

Audio Transcript: JoNina Abron-Ervin interviewed by Jessica Lynne

This audio transcript has been substantially edited for clarity and flow.

Jessica Lynne [JL]: [00:00:02] I would love to start this conversation at the beginning and ask you how and when you first came to understand yourself as a storyteller through the written word.

JoNina Abron-Ervin [JAE]: [00:00:21] . When I was in college in the late 60s, I had thought I was probably going to be a lawyer. I thought I wanted to be a lawyer for the movement. But when I got to college, I started thinking about journalism, and in the last two years I was in college, I was the co-editor of my campus newspaper. I think I began to realize that, well, you know, using the news media I can still help the black liberation struggle because I'll be writing about events that are going on or other things. I had not thought about it before. Plus, if I wanted to be a lawyer, I had to go to law school and do all that and get a license. And I said, you know, I don't have to do that. I like to write. In fact, I was on the newspaper staff of what we used to call back in the day junior high school. You all call it middle school. That was seventh and eighth grade. Then I was on the staff of the high school newspaper. I guess it's been in my blood. So I guess maybe at some point I started thinking this is something that I like to do, obviously.

I began to realize that journalists tell a kind of story. I had never thought about that before. I thought about storytellers as people who write fiction. But all stories are not fiction, right? My husband, Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, is a great storyteller. He really knows how to capture your interest when you're talking to him. Ninety-nine percent of the time, it's not fiction. He's talking to you about what's going on and what happened to him. I really began to understand that I could contribute to the struggle as a writer. I started to understand that when I was about 20, 21 years old and I'm now 77. So it's been a while, but I did at some point realize it.

JL: [00:02:56] I appreciate that, and I share that experience of coming into the understanding that even if you're doing journalism or nonfiction work, you too can be a storyteller. Even if it's not necessarily through poetry or fiction, I feel like the Black journalist, the Black essayist, the critic, all of us are storytellers. Now, towards what end is a very different concern. Relatedly, one thing that I really enjoyed learning about, especially in the acknowledgements of your book, is that your mother was an author and to me as a reader, it felt like a detail -- even if it's not necessarily elaborated on in the book fully -- it felt like such an important way to honor her and an important detail not to gloss over. So I wanted to ask how you observed her as a writer. Do you think now that any of the lessons that you may have gleaned from observing her, and your relationship to her, inform your own work as a writer?

JAE: [00:04:52] I learned from my mother that it's okay to write about yourself. I've always been somewhat skittish about writing about personal things. I've always wanted to be writing about the struggle. My mother was not a widely published author. She published one article, "From Amazon Woman to Princess," in the book, *Chicken Soup for the Grandparents' Soul*. She wrote an essay about the nickname, Princess, that some of her grandchildren gave her. This touched her deeply because my mother spent a lot of her life, unfortunately, not having a good image of herself. She did not think of herself like a princess in a fairy tale. When my youngest sister's children decided to call her princess, Mother wrote about how that really touched her and made her very emotional!

A lot of people don't like to necessarily share their problems with their self-image. That's very personal. Her publishing that story really sort of helped me to understand that it's okay to write about your personal life. I'm maybe 60 percent of the way through the first draft of my memoir. The person who's done a fantastic job helping me is a sister I was in the Black Panther Party with, Dale Rascoe. Dale is a memoir teacher. She kept telling me, "You know, JoNina, your life is not a news story. It's not enough to say you were born, so and so, and you attended that conference. People want to know who you are, what life was like for you." Some of that was okay for me to write. There are other parts I have problems with, but having seen what my mother did and what Dale told me started to make sense to me. People do want to know what I did and when I did it. They also want to know how these things affected me. What was it like for me growing up? Things like that.

JL: [00:08:44] What has it been like working on this new memoir and are there parts of your life story as you shape them on the page that feel more vulnerable to touch and make public? Or are you feeling propelled as you look back?

JA: [00:09:14] There are definitely parts that I feel vulnerable about. My memoir writing coach believes that if you're going to do a memoir, you should tell it all. She doesn't want my book to be an autobiography, [where] you're dealing with what you did, when you did it, and stuff like that. So, mine won't be that. But I definitely feel more vulnerable. She and I just don't have the same opinion about telling it all. There are some things I'm not going to tell, and I don't think that I'm obligated to. But there are other things that will be good for me to write that maybe I hadn't thought about. So yeah, it definitely makes you feel more vulnerable. There's no question about it. You begin to think, well, if I put that in there, is that going to hurt somebody?

JL: [00:10:26] It strikes me that autobiography is like the accounting of facts. But memoir is like the truth that you make of those facts. And not all the facts necessarily lead to the same kind of truthful conclusions. I mean, maybe I'm wrong. I'm still working it out in my head, too. But I do appreciate that difference. There is something about how the truth comes out in the story form that's different between the two approaches, you know?

JA: [00:11:00] I got a good start on it. My publisher said that my book, *Driven by the Movement, Reports from the Black Power Era*, is a collective biography about several people. I had never thought of it like that. Most of them did share very personal things. There were things they did not want to talk about, wouldn't or couldn't. But for the most part, they did. They shared a lot of personal things. Having written and published two editions of my book has helped me to understand more about the importance of writing about the personal.

I know that your generation and Gen Z and even up to maybe Gen X -- my daughter's Gen X, but she's a little older -- but that you all want to know what it was like for us, what we went through, how we felt. You read all the stuff. You know I was the editor of the Black Panther newspaper. You know I did X, Y, and Z at different parts of my life. But you want to know what was it like? What did it feel like? I understand now that if I don't put any of that in my memoir, I will be shortchanging my readers. I want to help educate and share with the generations coming up and I can't share with them what I've learned if I don't deal with some of the personal. So it's been a good process for me, a very good process.

JL: [00:12:45] I mean, we're all waiting. I can't wait to read it.

JAE: [00:12:49] Yeah, I gotta get back to it. I get distracted by a lot of stuff. That's my life. But part of it is also this whole thing about how much I want to tell and having disagreements with my writing coach about the right approach.

JL: [00:13:14] This is this is actually an interesting segue because I think one of the things that you outlined for us as your readers in *Driven by the Movement*, in the preface, is that you draw a line between the work of the historian and the work that you do as a journalist. But your comment, the comment that you shared from AK Press about the book itself being a collective biography, has me wondering if you could talk more about why that line is a line for you. As I read the book and understand it, of course it is a journalistic endeavor to me as a reader. But it is also, I think, a historical text. I feel like you're doing so much of the historian's job, whereas a more textbook approach to history, if you will, would read differently. So I'm wondering if you could just talk a little bit about how you understand the boundaries between the role of or the task of the historian and the task of the journalist. So maybe this book is also like a meeting point between the two roles?

JAE: [00:14:36] Well, you know, it really is. I put that in the book because I wanted to distinguish myself from people who are specialists or scholars of history I've studied. I'm not that. I wanted to make sure that people understood that they're not going to get that from my book because that's not what I do. A historian is someone who specializes in a particular period of time and writes about that period. Most of my writings deal with the Black Power Era. So I guess in that sense, maybe I am an historian. I've always thought that journalists are historians of the current moment. You go online and you read that Trump, that asshole, did so and so today. That is an historical account of what happened on say, March 20, 2026, right? So as a journalist, I view myself as someone who's recounting daily history being made, what is going on right now. In the late 1990's when I was trying to publish the first edition of my book, I sent it to a university press. They said, "It's a very interesting book, but it's not scholarly. We can't use it." I told them, "You're correct. I never intended to write a scholarly book." Back then, a lot of the academic presses were more concerned about having scholarly books. But if you look at academic presses now, many of them have veered away that. All of the books they publish now are not scholarly. At some point, I guess they realized that they were going to miss a lot of important books if they didn't start to broaden their focus.

JL: [00:17:14] What was it like for you going back to the first edition, which in and of itself was like a retrospective gesture? Were you surprised by anything as you revisited the interviews? Did you learn anything from the assembling of this particular edition as compared to the first one? I'm curious what it feels like to come back to the work in a world that's very different from 2011, which was very different from the late 90s, which of course was very different from the Black Power era.

JAE: [00:18:16] When I interviewed the people in the 90s for my book, it had been twenty to twenty-five years since the Black Power Era. Time had passed. For the second edition of my book, I added two chapters, one on the Black Panther newspaper and one on the Black Panther Party survival programs. I had previously published these essays in other books. I also added a new interview to the second edition, about a former Black Panther comrade sister. If I had thought about it, her interview would have been in the first edition. It should have been. As I started writing the acknowledgements for the second edition, I realized that since 2011 when the first edition was published, fourteen or fifteen of the twenty people whom I interviewed in the 90s had died. Many of those who died were around my age. Some were older. This may sound strange. Going back and working on

the second edition and confronting the fact that many of the people had died whom I interviewed made me deal with my mortality.

JL: [00:19:57] That doesn't sound strange at all.

JAE: [00:19:59] Except maybe for three or four people, I personally knew on one level or another everyone I interviewed. I sent the first edition to one of the women I interviewed. Her daughter wrote back. She said, "JoNina, thank you so much for the book. Mom died last year. She had cancer."

JL: [00:20:30] Wow.

JAE: [00:20:31] These stories need to be told. We are getting older. I'm getting older. I'm 77. A young, beloved friend and ally of mine and my husband gently reminds us periodically that if we have not finished our wills, we need to get that done. He's right because you don't know when you're going to die.

While working on the second edition of my book, something I didn't realize when I did the first edition was that the people I interviewed told me really wonderful stories. In the book, I quote a writer who says that memoirs are not so much recounting all the facts of what happened to you in your life, but it's how you feel about what happened to you. She was saying that an important part of memoirs is sharing how you feel about your life. The wonderful stories that were shared with me were such that young people who read my book might be able to get something out of it. The people I talked to came to such a variety of backgrounds.

I interviewed three women who were single mothers who got involved in the struggle for different reasons. I got a greater appreciation of the stories that they told me and that they were willing to share what they did. I recall one interview with a brother whom I knew personally. At one point he said, "Okay, this is the part where I'm going to tell you this, but you need to turn the tape recorder off." I said, "No problem." I understood why he didn't want that to go in the book. But for the most part, nobody did that.

JL: [00:23:58] One of the things that stood out to me, just briefly, was, I think it was the brother in Sacramento—

JAE: [00:24:08] Dr. Hardy Frye? He became active in Sacramento.

JL: [00:24:14] He talks about listening to Kwame Ture and how he considered Black Power a little too nationalist because he was organizing with all these different types of folks and allies who were risking their lives going to jail. He didn't know if he was up to taking up the nationalist call. And I feel like the book is so good at making those disagreements or sort of divergences public, and talking about how these people were living full lives. People like Miss Joy who was a single mother trying to think about the way the state plays in the faces of Black and other women of color who are on welfare. Through the interviews, you really are able to give us a sense of the highs and the lows, the nuance that I feel like is rarely captured, and it forced me to rethink my own opinion about what I thought I knew or how I had engaged previously with stories from that era. So I appreciate how people are whole in your book and not just archetypes or one dimensional avatars of themselves.

JAE: [00:26:11] The person you're referring to is the late Dr. Hardy Frye. He was in SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee). But you know, when SNCC went over to

Black Power, Hardy disagreed with it. And he talks about that in the book and I thought that was important. People need to know that those disagreements happen, that everybody who was in SNCC didn't agree with SNCC going over to Black Power. There were some real differences of opinion about that.

JL: [00:26:47] On a technical note, what was it like for you as an editor to work with someone else as an editor? How did you negotiate another editor's sensibilities? Did you have moments of friction or disagreement and in bringing the book to life?

JA: [00:27:22] No. My editor at AK Press and I didn't have any real disagreements. When I was a college professor teaching journalism, I would always tell my students that every writer needs an editor. For the first edition of my book, I was my own editor. It was great to have someone else look at the book and tell me, you might want to consider that, you might want to consider this. My editor really didn't make a lot of changes. There were some things that they wanted me to rework, but it was good because when you're writing something, you're so wrapped up in the material, you need another person to look at it who can be a little bit more objective than you can. It took a lot of pressure off of me. I felt like I could be missing something or didn't say something right. Editors will help you get through that process. They respected the fact that I am an editor, too. It was great. We didn't have any problems at all.

JL: [00:28:41] I love that. We've kind of been touching on this a little bit, but I'll just ask it directly and plainly. Do you consider yourself an artist?

JA: [00:28:52] I have not until recent times. I guess that's because of my two younger sisters who are both retired public school teachers. One of my sisters taught art. She paints and draws. My other sister taught music. She's a pianist, sings and has directed her church's choir. (By the way, each of my sisters is a writer. One has published a children's book, and the other one plans to publish her doctoral dissertation.) I have always considered my sisters to be artists. But the reality of it is that if you create, if you write and you create written words or spoken words, stories, that is an art.

In recent years, I have come to consider myself more as an artist. I had been thinking of it just in terms of being a painter. I certainly can't paint anything! When I was in seventh and eighth grades, all students were required to take art. Girls had to take home economics classes. I always hated art class and home economics class! They messed up my GPA. I was a very good student. I get A's and B's in everything except for art and home economics. I got C's and maybe D's in those classes. In the 60s, girls had to take home economics because we were all going to be housewives and homemakers, right?

JL: [00:30:37] It was the time. You just had to find your form.

JA: [00:30:41] You do.

JL: [00:30:42] I asked that too, because I've been thinking a lot about the idea of pleasure. And writing, I know, is hard. You are taking language and then making a world out of that language to give over to readers. I'm curious how you think about the element of pleasure in your life and in your writing. What do you do to relax? How do you come out of being stuck if you're working on a story or an idea, especially with respect to the memoir, as you shared? I know everyone has a different opinion on writer's block, but how do you continue to allow yourself to feel good when you're in a moment where the writing might not necessarily feel good?

JAE: [00:31:50] The whole notion of finding pleasure and enjoying myself really took a while for me to develop. In the Black Panther Party, we felt like we were soldiers in the army fighting for the liberation of Black people. We oftentimes did not do enough to enjoy ourselves. I'm not saying we never did, but it was pretty much seven days a week, twenty-hours a day. As I've gotten older, I've learned some things. I know better now. Since I was very young, I have loved reading mystery detective books. That's my favorite way to relax. So what I do when I need a break, need something to enjoy myself, I go online and find a book to read. I recently started listening to audio books on YouTube. There are a lot of great audio mystery books written by some of my favorite authors, like the famous British mystery writer, Agatha Christie. I remember starting to read her books when I was 11 or 12 years old. I loved them, and I became a fan after that. Now, there are all these Agatha Christie fan clubs, and they create audiobooks.

JL: [00:33:28] The fans are reading her books?

JAE: [00:33:31] The fans are inspired by her books and are producing audiobooks that are different from the books she wrote. These are totally different stories based on characters Christie created. These fans come up with some pretty creative stuff. So that's what I do to relax. I watch some kind of mystery movie on YouTube or TV. When Lorenzo and I were doing a lot of heavy intensive organizing, one of the things we would do after a big march or a protest was to watch Netflix for two or three days. We basically would not answer the phone because we had to have time to decompress. We're not machines. We're just like everybody else.

JL: [00:34:34] That's right.

JAE: [00:34:35] So JoNina Abron-Ervin, the former editor of the Black Panther newspaper, likes murder mysteries and detective stories.

JL: [00:34:48] That's right.

JAE: [00:34:50] Have since I was a kid.

JL: [00:34:52] Do you feel like -- how do I want to ask this? One of the things that stuck out to me and reading the book is the way love and partnership -- here I mean, romantically, although it could be platonically and in other ways, -- are experienced. It feels like there's so many young people coming into a political awakening. Maybe they're moving from East Orange to LA or coming from Mississippi to Oakland. They're young and they're getting married and they're partnering and starting families and then those families are changing. I guess I want to ask, what do you think you've been learning or have learned about love and partnership in the context of this all? That was one thing that really stood out to me in the book, that as folks are changing themselves politically and reorienting themselves politically, those changes also seemed to be, at least as a reader, showing up in how the interpersonal was playing out.

JAE: [00:36:06] That is a very, very good, complex question and we could be here for three days talking about it. But let me try to summarize it as best as I can. When my father died, he and my mother had been married for 55 years. I grew up in that type of home. That was the type of relationship I saw. I had aunts and uncles who had been together for a long time. I believed that you find somebody and you stick with them. When I moved to the San Francisco Bay area in 1974 to work at Black Panther Central Headquarters in Oakland, it was at the time when the concept of free love was popular. Have you heard about that? It was all the rage at the time in the Bay area. It wasn't everywhere in the

country, but it was definitely in the Bay area. I'm a member of the Baby Boomer generation. Some Baby Boomers were trying to reject our parents' notions of marriage and family. We were going to do it differently. We didn't necessarily think that you had to have just one sexual partner. That was a key part of the culture of free love. Sleep with person A tomorrow and with person B the next day because you might be dead after that! What difference did it make? To this day, I only know of two or three couples who were together in the Black Panther Party and who are still together now.

I think at some point I realized that it is important to have a partner that you can be monogamous with for life. My ex-husband was in the Black Panther Party. The free love culture helped to destroy my first marriage. I had been divorced for years when I met Lorenzo, my husband now, because I had never been able to find someone to create a loving partnership with. What I'm trying to say is that as I got older, I understood that your life can't just revolve around the struggle. You have to have something else. Lorenzo and I are fortunate that we're both in the struggle, and we can share that. But we're still human beings. I'm an adoptive parent. I adopted my daughter when she was eight years old. She's Gen X, in her late 40s. My mother encouraged me to adopt my daughter. Mother said to me, "You know, JoNina. One day you aren't necessarily going to have the struggle to be involved in. You need something else in your life." I had never thought about that. It was because of my mother that I even considered adoption. I did it, and it really changed my life! Adopting my daughter definitely helped contribute to the person I am today. I used to believe that being in the struggle was all that I needed. Now, I have a better appreciation of the fact that it's not enough.

JL: [00:40:40] Thank you for sharing that. That's beautiful. I think a few of us need to hear that. So I appreciate your candidness there.

JAE: [00:40:49] When I talk to young people, I tell them to make sure to take time for themselves. I'm not trying to get in their business or anything. I just don't want them to burn out.

JL: [00:41:06]. Who are you learning from right now?

JAE: [00:41:14] I'm learning from a lot of people--your generation, the Millennials, Gen Z, and Gen X. Right now, I'm reading a book called *Moving Beyond The Left*. Have you seen that?

JL: [00:41:43] I haven't seen that one.

JAE: [00:41:46] It just came out. The author is Z, a co-founder of Black Socialists of America. The subtitle of the book is *A Post -Left Post-mortem in Pursuit of Freedom*. I know the author, Z, personally. They are a Millennial, a contemporary of yours. I'm an elder who's been in the so-called Left for decades. Z, a young person, has written a very critical analysis of the Left. It's a thick book. Z has gone through a lot of stuff in his work in the Left. I've complained about the Left for years, about what's left of the Left. Is there even a Left anymore? I'm learning from Z's book to appreciate younger people more. Z, a very busy activist, took a long time out of their life to write their book. As an elder, I'm learning from *Moving Beyond The Left* that I can't dismiss everything that young people think or do just because they're young. When I was young, I couldn't have written anything like this! It would never even have occurred to me to write anything like it. Maybe not enough time had passed. Maybe this is the time for a book like this to be written. I so respect and admire *Moving Beyond The Left* and other books written by young activists. They teach me as an elder how much I have to learn from young people. I am also learning at this

point in my life to be concerned about my legacy. I have to make sure that my legacy is safe and that after I'm dead, people who hated me don't claim they loved me.

JL: [00:45:56] Right, right.

JAE: [00:45:57] People will do that. A friend of mine, an elder like me, says we have to grow old gratefully. I'm trying to learn that. I'm grateful that I am still alive because many of my comrades didn't make it to be an elder.

I'm also learning from all these podcasts that are being done to expose the lies of the Trump regime about what's going on in Iran. They're great. Back in the 60s and 70s, we had what was called an underground press. There were a lot of radical left publications. The Black Panther newspaper was one of the best known, one of the most popular.

Today, the underground press consists of so many podcasts. The people on many of these podcasts are not young people. It's been amazing to me. I'm no supporter of the military, but there are a lot of old generals, my age, who are debunking the lies about America's war with Iran. They've been in the military and know what's going on. They know it's bullshit. I really appreciate that podcasts are available so that people can get information that the government tries to block. It's always going to be important. We're always going to need that. I'm learning a great deal and appreciate it.

JL: [00:51:58] I think just as you're learning from young folks, it's also important for us to make sure that we're listening to you all, to the elders, and paying attention to the fact that, as you know and articulate, the conditions of the struggle have to be concrete and specific to the time. But there are lessons that are nonetheless timeless. What do you think is at stake for the Black writer who wants to remain insurgent? Who doesn't necessarily want to be consumed by nostalgia, but still wants to be precise and sharp and forward moving in 2026, as we witness U.S. Imperialism and the project of Zionism engender collapse for us all. How can the young Black writer move in a way that still intervenes without necessarily falling into this the trap of nostalgia?

JAE: [00:53:19] One of the things that I always tell younger people is that the conditions now are a lot worse in many ways than they were in the 60s and 70s. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale started the Black Panther Party because of police brutality. But right now we have police terror in this country that's far worse than during the 60s and 70s. The police are much more militarized today. It's important for young people not to get wrapped up in romanticizing the past, writing about how great the Black Panther Party was standing on the corner with guns and everything. Please write about what's happening now. I know some of them do. I don't want to say nobody is. But attention should be drawn to the fact that in the United States in recent times police have killed well over a thousand people every year. We didn't have all those statistics back then, but now we do. You can go back and romanticize stuff about the Black Power Era, but the stuff now is a lot worse. We did not have back in the 60s and 70s, the degree of homelessness that we have now in this country. We did not have it. I'm not saying there were no people in the past, but we did not have we did not have this large class of poor people who were so poor they were on the streets. Younger people should not get so trapped in romanticizing what happened in the past, that they don't deal with the present situation.

My heart goes out to the younger activists today because y'all got it a lot harder than we did. We had to deal with COINTELPRO and all that stuff, yes. But overall, the socio-political conditions in America are far worse now than they were then. I appreciate the fact that you brought up people not getting caught up in the romanticism of talking about the

past. Young people ask me what was it like back then and what did you do? I share that with them. But at this point in my life, I am not trying to focus on what we did back then, only in the sense that there are lessons that maybe can be learned. But it's just like in the last 30 years or so, you've had different groups that have said they were forming new Black Panther parties. And you know there can never, never be a new Black Panther Party. And why is that? Because it will never be October 15th, 1966 again, when the BPP was founded. That is gone. We are never going to have the particular socio-economic and political conditions that were in America on October 15th, 1966.

I'm not trying to disrespect young people. I know that a lot of them want to form new groups. Some are. Some do it out of opportunism. There are others who truly want to carry on the work and the legacy of the BPP. There's apparently a new group that has started and they call themselves the original Black Panther Party. They're on Facebook, I'm told, and look like young people. Unless they're in their 70s like I am. they can't be the Original Black Panther Party.

JL: [00:58:59] Right.

JA: [00:59:03] How can you be a Millennial or Gen Z and call yourself the original Black Panther Party? You hadn't even been born in 1966!

JL: [00:59:15] You have to face what's in front of you.

JA: [00:59:17] Yes, and not be so focused on what was done in the past. You can take what you can learn from the past, yes. I have no problem with that. Being in our 70s, Lorenzo and I realize we're not going to be here forever. We have to try as much as we can in the time we have left to deal with what's going on right now.

JL: [00:59:50] Well said. I have just one more question for you today. I was reading this interview with the late Toni Cade Bambara and Louis Massiah, and in the interview, Toni Cade is talking about one of her trips to Vietnam and her meeting with counterparts there. She describes to Mr. Louis how everyone asked questions of the delegation that were big, heady, political and theoretical questions, while she was mostly interested in the personal. She recounts how she got close to the sisters there, and asked them instead: who were you then and who are you now? And I love that question so much because even though it's a big question, it feels like it can hold all the nuances of a life. So, I want to put this question to you as a matter of closing. How would you answer that? Who were you then, and who are you now?

JA: [01:01:22] The thing that is in common between who I was then and who I am now is that I'm still a revolutionary. The difference is that when I was younger, I thought the revolution was right around the corner. I was positive about that. I think I can best sum it up this way. Are you familiar with Robert Allen? He died a few months ago. I knew him. He encouraged me to write the first edition of *Driven by the Movement*. Robert was a Black sociologist who wrote the book, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*, one of the first major books about Black Power. He pointed out that social revolutions do not proceed in a straight line. There are a lot of deviations you're going to get. There will be a lot of setbacks, failures, and betrayals.

We're now in a period in which we have the rise of a fascist state in America. One of the things I think a lot of us didn't really understand is that the Black Power era caught the ruling class by surprise. By the time they realized what was happening, it was there. So back then, 40, 50 years ago, the ruling class decided they were never going to let this

happen in America again. Over the years, they have been organizing to set in place a structure that will not allow Black Power to happen again. That's what we're seeing right now in this country. This is all the stuff they put together over the years to keep any new movement from coming around. We may think what they're doing is new and came up pretty much with Trump in recent years. It's not true. They've been plotting and planning this stuff ever since we did what we did back then. It's been important for me to understand that the revolutionary process does not proceed in a straight line. You have to be able to deal with the setbacks and the failures, and celebrate the victories. But it's going to be a tough row to hoe. And it has. And it is.

JL: [01:04:44] Well, I appreciate you, Ms. JoNina, and your wisdom and your realness and honesty. I feel like it's important for all of us to be thinking about that and to be aware of what's right in front of us. Thank you for that.