

Jane Lazarre

Jane Lazarre is a prize-winning writer of fiction and non-fiction. Her memoir, *The Communist and The Communist's Daughter*, was published in Fall, 2017 by Duke University Press. Her previous memoirs, *Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness: Memoir of A White Mother of Black Sons* (reissued in a special 20th anniversary edition), *Wet Earth and Dreams: A Narrative of Grief and Recovery*, and *The Mother Knot*, are also published by Duke University Press. Other recent works include the essays, "Once White in America," "On The Problems of Breathing in America" (both widely published on line), "Politics and Art," in the anthology, "The Racial Imaginary," Editor, Caudia Rankine et al.; and "Hoarding," a story, in Hamilton Stone Review. Novels include *Inheritance*, *Some Place Quite Unknown*, *The Powers of Charlotte*, and *Worlds Beyond My Control*, reissued in winter, 2017, by Hamilton Stone Editions.



Lazarre has taught writing and literature at the City College of New York, Yale University and Eugene Lang College at the New School, where she created and directed the undergraduate writing program and served on the full-time faculty for many years. She serves on the board of directors of The Brotherhood-Sister Sol, an organization in Harlem that serves children and youth in New York City and across the country, and as an Advisor to "Persimmon Tree," a literary journal on line for women writers and artists. She lives in New York City where she teaches writing privately to individual students.

Lazarre's essays, articles and reviews have been published in newspapers, magazines and journals, and collected in many anthologies over the past forty years. She has won awards for her fiction from the National Endowment for Arts Award and the New York Foundation for Arts. She has been keynote speaker, read her work and presented papers at universities, as well as at national conferences on literature, diversity and teaching race. She has given talks and lead workshops and seminars on race and teaching race at independent and public schools and non-profit foundations. She has presented her own work and led panels of writers at such venues as the 92 Street Y, The Jewish Museum in New York City, and others. In 2003 she was a featured writer in the PBS documentary, "Matters of Race," produced and directed by Orlando Bagwell. Her work has been the subject of critical works by many scholars including Susan Gubar, Jessica Benjamin, Maureen T. Reddy, Sara Ruddick, Joanne Frye. Her books have been widely reviewed and translated widely.

Additional information, interviews and commentary on her works can be found at:
www.janelazarre.com.

REVIEWS

<http://www.janelazarre.com/blurbs.html>

Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness

"An important affirmation of a white woman's love of her black sons. Jane Lazarre, warrior mom, has crossed over."
Alice Walker

"This is a passionate, provocative, and moving narrative that should be on every American's reading list."
Sekou Sundiata

"In the end there is the great gift of being taken into the life of American black culture. On the way there, this mother and child - the most intimate of relationships from infancy - has no public or political recognition for years. A kind of love story and useful as well to people in interracial lives and families."
Grace Paley

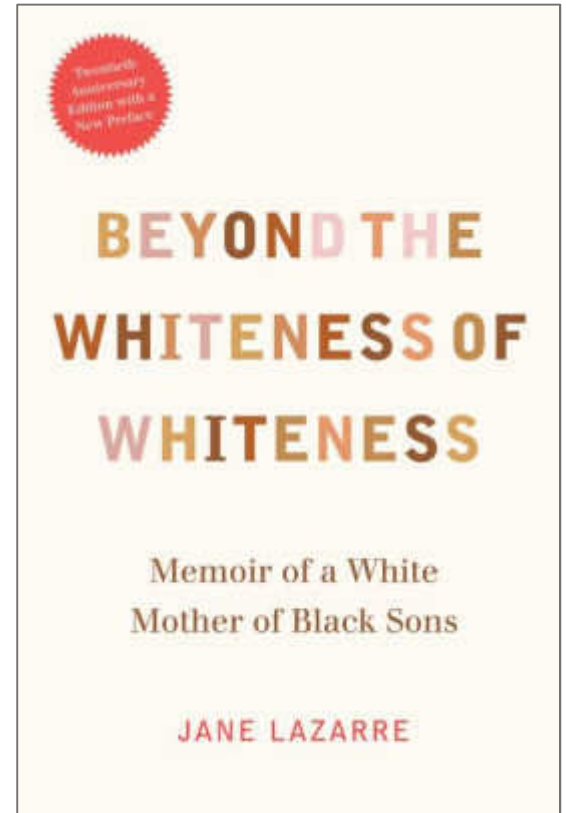
"Through the profoundly human caring of this book; its luminous beauty, passionate authenticity, truth and power; its multi-lensed and sourced hard-wrung wisdom - and yes, through the art with which it is written - we see, we feel, understand what we never have before, the ways of the Whiteness of Whiteness; and we are challenged, enlarged, and enabled, as was Jane Lazarre, to move beyond."
Tillie Olsen

"Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness will be the classic Lazarre's Mother Knot has become, a book in which a piece of American experience gets its full telling, a necessary book."
Ann Snitow

"...breaks new ground in using the memoir genre to examine constructs of race and the history of racism in the United States..."
Maureen T. Reddy

"This insightful Jewish mother opens our eyes to the pervasiveness of racism in our culture - a reality that Jews and other whites easily ignore."
Rabbi Rachel Cowan

"An illuminating book...offers invaluable insights not just for those working to raise children in biracial families, but for all who would like to understand the notion of whiteness in order to see beyond it and reach for fairness."
Boyd Zenner, Women's Review of Books



"A novelist, essayist and teacher, Lazarre presents her troubling but clear-eyes vision of her life and times with incisiveness and grace."

John Gregory Brown, Chicago Tribune

"A beautifully written, deeply thoughtful journey into the worlds of self and other."

Kirkus Reviews

"Lazarre's voice is artful and measured...substantial food for thought for both white and black perspectives on the murky issue of race in America."

Publishers Weekly

"Powerful, moving and beautifully written..."

Richard L. Zweigenhaft, Greensboro News and Record

The Communist and the Communist's Daughter: A Memoir

September 8, 2017

by [Jane Lazarre](#) (Author)

<https://www.amazon.com/Communist-Communist%C2%92s-Daughter-Memoir/dp/0822369370>



In a letter to his baby grandson, Bill Lazarre wrote that "unfortunately, despite the attempts by your grandpa and many others to present you with a better world, we were not very successful." Born in 1902 amid the pogroms in Eastern Europe, Lazarre dedicated his life to working for economic equality, racial justice, workers' rights, and a more just world. He was also dedicated to his family, especially his daughters, whom he raised as a single father following his wife's death. In *The Communist and the Communist's Daughter* Jane Lazarre weaves memories of her father with documentary materials—such as his massive FBI file—to tell her father's fascinating history as a communist, a Jew, and a husband, father, and grandfather.

Soon after immigrating to the United States as a young man, Lazarre began a long career as a radical activist, being convicted of sedition, holding leadership positions in the American Communist Party, fighting in the Spanish Civil War, organizing labor unions, testifying in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee, and resisting the FBI's efforts to recruit him as an informant. Through periods of heroism and deep despair Lazarre never abandoned his ideals or his sustained faith in the fundamental goodness of people.

This is also the story of Jane as she grew up, married an African American civil rights activist, and became a mother and a writer while coming to terms with her father's legacy. She recounts her arguments with her father over ideology, but also his profound influence on her life. Throughout this poignant and beautifully written work, Jane examines memory, grief, love, and conscience while detailing the sacrifices, humanity, and unwavering convictions of a man who worked tirelessly to create a brighter future for us all.