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**Strange Fruit: The System of Blood Justice, the Red Summer Incident of Mary Turner, Black Women, and the Perpetuating Social Psychology of Lynching**

**IV. I. The System of Blood Justice**

*Southern trees bear strange fruit,  
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,  
Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze,  
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees.*

- - by Lewis Allen (Abel Meeropol) written for Billie Holiday in 1938

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Lynching was a system, a white “code” of extralegal punishment without due process of law which became a vital underpinning of white supremacy; lynching is an act which is part of an overall pattern of repression and retaliatory violence, a vigilante-style justice of real or imagined crime. Historical analysis of the sadism of “their majesties the mob” illustrate the ritualization and social acceptance of gruesome lynching.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, lynching carried significance that transcended straightforward punishment. The lynched black was symbolic of his/her whole race and accordingly disciplined for more than his/her crime. Dehumanizing terms were used to label the black victim -- e.g., "wretch," "fiend," and "desperado" -- assumed that the black race predisposed him/her to commit violent crimes, particularly rape, which self-righteously legitimated lynching. Race was an accusation, a stereotype of behavior.

In photographs, buoyant lynch crowds in their Sunday’s best surrounded the bodies of “strange fruit” hanging from trees. One can see the vivid, perverse images of the crowd--- the smirks, the glee, and the premeditated entertainment---mutilating bodies, saving toes, fingers and

other appendages for souvenirs. In the *Without Sanctuary, Lynching Photography in America* exhibit, one lynching photograph had writing on the back, like a postcard which read “This is the barbecue we had last night – your son Joe.”<sup>2</sup> The act of lynching was usually consummated by young men of lower socio-economic stratum. Studies showed that they could not lynch so freely without tacit approval of community leaders.<sup>3</sup> The federal and state laws in place were ineffectual because they claimed no power. “The black man asks for justice...asks for protection and is confronted with a scheme of governmental checks and balances.”<sup>4</sup> Witnesses developed selective blindness, and perpetrators were rarely identified. Collusion was common among local officials to prevent prosecution. “Between 1900 and 1930, less than 1 percent of lynchers in the U.S. were convicted for the crime.”<sup>5</sup> The frenzied mobs possessed virtual impunity for their actions, thus lynching was a performance on a grand, socially legitimized scale. The phenomenon of lynching is rooted in racist ideals from social, psychological, political, and economic causalities.

The social psychology of prejudice exists in an individual-society dichotomy, which is central to the development and perpetuation of discriminatory social relations. Prejudice can be defined as thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant based on distorted belief of premature judgment.<sup>6</sup> Thus, this judgment leads to the tendency to attribute characteristics from an individual to an entire group, which the individual is a member, otherwise known as stereotyping. Claudine Ferrell’s Nightmare and Dream showed modern scientific racism studies supported that blacks were biologically and fundamentally different with disregard to environmental factor, viewed as a failure as a free man.<sup>7</sup> “The [black] was notoriously, naturally indolent, lazy, and unambitious.”<sup>8</sup> The racist’s status quo is maintained to a large extent not only through coercive and blatantly racist practices, such as lynching, but through the liberal position

which criticizes these as *aberrations*.<sup>9</sup> Systemic/unconscious projection of false characteristics onto another group results in the production of fantasized characteristics.... These attributions can contribute to the production of the group's (blacks) subjectivity.<sup>10</sup> "Racism reproduces itself not only mechanically at an economic and social level but also through the power relation between white and black people and the subjectivities which these produce and reproduce in both."<sup>11</sup> Between blacks and whites lay a political objective conflict of interest. Whites aspired to maintain economic power and their cash crops, where as, blacks desired a different end, freedom, respect, and opportunity. Thus what developed is a cognitive form of rational theories of subjectivity to achieve those means, for example Willie Lynch's System of Social Control of 1712.

Willie Lynch was a British slave owner from the West Indies who traveled to the United States to lay down the art, a fool-proof method for slave owners and future generations about the *lynch system* to keep slaves under control. He attributes the breaking of blacks akin to breaking in a horse, breaking them from one form of mental life to another. Lynch proposes to keep the bodies strong and take the mind, reducing blacks from their natural independent state to create a state of dependency in order to sustain basic economy and pleasure.<sup>12</sup> The theory requires long range comprehensive planning. The ingredients consist of black male, a pregnant female, and a black boy.

Lynch utilizes fear, distrust, and envy as the major tools of control and exploitation. Both male and female must be taught to respond to a new language. By controlling language the 'nigger' will be unable to move through all levels of society and discern secrets, thus remaining vulnerable. The male and female must be tied together and must be crossbred for division of labor, and psychological and physical containment created for both. Pay special attention to the

black female, if you break the female you will break the offspring, Lynch suggests, “normal female protective tendencies will have been lost in the original breaking process.”<sup>13</sup> Lynch recommends various degrees of pressure to break an ‘uncivilized nigger’ which include striping him in front of the other ‘niggers,’ female and infant ‘nigger,’ then tarring and feathering him and tying each leg to a different horse to pull him apart. The next step is to bullwhip whatever remains of the male ‘nigger’ to the point of death.

The female is to be treated as desired in *everyway*. If there is any resistance, bullwhip her but take care not to kill her. She is the key to the spoils of economic goods. She will teach her offspring to submit to labor by quite literally pulling apart the protective male image. This destroys the image of the male in front of the female, thus estranging the female from the male. Consequently, the circumstance throws the female from a psychologically dependent state to a frozen independency state reversing the relationship.<sup>14</sup> Also, mix as much white blood with the ‘nigger’ women as possible for the desired skin tone. Theoretically, the female will train male offspring to be mentally weak, dependent yet physically strong, and train her female offspring to be psychologically independent as herself. The outcome is “a multiplicity of colors of ass backwards, unusual niggers, running, tied to backwards ass long headed mules, the one productive of itself, the other sterile.”<sup>15</sup>

The Black slave after receiving this indoctrination shall carry on and will become self re-fueling and self generating for hundreds of years, maybe even thousands. Don’t forget you must pitch Black male vs. the young Black male, and the young Black male against the old Black male... You must use the female vs. the male, and the male vs. the female. <sup>16</sup>

Lynch refers to the perpetuation as an orbiting cycle that will turn on its own axis forever, unless a *phenomenon* occurs that re-shifts the position of the male and female savages.

The lynch system was constructed as a scientific and psychological instrument derived by and for slaveholders and following generations as an endeavor to perpetuate false consciousness of fear and inferiority in blacks for basic economic means. Attributing the system's success to the construction of a dependency state within the family unit structure, utilizing Lynch's *orbiting cycle* to destroy the male image and freeze the female in a psychological state of independency, which accordingly is perpetuated by the female to male child creating a submissive dependent mind of the offspring. Theoretically, the process would last from 100 - 1000 years.

The proposition is that through historical analysis, oral narrative methodology, and the emergence of contemporary incidents there are possible indicators to determine the extent at which black women played a multifarious role in sustaining or influencing psychological barriers between white/black and black/black relationships---essentially implementing the social psychological system of control. This research approach utilizes specifically oral history, psychological evidence, and narratives to better examine the process of lynching and prejudice. Ida B. Wells poignantly pronounces, "for every lynching humanity asks that America render its account to civilization and itself."<sup>17</sup> In accordance, the proposition is to illuminate narrative events in attempts to confront the nature of racial discrimination. The focus narrative is an illustration of brutal and bloody lynching of Mary Turner a black woman caught in the turmoil of her times.

## II. The Red Summer Incident of Mary Turner

*Pastoral scene of the gallant South,  
The bulging eyes and twisted mouth,  
The scent of magnolias, sweet and fresh,  
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh.* - Lewis Allen



Leading up to the Red Summer of 1919 there were 54 lynchings in 1916 and 38 in 1917. July 28<sup>th</sup> 1917, on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, New York the NAACP organized a silent parade with anti-lynching propaganda that flew high with pessimistic posters pessimism screaming YOUR HANDS ARE FULL OF BLOOD. World War I did not make America free for Democracy for all and this sententious hypocrisy rankled within the black American Community.<sup>18</sup>

The mob 'execution' of a black man, woman, or family was a public theater, often a festive affair. On a number of occasions newspaper articles about the lynching occasion's time and place was announced in advance with such colorful headlines as "Negro Jerky and Sullen as Burning Hour Nears."<sup>19</sup> At times, transportation was provided by 'excursion' trains to transport spectators to the scene. Parents sent notes to school to excuse children from school and employers released workers to attend. Entire families engaged in this gruesome celebratory event, it was a sight to see. The Mary Turner incident occurred in Brooks County, Georgia and Valdosta, Georgia, a southern place fraught with a deep-seated legacy of prejudice angst and lynching.<sup>20</sup>

To properly capture the fervor of the moment it is imperative to describe the events that initiated a volatile mood of the southern community, to depict exactly how fear and violence mingled to create a reckless environment of hyper-paranoia, instigating series of innocent deaths. Hampton Smith owner of a large plantation in Brook County, bore poor reputation in the community for his mistreatment of black employees.<sup>21</sup> Smith was murdered, shot twice through a window at home. There was talk of conspiracy among the blacks who had suffered at the hands of Smith, which included Hayes Turner and Mary Turner whom Smith beat on occasion. All blacks were suspect. The atmosphere held a dangerous, fickle vibe that resonated amidst the folks of Valdosta and Brooks County. The heat was on, the thirst of blood in the air, and search

for a target to hold culpable for recent death of a white man. Six lynchings occurred as a result, the third being Hayes.<sup>22</sup>

In an interview Arnold Rhym, 67, cousin to Mary Turner explicates the circumstances of Mary Turner's husband, Hayes Turner, lynching that ultimately led to the lynching of Mary Turner. Hayes is a case of man being in the wrong place, at an extraordinarily wrong time. "Two white man got into an argument about a settlement or something. Hayes dipped into it. [They] put it on Hayes Turner. He got away from them and made it to Valdosta. Black folks to' where he was to keep from getting lynched and he got caught in Valdosta."<sup>23</sup> Simie Jackson, 94 year-old, an eye-witness to the account adds, "Drug Haze from Valdosta to over here [Brooks County, *Camp Ground*]. Killed him in Valdosta." Jesse Wade [released him to the mob], a no good sheriff."<sup>24</sup>

Olgesby Jackson, 56 year-old, cousin of Mary Turner continues, "Mobs were irate and uncontrollable after the Hayes incident... There is going to be hell in Brooks County this day. After, there was big mob of whites on horses and buggies. There was a wholesale of lynching of blacks...They said they lynched 27 in one day out there on old 84, call it *nigger branch* now."<sup>25</sup> Arnold asserts, "Mary went to raisin' cane and they got her."<sup>26</sup> The details of the Mary Turner incident are as follows. After hearing of her husband's murder, Mary Turner, eight months pregnant vowed to find those who had unjustly dragged and lynched her husband. She threatened the perpetrators with legal action of the courts. The Associate Press later terms her outrage as "unwise remarks."<sup>27</sup>

A mob of several hundred white men and women determined to "teach her a lesson." After tying her ankles together, they hung her from a tree, head downward. Dousing her clothes with gasoline, they burned them from her body. While she was still alive, someone used a knife, ordinarily reserved for splitting hogs to cut open the woman's abdomen. The infant fell prematurely from her womb to the ground and cried briefly,

whereupon a member of this Valdosta, Georgia, mob crushed the baby's head beneath his heel. Hundreds of bullets were then fired into Mary Turner's body, completing the work of the mob.<sup>28</sup>

Arnold's childhood was greatly impressed by images of this stunningly merciless, bloody slaying of mother and child. "They cut her baby out of her. They say it was Guy Willison. The name of the man.... They hung her up. They said 'who got nerve enough to cut the b----.' Cut her belly open. He told 'em to "gimmie that jug." Some to them were drinkin'. Open his knife and split her stomach open. When they did, that blood and water just spewed out [covering Willison]. And in the summertime, he would break out. He would have one of 'em big straw hats with a net over it. Flies and gnats would be at him. He would breakout all over his hands, arms..." "When the baby fell out, they stomped the baby... There was no punishment for killing blacks, lynching blacks."<sup>29</sup> Brooks County, Georgia led the nation in lynching. "It was like shooting rabbits. It was a pastime. They did like they wantta."<sup>30</sup> Officially, Mary Turner was charged with the offense of complicity in murder, the governmental system wrongly legitimates her murder.

The dimension that is poignant in this incident is the bold, audacious element in Mary Turner's protest. This was an era where blacks dared not rock the boat, where survival was analogous to silence and submission. Mary Turner despite her socially diminutive circumstance of race and sex and despite the raging sadism of the Valdosta mob she protested, thoroughly outraged by the injustice of her husband's lynching. Blacks began to fight back. The riots of the Red Summer were not all one-way massacres; some lynching riots were more like wars. Blacks found a fierce, exhilarating joy that some would take up arms in defense.<sup>31</sup>

In determining the extent at which Lynch's system of social control is carried an aspect to now significant to analyze are women in term of influence and social power. The woman in the



family institution plays a vital role in care-taking, instilling values, and socially educating offspring.

The assignment to women of primary responsibility for child-care and socialization is an important factor contributing to their power. Until they reach adulthood children spend most of their time, other than when they are in school, with their mothers and other women. ...much of the child's learning of socially acceptable behavioral patterns is an informal process. During the course of daily interaction in the household, children learn the community's expectations for correct behavior, as well as many cultural theories and explanations of their world of phenomenal experience.<sup>32</sup>

It is found that family obligations and preparation for family roles are stressed more in the upbringing of girls than is the case for boys. Therefore, men and women enter adolescence and young adulthood with quite a different self-definitions and roles orientations.<sup>33</sup> "Women, much more than men, have been groomed to be kin-keepers and "ministers of the interior", e.g. focused on the inner familial world and its workings..."<sup>34</sup> Historically black women are exploited on the basis of gender as breeders and raisers of slaves for plantation owners."<sup>35</sup> Lynch exploits the social power of black women in the family as a tool to perpetuate what he terms as *orbiting cycle* of psychological fear and humiliation in order to maintain social control in the name of basic economic profit.

To better understand the societal image of black woman during the racially tentative era of Reconstruction here is an interview with Aneesah Shaheed a 69 year-old, born in 1933, brought up in Georgia during a time where she said, "basically, everybody knew their place and you just [didn't] rock the boat." "Black people had no choice. They grumble about it but to themselves. They talked about how they did us. No one had no idea how to go about changing it or what, because it was dangerous. They could just take you and hang you for no reason at all. If a white women go tell somebody that that "nigga whistle at m," they could go lynch him. You

couldn't talk back to them."<sup>36</sup> By the end of the 1930s the prominent fear of death by lynching loomed large even to a six year old.

Aneesah as a little girl carried water to the field laborers, some black some white. The white always drank first. The inequity was evidence in other areas, she was forced to eat out the back door, blacks folks worked longer and harder for less pay, she was forced to drink out of crummy "Colored Only" water fountains, use dirty "Colored Only" bus stations, and not sit in a restaurants.<sup>37</sup> Aneesah's thoughts of her subjugated predicament were originated from her grandmother. "My grandmother always taught us to do the things that should get us into heaven. And she would always say, "ain't no white folks going to heaven."<sup>38</sup> And we knew by that we knew what they were doing to us was wrong." Next, Aneesah observes what it was to be black woman during this time. "See women, they had two battles to fight. They had to fight the white race and black men. Because at one time the man felt like a women didn't have rights. That's were the two come in, women didn't have rights with the white people and women didn't have rights with the black men. There's two things against them, being black and being a woman. People used to use the phrase, "keep 'em barefoot and pregnant" and that was horrible."<sup>39</sup>

Paradoxically, the black women despite her struggles with whites and black men, in terms of labor they performed a double duty, a man's share in the fields and the domestic activities like washing, cooking, gardening, cleaning and ploughing. Black women after the Civil War and before the 1960s Civil Rights Movement were employed largely as laundresses and domestic servants and sometimes as common laborers in yards and waste gatherers, working 14 to 16 hour days.<sup>40</sup> They worked harder and longer than black men.

The next subject in the interview pertained to the upbringing of her children. Aneesah had four boys and she taught them anything other then notions of psychological dependency, "I

told them they would never tell their wife they didn't know how to do anything because I'm going to teach you how to do it all. And I said, "don't ever think a woman is just here to wait on you, you wait on yourself."<sup>41</sup> Most likely due to Aneesah's survival of personal hardships, intense labor, and racial inequity she desired an improvement of conditions for black women. Consequently her teachings were motivated to dispel the misapprehension that black women are simply at the beck and call of the black men. Feminine roles usually lack respect from the dominant masculine role because of the expectations of weakness and subservience associated with femininity. However, as evidence this idea is a social construction and in reality black women work longer, harder, and have more responsibility and power particularly in child-rearing. Black women continue to fight the battles of sex and race.

### III. The Aftermath & Responses in the Contemporary

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*Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck,  
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,  
For the sun to rot, for the trees to drop,  
Here is a strange and bitter crop. - Lewis Allen*

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In the contemporary there are a myriad of reactions from blacks concerning the state of the black race. After American slavery during Reconstruction the tumultuous era is pierced by social activism, as blacks scramble to give order to their circumstance economically, politically, and socially disrupted and attempt to redefine the meanings of race and privilege as it applies to their daily lives.

After the Civil War Booker T. Washington, an educator and founder of the Tuskegee College, knew that society had to construct new laws, systems, and social processes to handle the absorption of 4 million freed blacks into the nation's economy. During Reconstruction,

Washington took it upon himself to become one of the most respected influential black spokesmen of African-Americans and assisted in influencing the development of a new social order. Washington's novel Up From Slavery outlines and advocates a new transcendental mentality in which Washington believes blacks must acquire in order to progress socially and economically in American society. In his Atlanta Exposition speech he denounces that blacks possess lingering bitterness towards whites. Washington placates white audiences with reassurances of love and forgetfulness.

“Casting down your bucket among my people, helping and encouraging them...

you can be sure in the future as in the past, that you and your families will be

surrounded by the most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people that the world has seen.”<sup>42</sup>

Washington is setting black middle class standards; being the model black, possessing eloquent command of language, manners, Washington was born into shackles of slavery then preceded through industry, hard labor, strong will, and sweat on his brow to obtain an education from Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia. As a result, Washington upholds a system of *meritocracy*, in which any man through hard work and effort will receive just reward. He endorsed this notion of meritocracy to all blacks. Washington stated “the Negro youth must work harder and must perform his tasks even better than a white youth in order to secure recognition.”<sup>43</sup> The black man in order to exhibit his worth has to overcompensate and surpass normal expectations to be considered laudable citizens.

“The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing.”<sup>44</sup>

Washington renders a sentiment of forgetting, surpassing, and forgiving. Though the question remains what about the condition of the *Mary Turners* of the world? How does the system of

*meritocracy* combat the perpetuating psychological system of lynching? What Washington lacks in his proposition is the notion of simple self-interest, to reconstruct the black image for affirmation of character and personality in order to combat the psychological bull blacks had been fed purposefully for social control. He deals with a false dichotomy. Blacks now have to measure up to standards instituted in a “white world.” He does not deal with formulating an independent socioeconomic measure of confidence and worth, which could ultimately destroy the artifice and perpetuation of racial biases.

An additional perspective comes from the Coming of Age in Mississippi by Anne Moody. The book is an autobiographical narrative work of a young, black girl coming of age during the volatile movement of the Civil Rights era. Moody touchingly conveys the effects of prejudice which negatively plagued her childhood. She spoke of the difficult economics conditions she faced; she spoke of a time in which her mother had to steal corn in order to feed her children and days that they starved. Many blacks lived in similar poor rural community and are limited by their socioeconomic circumstance. Their precarious existence depended upon “working a whiteman’s land, with a white man’s mule and a white man’s credit. Theirs was an oppressive, closed society, designed to thwart black advancement and encourage black subservience.”<sup>45</sup> The very people who hated them ruled their lives. The adults in Moody’s life were victims of this ironically fateful situation. Violent acts of racist discrimination, such as lynching, lay in the periphery in all black thought as a threat and a promise. Acts of discrimination instigated turbulent emotions of irritation and discontent, which served to exacerbate troubles within family and community.

Moody’s stepmother’s foot was shot off in a neighbor’s domestic dispute while she attempted to protect a wife and her kids from an irate husband, yet she did not blame the shooter,

Wilbert. She stated “It aint’s Wilbert’s fault...Him and Janie wouldn’t be fightin’ if Wilbert could get a good job and make enough money to take care of them children. If these damn white folks ain’t shootin’ nigger’s brains out they are starvin’ them to death. A nigger can’t make it no way he try in this fuckin’ place.”<sup>46</sup> The physical and psychological injuries of racism went deep in the heart of society. Black people were tired, tired of being threatened, beaten, clubbed, lynched, spat on, and denied basic human rights of respect, and as evidence here, they were tired of blaming each other. Aneesah comments, that “Long and then, that’s the way we were brought up in that, we didn’t realize exactly how bad it was until we were out of it and looked back.”<sup>47</sup>

The black children brought up in this environment watched their parents and heard their grievances. Black people wanted changed, needed changed. Moody joined the Civil Rights Movement and work vigorous alongside great leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr. to struggle for equality. Amidst the church bombings, nonviolent demonstrations, marches, boycotts, and media tumult of 1960s, *We Shall Overcome* appeared an attainable dream of social freedom. The Civil Rights Movement was about blacks finally awaking from their victimized worlds and realizing the true barbarity and ignorance under which they were governed and suffered. Thus the people could no longer rest in their predicament and set out to battle racist ideals with marches, speeches, pleas, and if must, the very breathe in their bodies. There rose a great spirit of hope and euphoria.

Moody participated in SNCC, a zealous student organization, to organize sit-ins, make public motivational speeches, get names for voter registration, be arrested, or basically be involved in nonviolent, newsworthy protest that would shake America’s sleepy conscious. She listened to the moving speeches of Medgar Evers and dined and spoke with great black leaders such as Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Repeatedly, Moody faced many obstacles in her trek

through the Civil Rights Movement. She was frightened by the ferocity of the cops and their ready club, yet despite doubts, cut-down leaders, failed voter-registration plans, and threats of physical violence she pursued the Civil Rights Movement because of the hope. The hope she saw when old, weary wrinkled faces sang “Oh, Freedom, Oh, Freedom,/ Oh, Freedom over me./ And before I’ll be a slave/ I’ll be buried in my grave/ And go home to my Lord and be free/ No more lynchings...”<sup>48</sup>

This euphoria and hope marked the period of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s---a turning point in the history of black struggle. Racial equality represented the threat of change. A change that would upset established systems of privilege and open equal opportunities for education, jobs, housing, voting, and public facilities. The Civil Rights movement was about blacks finally awaking from their victimize worlds and realizing the true barbarity and ignorance under which they were governed and suffered. Along with this new attitude, new racist methods of social control metamorphosed. Outright lynching was replaced by assassinations, bombings, beatings and race riot, and though horrific and sorrowful, these acts were different from ‘classic’ lynching which was exercised without moral or legal constraints.<sup>49</sup> Blacks and their supporters could no longer rest in their predicament and set out to battle racist ideals with marches, boycotts, sit-ins, speeches, pleas, and if must, the very breathe in their bodies.

Contemporary issues of prejudice, though subtle are alive and well. Returning to Valdosta, Georgia in Lowndes County there is a recent incident of a symbolic lynching perpetrated by three Lowndes High School (LHS) students. “The act in question involved these student painting several Barbie dolls black, tying nooses around their necks and hanging them from the ceiling” October 2, 2002.<sup>50</sup> Other students reported Klu Klux Klan graffiti written on the walls throughout the school. The peculiarities of this case, is Linda Buford relative to student

at Lowndes High School said that no one wanted to talk about what happened. “The kids think they don’t say anything, then it will go away and never happen again. We need to make this type of behavior stop. What if they had a real black child hanging there instead of dolls.”<sup>51</sup> Aneesah Shaheed also a resident of Lowndes County commented on the episode during an interview. “They had black Barbies dolls hanging. Parents need to talk a different language to their children. Children did that, but this is the same thing they used to do years ago. How did their children learn this? They didn’t learn it from watching TV.”<sup>52</sup>

The official immediate response came from Lowndes County School System Superintendent, Dr. Steve Smith, who issued five days out-of-suspension for all three white students for violation of rule 155 code. His comment about the incident was “It was simply inappropriate and immature behavior on their part. They used poor judgment. I have seen students do some pretty bad things over the years. However, that does not make them bad people.”<sup>53</sup> According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation “offenses motivated in part or singularly by personal prejudice against other because of diversity—race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity/national origin, or disability,” which significantly conflicts with Smith’s lenient attitude towards the kids. Legally, the three kids appalling, “poor judgment” qualifies as a hate crime and falls under the “intimidation offense code with the bias motivation being anti-black.”<sup>54</sup> Catherine Turner, whose son and nephew attend LHS, is angry about the entire incident. Her son was afraid to tell her about the dolls in fear of stirring things up. This particular black woman exclaims, “If I have to go to that school every day to ensure his safety, I will do so.”<sup>55</sup>

The principal question proposed is whether there are indications that Lynch’s social psychological system continues to compel black women to perpetuate social inferiority



complexities to offspring, which attributes prolonged subjugated, slave-like mentality to the upbringing by black women. The black women's voices that are prevalent throughout the previous narratives are not defined absolutely by fear. Instead what becomes more apparent is a kind of audaciousness, a shrewd realism about the position which race/gender conditions institutes. Accordingly, black women became skilled at maneuvering within the societal constraints of their sex and race. Mary Turner, living in the inferno of prejudice and dared to defy a bloodthirsty mob for what she understood was right. She died for her objections, for her belief. In the 1930s, Aneesah Shaheed grew up battling both white supremacy and the black masculine ideals of supremacy, yet she recognized and taught her male children the wisdom of equal marital partnership. In the 1960s, Anne Moody worked tirelessly in nonviolent demonstrations, suffering physical threats for the struggle of black equality. Today we have Cynthia Turner, outraged mother, who moves to protect her child in his educational endeavors at her personal costs. These women are not examples of weak and easily manipulated minds.

The Lynch's system gives little or no credit to the natural cognitive, rational logic within humans, blacks. Ironically, the subjective egotism and stereotypes which drove his theory and lead to its ruin. Erroneously, he underestimated the inner strength and will of his subjects, as evidence by aforementioned narrative accounts. Black women distinctively diverge from the conceit of Lynch's thesis and prove the *phenomenon* condition, a social psychological shift.

**V. IV. Conclusion: Psychological Reconstruction**

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*They's shame niggers ever was slaves* – Hurmence, ix

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Slavery is often perceived as an embarrassment, a deep humiliation of African-American past. Since the Civil Rights Movement socioeconomic conditions have improved. Concurrently, blacks are ignoring and avoiding the lingering subtle metamorphoses of slave-like mentality, like the white elephant in the room no one wants to mention or confront. “My folks don’t want me to talk about slavery...[yet] to ignore life under slavery is to ignore black pioneering in the United States---and, in effect, to deny [black] humanity, as it was denied in slavery time.”<sup>56</sup> In reality is slavery and its effects are over? Has the Civil Rights Movement definitively answered most, if not all socioeconomic inequalities?

Dr. Khalid Al-Mansour, an international attorney and businessman works dedicatedly as a religious activist, author and teacher. He rejects the African-American middle-class complacency and the acceptance of race conditions. Dr. Al-Mansour declares, “There is a reason why the African-American either does not want to or is afraid today to talk about their origins. One of the reasons had to do with slavery... repudiate all of your background, your religion, your cultural underpinning, your social antecedents, your economic experiences or die. Coupled with that enforcement was a level of uncertainty in their everyday lives that no one can endure. ... When you remove certainty from the life of a human-being you have a personality dislocation when that is replaced with whippings, and brutalities, fears, social alienation--- the heart of which says you are nothing, you came from nothing, and you will never be anything at all. The constant surveillance, constant disintegration, constant emasculation, that is what happened to [African-Americans]. So, many of [black] leaders took the message literally. They don’t want to know. They don’t want to have to give an account for the origin of a race in my view is the greatest untold history that has ever occurred...The African-American will never will be restored

to total humanity, until that period whether it be called a catharsis or repentance until we address what happen in our *personality*... [blacks] will always be prone to covering, escaping.”<sup>57</sup>

Dr. Al-Mansour distinguishes among the forced oppressive circumstances of slave and the contemporary black who is psychologically trapped because of ignorance and avoidance. “The slaves when they came...they knew who the enemy was and knew how they were oppressing them, the black rapper doesn’t know, the black domestic maid doesn’t know, the brother on the corner who is loaded doesn’t understand that there is a psychological dislocation in his personality that [he] continues to inherit, it’s cultural. But the condition that gave rise to [psychological dislocation] still remains and [society] fosters [it]. The slave master has been extracted but [blacks] are still living out the slave system. [Blacks] are still obeying those commandments... there is no one with a whip over [them], [blacks] are not being told in 3 seconds “Hate Africa,” but [they] are still maintaining, exhibiting and living the slave experience...”<sup>58</sup> Dr. Al-Mansour position is to reconstruct the black personality for the beneficence of self-interest. He urges blacks not to settle for equal socioeconomic means but to go deeper, to understand the origins of black subjugated mentality in order to enlighten the race with self-confidence, self-worth, and great self-love. Although the general attitudes are changing, the residue of the underlying psychological condition remains. The Lowndes County black Barbie dolls incident indicates a surviving nostalgia for the petering institution of lynching. Finally, I do want to make a clear assertion that though the particular Lynch system in question is not currently bursting in force this does not empirically imply that all lingering alterations and subtle manifestations of the system are superseded.



**Footnotes:**

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9. Henriques, Changing the Subject, 88.
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24. Simie Jackson, interview with Mary Turner descendent, Brooks County, Georgia, 3 November 2002.
25. Oglesby Jackson Sr., interview with Mary Turner descendent, Brooks County, Georgia, 3 November 2002.
26. Rhym's, eye-witness, 3 November 2002.
27. Barutiwa, *The Bloody Lynching* [<http://www.barutiqa.com/bns/bio11.html>], 1.
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