

FRIDAY
JULY 1
2005



- ShopNetDaily
- Free News Alerts!
- Page 1 News
- Page 2 News
- VideoNetDaily
- G2 Bulletin
- BizNetDaily
- LocalNetDaily
- Commentary
- Classified Ads
- Letters
- Health
- Weather
- TV Guide

JACK CASHILL



WORLDNETDAILY EXCLUSIVE COMMENTARY

HOODWINKED Alex Haley's immaculate roots

Posted: July 1, 2005
1:00 a.m. Eastern

Editor's note: The following commentary is excerpted from Jack Cashill's eye-opening new book, "Hoodwinked: How Intellectual Hucksters Have Hijacked American Culture," where he shows how, over the last century, "progressive" writers and producers have been using falsehood and fraud as their primary weapons in their attack on America.

© 2005 WorldNetDaily.com

Alex Haley's "Roots: The Saga of an American Family," first published in 1976, generated extraordinary reviews and spectacular sales, here and abroad. The mini-series based on the book captured more viewers than any series before it. And Haley won a special Pulitzer Prize for telling the true story of a black family from its origins in Africa through seven generations to the present day in America.

The only problem is that the book was a fraud from beginning to end,

Working backward through the book, Haley decides to trace his family's heritage to its African roots. All

WND Today's highlights NEWS:

- GO** Accused fetus-eater says he's vegetarian
- GO** NBC anchor compares Founders to terrorists
- GO** Ex-hostage: Iranian leader threatened my son
- GO** Uzbek cops torture Christian

[MusicNetDaily](#)[Movies](#)[Stocks](#)

3 books for
\$1 each



JOIN NOW ►

CONSERVATIVE
BOOK CLUB

**Proof
of
terrorism
link!**

that he has to guide him are the tales his grandmother and great aunts have told him about "the farthest-back person" they could recall, "the African." According to his relatives, the African's master had called him "Toby" after he first arrived by ship in "Naplis."

Proud and defiant, Toby continued to call himself "Kin-tay." In time, Toby had a little girl named "Kizzy." Kizzy remembered that her father used to call a guitar a "Ko" and a nearby river the "Kamby Bolongo." Working from little more than this and the names of Kizzy's descendants, Haley finds his way back to the Gambia River, or "Kamby Bolongo." Here he learns firsthand from an old-time "griot," the true story of his own ancestor, Kunta Kinte.

The story unfolds tranquilly enough. Born in 1750, Kinte grows up in a peaceful, sheltering community along the Gambia River in West Africa. He is well schooled in math and writing and the Islamic faith. At age 17, Kinte is snatched from his youthful idyll by the evil, club-bearing "toubobs," or white people.

When he finally regains his senses four days later, Kinte finds himself chained in the stinking, claustrophobic hold of an ocean-going vessel, manned by ugly toubobs, all of them seemingly British or American. After a hellish journey, he arrives in Annapolis, attempts to escape four times, and is subdued only after some poor, white bounty hunters chop off half his foot. The year is 1767.

In Haley's tale, it is the whites who enter the forest and enslave the blacks, not Arab slave traders, not other blacks. Since Kinte is unconscious through the period of transaction, the reader has no picture of African participation in the slave market, nor of any Portuguese or Hispanic involvement in the slave trade.

As a Muslim, Kinte does not sense any virtue in Christianity. Indeed, it strikes him as crude and hypocritical. Coming of age during the revolutionary period in Virginia, Kinte sees the revolution as inherently fraudulent: "'Give me liberty or give me death,' Kunta liked that, but he couldn't understand how somebody white could say it; white folks looked pretty free to him."

Approaching 70 when "Roots" debuted, Harold Courlander was shocked to read it. For the previous 30 years or more, Courlander had been traveling the world collecting folk tales and writing about his findings.

In 1978, Courlander sued Haley in a U.S. District Court in New York for copyright infringement. The suit cited 81 passages that had been lifted from Courlander's "The African," as well as the plot and certain characters. Haley's defense fell apart when, during discovery, the plaintiff's lawyers found three

[GO](#) **Lesbians target innkeeper over same-sex 'wedding'**

[GO](#) **Protesters to flood Gaza if closure not rescinded**

COMMENTARY:

[GO](#) **Happy Dependence Day**
By Joseph Farah

[GO](#) **Constitutional militia required by 2nd Amendment**
By Devvy Kidd

[GO](#) **Will the real liars please stand up?**
By David Limbaugh

quotes from "The African" among his typed notes, notes that he had apparently failed to destroy.

The last thing the judge wanted to do was to undermine a newly ascendant black hero. Midway through the trial, he counseled Haley and his attorneys that he would have to contemplate a perjury charge unless they settled with Courlander. They did just that to the tune of \$650,000, or about \$2 million by 2005 standards. In return, Courlander agreed to keep quiet about the suit, which he did until he died in 1996.

The media paid scant attention to the suit and even then failed to explore the real gist of the scandal: namely that the author of a "nonfiction" book plagiarized from a fictional one.

In the late 1970s, two leading genealogists, Gary Mills and Elizabeth Shown Mills, decided to follow up on Haley's work through the relevant archives in Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland. They found that Haley, like most amateur genealogists, made mistakes. But they found, too, that his transgressions went well beyond mere mistakes. "We expected ineptitude, but not subterfuge," observed Elizabeth, herself the editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly.

The records showed that in the pre-Civil War period, Haley got virtually everything wrong. In "Roots," for instance, Haley tells in great excited detail how he tracked down the very ship that Kunta Kinte had taken from the Gambia to 'Napolis, the Lord Ligonier in 1767, the very year that "the King's soldiers came" to the Gambia. In fact, as the Mills discovered, the man that Haley identifies as Kunta Kinte, a slave by the name of Toby in the possession of the John Waller family, could not have been Kunta Kinte or Haley's ancestor. Toby had been in America as early as 1762, five years before the Lord Ligonier arrived. Worse for Haley, Toby died eight years before his presumed daughter Kizzy was born.

Still, neither the lawsuit nor the unraveling of the genealogy dimmed Haley's star while he was alive.. The book and video remained a staple in history classes across America. The Pulitzer remained in his trophy case. And the awards and the money continued to roll in.

In 1993, a year after Haley's death, literary detective Philip Nobile did his best to blow the whistle on what he calls "one of the great literary hoaxes of modern times." In February of that year, he published "Uncovering Roots" in the influential alternative publication, the Village Voice. The article brought to a larger public the story of the Courlander suit and the Mills' genealogy. Nobile also revealed that Haley's editor at Playboy magazine, the very white and Jewish Murray Fisher, did much of the book's writing.

In the British Isles, the Nobile expose was a big story. It got serious coverage in all the major newspapers, and the BBC later made a documentary. The American cultural establishment, however, continued to turn its back on the story. The New York Times had exactly this to say about the controversy:

Two weeks ago, the charges about the authenticity of "Roots" and the integrity of Mr.

*Haley were raised anew in an investigative article by Philip Nobile in the Village Voice.
Members of the Haley family have rebutted the accusations.*

And that was that.

Order your copy of Jack Cashill's amazing new book, "Hoodwinked: How Intellectual Hucksters Have Hijacked American Culture."

If you'd rather order by phone, call WND's toll-free customer service line at 1-800-4WND-COM (1-800-496-3266).

As a very special added bonus, when you purchase "Hoodwinked" from WorldNetDaily's online store, you can also receive – FREE – three issues of our acclaimed monthly Whistleblower magazine, which many have called the best news magazine in the world. That's a \$22.50 free value! (Offer good in the U.S. only.) Watch for the free offer during checkout.

HOODWINKED columns:

[The Mumia Syndrome](#)

[Little Eichmanns](#)

[Michael Moore disarms America](#)


[Margaret Mead's fantasy island of sexual fulfillment](#)


[The pseudo-science of abusing children](#)

[Margaret Sanger's nation of 'morons'](#)

[DDT-eating scientist exposes eco-fraud](#)

Jack Cashill is an Emmy-award winning independent writer and producer with a Ph.D. in American Studies from Purdue.

 E-mail to a Friend

 Printer-friendly version



[E-MAIL JACK CASHILL](#) | [GO TO JACK CASHILL'S ARCHIVE](#)

[GO TO PAGE 1](#) | [GO TO PAGE 2](#) | [GO TO COMMENTARY](#)

[SEARCH WND](#) | [CONTACT WND](#)

WorldNetDailyTM

© 2005 WorldNetDaily.com, Inc.

[Contact WND](#)

[Co-Located at Fiber Internet Center](#)