Bois" (pp. xxii), but she fails to state what those philosophies specifically were!

⁴⁸ Ian Rocksborough-Smith, "Bearing the Seeds of Struggle: Freedomways Magazine, Black Leftists and Continuities in the Freedom Movement," unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of History, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C., Canada, 2003.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 14. Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam never were subjects of Freedomways feature articles. (However, Clarke does mention both and quotes Malcolm X in his second Freedomways article, "The New Afro-American Nationalism" [Fall, 1961, pp. 285-295]). Clarke helped Malcolm X write the charter to the Malcolm X's new organization, the Organization of Afro-American Unity, in 1964, and was a close personal friend and historical advisor to Malcolm. Clarke reviewed The Autobiography of Malcolm X as Told to Alex Haley (New York: Grove Press), 1965, in the Winter 1966 issue of Freedomways. Although never featuring Malcolm X, the magazine would carry poems and book reviews of other books about him throughout its tenure.

⁵⁰ It is worth noting that none of the Clarke books that grew out of Freedomways have articles from the Jacksons, and that Esther Cooper Jackson's (with Constance Pohl's) 2000 Freedomways anthology, Freedomways Reader: Prophets in Their Own Country (New York: Westview Press), has any article from Clarke. The 1978 Ernest Kaiser Freedomways anthology, A Freedomways Reader: Afro-America in the Seventies (New York: International Publishers), 1977, has one article by Clarke—on Cheikh Anta Diop, the Senegalese scholar who argued that the first civilizations were African ones. The article, "Cheikh Anta Diop and the New Light on African History," was originally published in Freedomways' Fourth Quarter 1974 issue.

⁵¹ The two Du Bois biographies by David Levering Lewis are: W.E.B. Du Bois, 1868-1919: Biography of a Race (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1994 paperback ed.) and W.E.B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century 1919-1963 (New York: Henry Holt and Co.), 2000. These are full biographies of Du Bois. As of this writing, there are no full biographies of Esther Cooper Jackson and James E. Jackson. A political biography, Sara Elizabeth Rzeszutek's Love and activism: James and Esther Cooper Jackson and the Black Freedom Movement in the United States, 1914-1968 (ProQuest: UMI Dissertation Publishing), was published in 2011. Esther Cooper Jackson published a small, 36-page biography of her husband, called, This Is My Husband. Fighter For His People, Political Refugee (New York: National Committee to Defend Negro Leadership), in 1953. James E. Jackson wrote several political books during his decades of activism, but like his wife no memoir. This is a scholarly priority if Freedomways is to be fully understood.