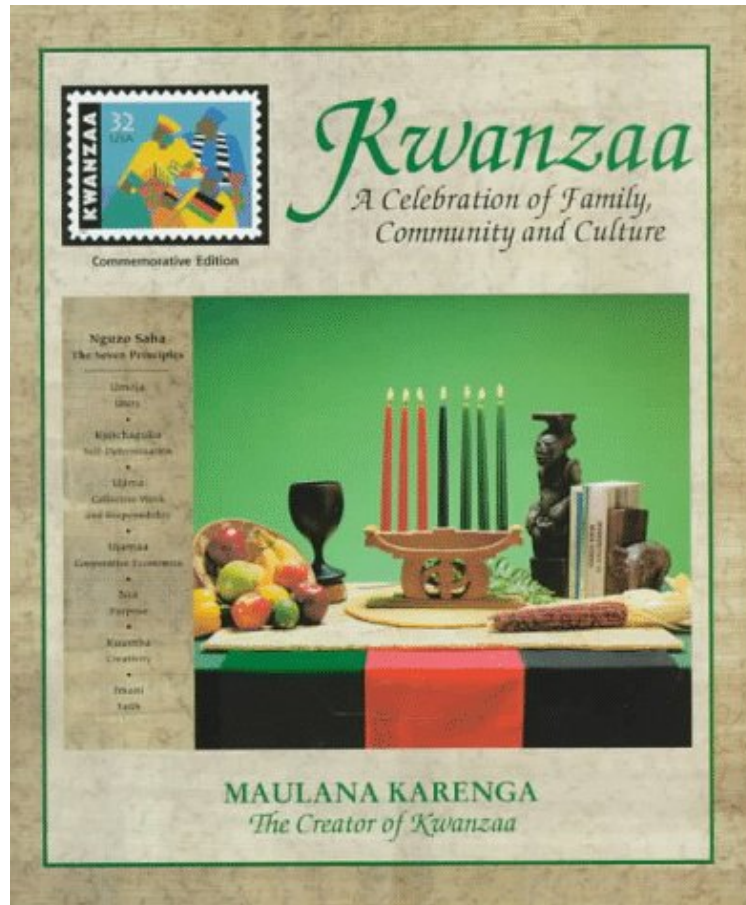


(Download pdf) Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture (Commemorative)

Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture (Commemorative)

Maulana Karenga, Karenga
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Maulana Karenga, Karenga : Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture (Commemorative) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture (Commemorative):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. THE BEST BOOK ABOUT KWANZAA, BY ITS CREATOR BY Steven H Propp Dr. Maulana Karenga (born 1941) is an author, political activist, and was Chairman of the Africana Studies Department at CSU Long Beach until his retirement in 2002; he is perhaps best known as the creator of Kwanzaa, which he developed in 1966. This 1998 book is his third on Kwanzaa; the earlier books were The African American Holiday of Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community Culture (1989) and "Kwanzaa: Origin, Concepts, Practice" (1977). He wrote in the Preface, "As interest in Kwanzaa continues to grow, new and enduring questions arise about its origins, values, symbols and fundamental activities. This volume is offered to answer these questions and to present Kwanzaa in the most authentic, effective and useful way as an expression of the rich and

ancient legacy of African culture as well as a living tradition of great and enduring value." (Pg. xv) He identifies the "five fundamental activities" of Kwanzaa as: Ingathering of the people; Special reverence for the Creator and Creation; Commemoration of the past; Recommitment to our highest ideals; and Celebration of the good. (Pg. 4-6) He explains that "The greetings during Kwanzaa are in Swahili... Celebrants also greet by saying 'Heri za Kwanzaa' or 'Happy Kwanzaa.'" (Pg. 9) Later, he adds, "saying 'heri' means happiness, blessedness, good luck, success, and just about anything else good." (Pg. 129) He notes, "Kwanzaa is a product of creative cultural synthesis... of both Continental African and Diasporan African cultural values and elements." (Pg. 15) He also observes that although the Swahili word "kwanza" ("first," as in "first fruits") has only one "a" at the end, "At the very beginning... seven children ... wanted to put on a program in which each of them represented and explained a letter of Kwanzaa... we added an extra 'a' to make it seven." (Pg. 17) Later, he adds, "when I say I created Kwanzaa, the term 'created' does not imply of mean 'made out of nothing'... [it] is rather a creative restoration of the African spirit of cultural restoration and renewal in both the ancient Egyptian and African American sense." (Pg. 63-64) He clarifies about Kwanzaa's commemoration of the past, especially of the ancestors, "Often this profound respect for the ancestors is called ancestor worship. But this is a misnomer, for Africans worship only God, the Creator, in his/her many manifestations... [and] is best called veneration." (Pg. 24) He suggests that "Kwanzaa is a cultural choice as distinct from a religious one... Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, but a cultural one with an inherent spiritual quality." (Pg. 32-33) Later, he says, "Kwanzaa was not created to give people an alternative to their own religion or religious holiday... This point can be made by citing two of the most frequent reasons Christian celebrants of Kwanzaa give for turning to Kwanzaa. The first reason is that it provides them with cultural grounding and reaffirmation as African Americans. The other reason is that it gives them a spiritual alternative to the commercialization of Christmas and the resultant move away from its original spiritual values and message." (Pg. 122) He also notes that "Kwanzaa is clearly an African holiday created for African peoples. But other people can and do celebrate it, just like other people participate in Cinco de Mayo besides Mexicans... in a public context, say public school or college, we can properly have public celebrations which include others... Any particular message that is good for a particular people... speaks not just to that people, it speaks to the world." (Pg. 116) If one was looking for "one book about Kwanzaa," this is definitely the one to get---in terms of its history and cultural background. (Other books may be used for more specific suggestions about actual practices; see my Listmania list, "KWANZAA: AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN/AFRICANA CULTURAL HOLIDAY.") 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is an incredibly valuable text for myself and my ...By Shaneka Sturdivent This is an incredibly valuable text for myself and my family. It gives us a detailed look at the celebration of Kwanzaa and also helps us to outline an ongoing culture infused with the valuable principles we celebrate during our Kwanzaa Celebration. I urge everyone who wants to see positive change in our communities to purchase this book, share it with family, and join us as we change our condition, create, and write our own history (our-story) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Pendevu Safari Sadikifu Brings hope to our future. New World order!

Book by Karenga, Maulana, Karenga

From School Library Journal Gr 6 Up--The complete Kwanzaa book that educators and parents have been waiting for has arrived. Written by the creator of the holiday, this book presents the continental African and African-American origins of the celebration, a chapter on each of the Seven Principles, explanations of the meaning of related symbols, suggested activities, and a wrap-up section in which Karenga answers frequently asked questions. The beginning chapter provides a concise overview of the holiday, with subsequent chapters providing in-depth information on the "first-fruits" or harvest festivals that provided the basis for Kwanzaa. The attractive layout features plenty of white space with text blocks broken up by both full-color and black-and-white photographs (from the author's very first Kwanzaa celebration) and illustrations. This book belongs in every library, both as a reference book and for general circulation. A chapter on Swahili terminology and Kwanzaa greetings is included and a bibliography provides extensive references for those interested in further research.--LFC Copyright 1998 Cahners Business Information, Inc.