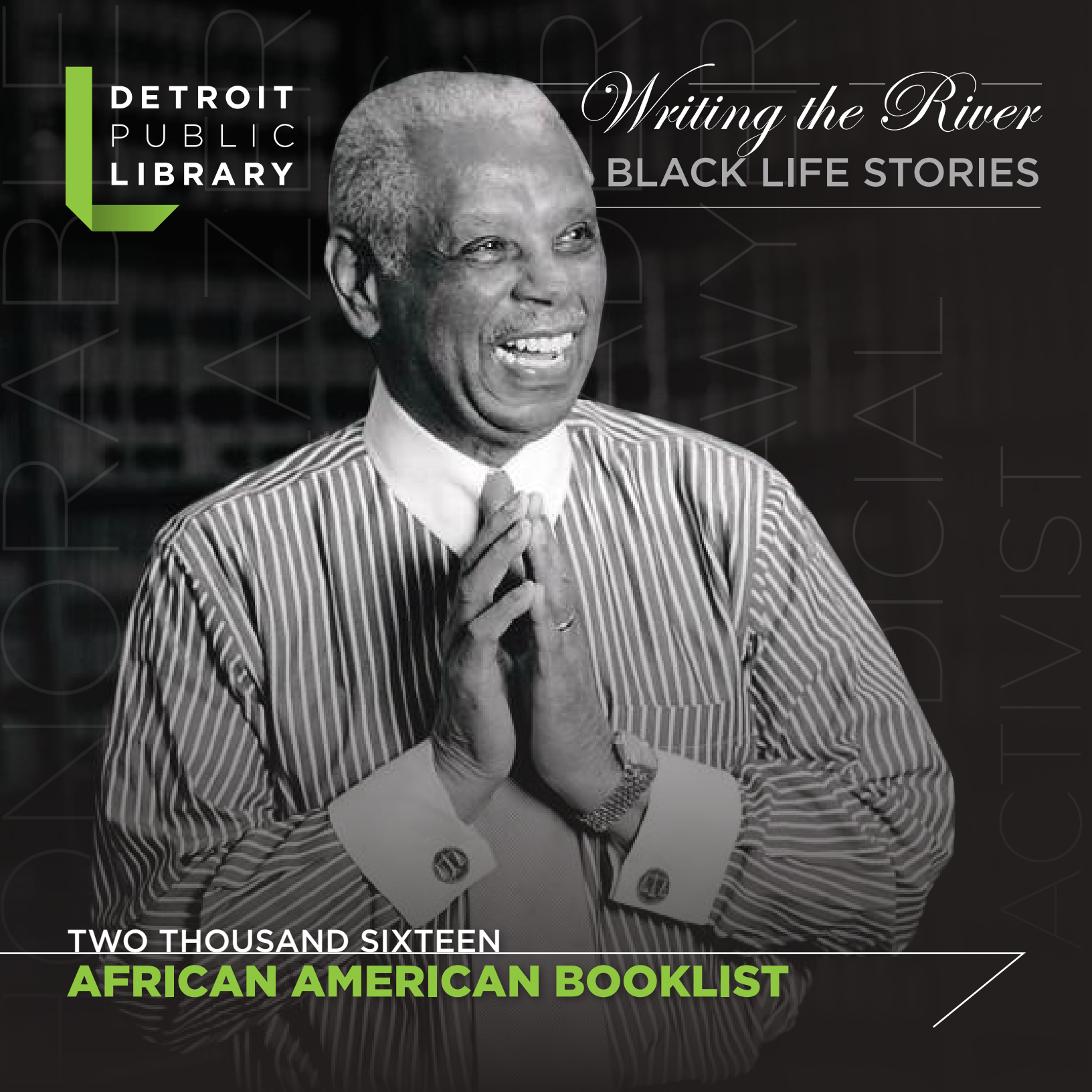
DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

Writing the River

BLACK LIFE STORIES



TWO THOUSAND SIXTEEN

AFRICAN AMERICAN BOOKLIST

2016 AFRICAN AMERICAN BOOKLIST

The Detroit Public Library, encouraged by the positive response to this annual publication, continues the tradition of the African American Booklist for 2016 and beyond. This bibliography provides a selected list of books by and/or about African Americans. The works of fiction and nonfiction for adults, children and young adults were reviewed and recommended by librarians of the Detroit Public Library.

The African American Booklist began as a way to commemorate Black History Month and since that time has continued to feature the accomplishments of African Americans in the literary world. Our booklist has become an annual tradition in the community and continues to be a highly anticipated publication for book lovers all across the nation.

ADULT LITERATURE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Vickie Baker
Stacy Brooks, Co-Chair
Christine Peele, Co-Chair
Taneca Chapman Mills

JUVENILE-TEENS SELECTION COMMITTEE

Lurine Carter, Chairperson
Tonya DuPree, Contributor
Tracy Massey

AFRICAN AMERICAN BOOKLIST PRODUCTION

Khamisi Benford
A.J. Funchess
Romondo Locke
Alma Simmons

Cover Photo: John Urbanck, *Hour*

Photos of Judge Keith: Reprinted with permission from *Crusader for Justice: Federal Judge Damon J. Keith*, edited by Peter J. Hammer and Trevor W. Coleman from Wayne State University Press © 2013.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BLACK NATIONAL ANTHEM 4
FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 5
THE HONORABLE DAMON J. KEITH 7
PERSONAL REFLECTION: UNCLE DAMON 10
THE WRITING OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE STORIES 12
AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE STORIES 26
FICTION 28
NON-FICTION 32
HISTORY 36
LIFESTYLE/ENTERTAINING 36
POLITICAL/SOCIAL SCIENCES 37
RELATIONSHIPS 38
SPORTS & RECREATION 38
FORTHCOMING TITLES IN 2016 39
YOUTH BOOKS 40
PICTURE BOOKS 40
JUVENILE FICTION 40
JUVENILE NONFICTION 41
JUVENILE BIOGRAPHY 41
TEEN FICTION 42
SERIES 42

BLACK NATIONAL ANTHEM

LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us,
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand.
True to our God,
True to our native land.

Lyrics by: James Weldon Johnson

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Everyone has a story. Autobiographies and biographies provide a view not only of individual life stories – the sorrows and disappointments, the joys and successes – in those pages we also make discoveries about the historical, social, and political contexts of those eras. This is especially true for the stories of African Americans' lives, many lived with brilliance, accomplishment and hope, in spite of significant challenges and obstacles. If you want a first person perspective of slavery, read *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*. Or for a view of late 19th and 20th century America, read David Levering Lewis' two Pulitzer Prize winning biographies: *W.E.B. DuBois: The Biography of a Race, 1868-1919*, or *W.E.B. DuBois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919-1963.*

Early in life, I developed a love of autobiographies and biographies. As a child stories about Phyllis Wheatley, Ralph Bunche, Ira Aldridge, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth, to name a few, fascinated me and, later in life, provided much needed hope and inspiration. Reading about these lives certainly framed my definition of what made people great.

DPL is honored to feature in our *2016 African American Booklist* a special biography, *Crusader for Justice: Federal Judge Damon J. Keith*, by Peter J. Hammer and Trevor W. Coleman. Judge Keith's life story provides a rich context for the history of his times. His recollections of his childhood, his legal and judicial career, and his 53-year marriage to the love of his life, Dr. Rachel Boone Keith, are engagingly captured by Professor Hammer and Mr. Coleman.

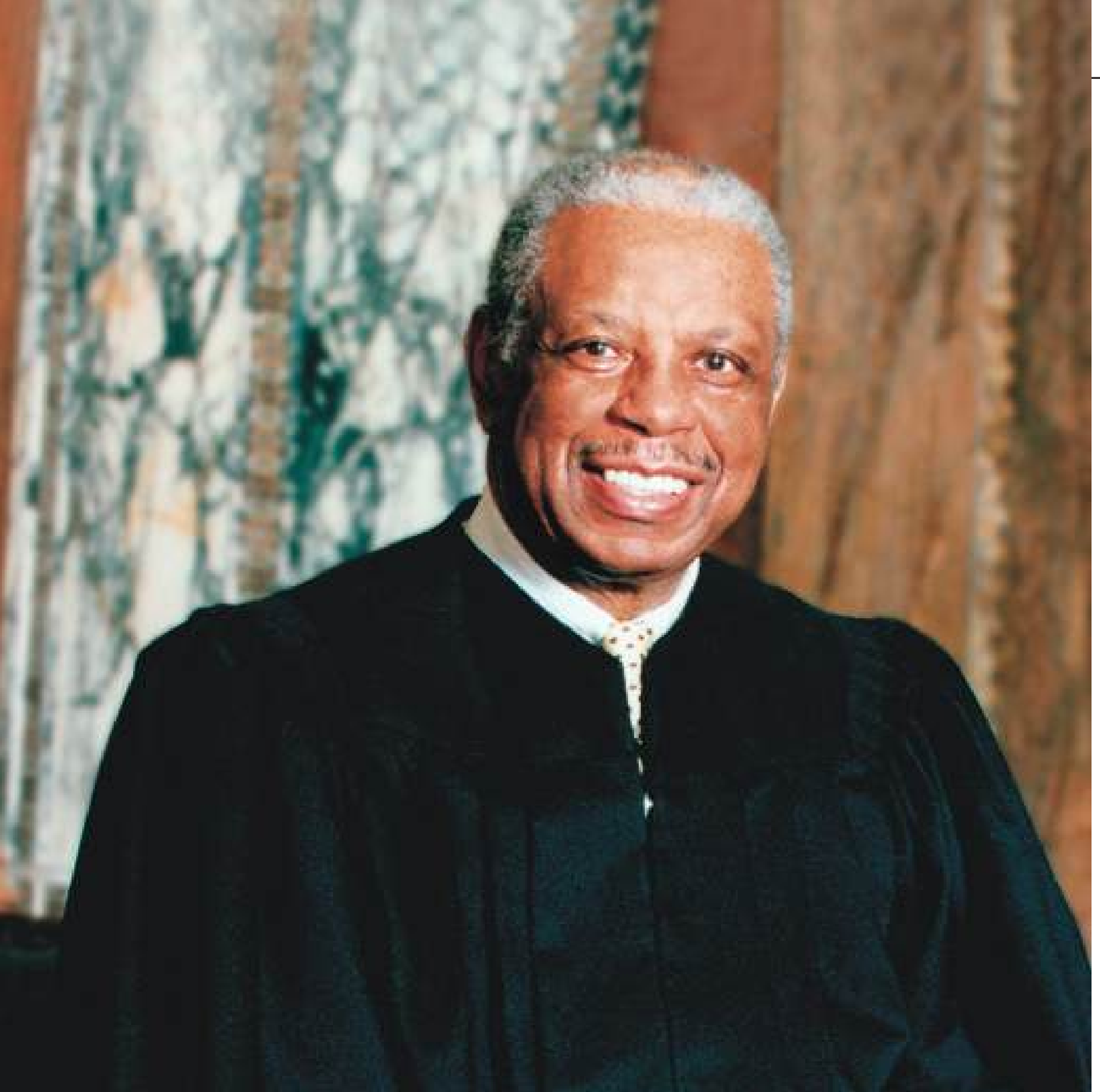
To read *Crusader for Justice* is to know that Judge Keith's judicial prominence is grounded in a lifetime commitment to justice and equality. However, Judge Keith is also "Uncle Damon," as we learn in a thoughtful essay by his nephew, Luther Keith, a former editor at the Detroit News, a former member of the Detroit Library Commission and founding executive director of ARISE Detroit. Mr. Keith's warm and loving words give us a familial perspective about the person behind the judge's robes.

We thank Stephen M. Ward, Ph.D., for his essay about the value of African American autobiographies and biographies. Dr. Ward is an Associate Professor in the University of Michigan's Department of Afroamerican & African Studies and the Residential College. Once again, the librarians of the Detroit Public Library have utilized their considerable expertise in selecting the fiction and non-fiction titles in our 2016 African American Booklist. The 2016 African-American Booklist is generously supported by Detroit area McDonald's restaurant owners.

Please visit the Detroit Public Library and check out the autobiographies and biographies, along with the other titles that are recommended this year. There is something here for everyone.



Jo Anne G. Mondowney
Executive Director



THE HONORABLE DAMON J. KEITH

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE SIXTH CIRCUIT

Damon J. Keith has served as a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit since 1977. Prior to his appointment to the Court of Appeals, Judge Keith served as Chief Judge of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. Judge Keith is a graduate of West Virginia State College (B.A. 1943), Howard University Law School (J.D. 1949), where he was elected Chief Justice of the Court of Peers, and Wayne State University Law School (LL.M. 1956).

Judge Keith's fidelity to the U.S. Constitution has been well recognized. In 1985, Chief Justice Warren E. Burger appointed Judge Keith Chairman of the Bicentennial of the Constitution Committee for the Sixth Circuit. In 1987, Judge Keith was appointed by Chief Justice William Rehnquist to serve as the National Chairman of the Judicial Conference Committee on the Bicentennial of the Constitution. And in 1990, President George H.W. Bush appointed him to the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. In recognition of Judge Keith's service to the Bicentennial Committee, more than 300 Bill of Rights plaques commemorating this important constitutional anniversary bear Judge Keith's name and adorn the walls of courthouses and law schools throughout the United States and Guam, as well as the FBI Headquarters and the Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Center in Washington, D.C. A plaque is also located in Detroit's Main Library, where it was unveiled by Mrs. Rosa Parks and Mayor Coleman A. Young on October 18, 1990.

Judge Keith has received over forty honorary degrees from colleges and universities across the country. His most recent is an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree bestowed by Harvard University, on June 5, 2008. The citation states "Avatar of independence, champion of equal justice under law, a just and humane jurist who has shared and shaped the action and passion of his time." Harvard's honorary degree provides only a small window into Judge Keith's distinguished career.

In 2010, Judge Keith was inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in Atlanta. In 2011, the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights at Wayne State University Law School opened its doors. In addition to promoting research and community outreach related to civil rights and racial justice, the Center – which honors and memorializes the life and legacy of Judge Keith as a civil rights icon – is a leading source for the legal history of the Civil Rights Movement and the historic accomplishments of American lawyers and judges dedicated to social justice.

In 2013, the Judge Damon J. Keith Scholars Program was established at his alma mater, West Virginia State University. In the fall of that same year, WVSU began construction on the Judge Damon J. Keith Scholars Hall, a $30 million residence hall, which opened in August, 2014.



Judge Keith's parents: Annie and Perry Keith



Judge Keith as child with family

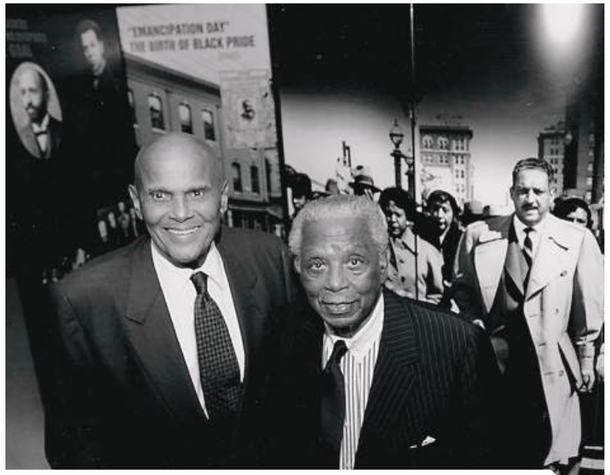
DAMON J. KEITH CENTER FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

KEITH (con't)

A biography of Judge Keith, written by Professor Peter J. Hammer (Director of the Damon J. Keith Center for Civil Rights) and columnist Trevor W. Coleman, with a foreword by Mitch Albom (a *New York Times* best-selling author), is entitled *Crusader for Justice: Federal Judge Damon J. Keith.* It was published in November, 2013, by Wayne State University Press.

In the summer of 2015, a documentary detailing Judge Keith's life and legacy, *Walk With Me: The Trials of Judge Damon J. Keith,* was released locally. A nationwide release is slated for the spring of 2016.

Judge Keith was married for fifty-three years to the late Rachel Boone Keith, M.D. They had three daughters: Cecile Keith Brown, Debbie Keith and Gilda Keith. Cecile and her husband, Daryle Brown, are the parents of Judge Keith's granddaughters, Nia and Camara.



Harry Belafonte & Judge Keith



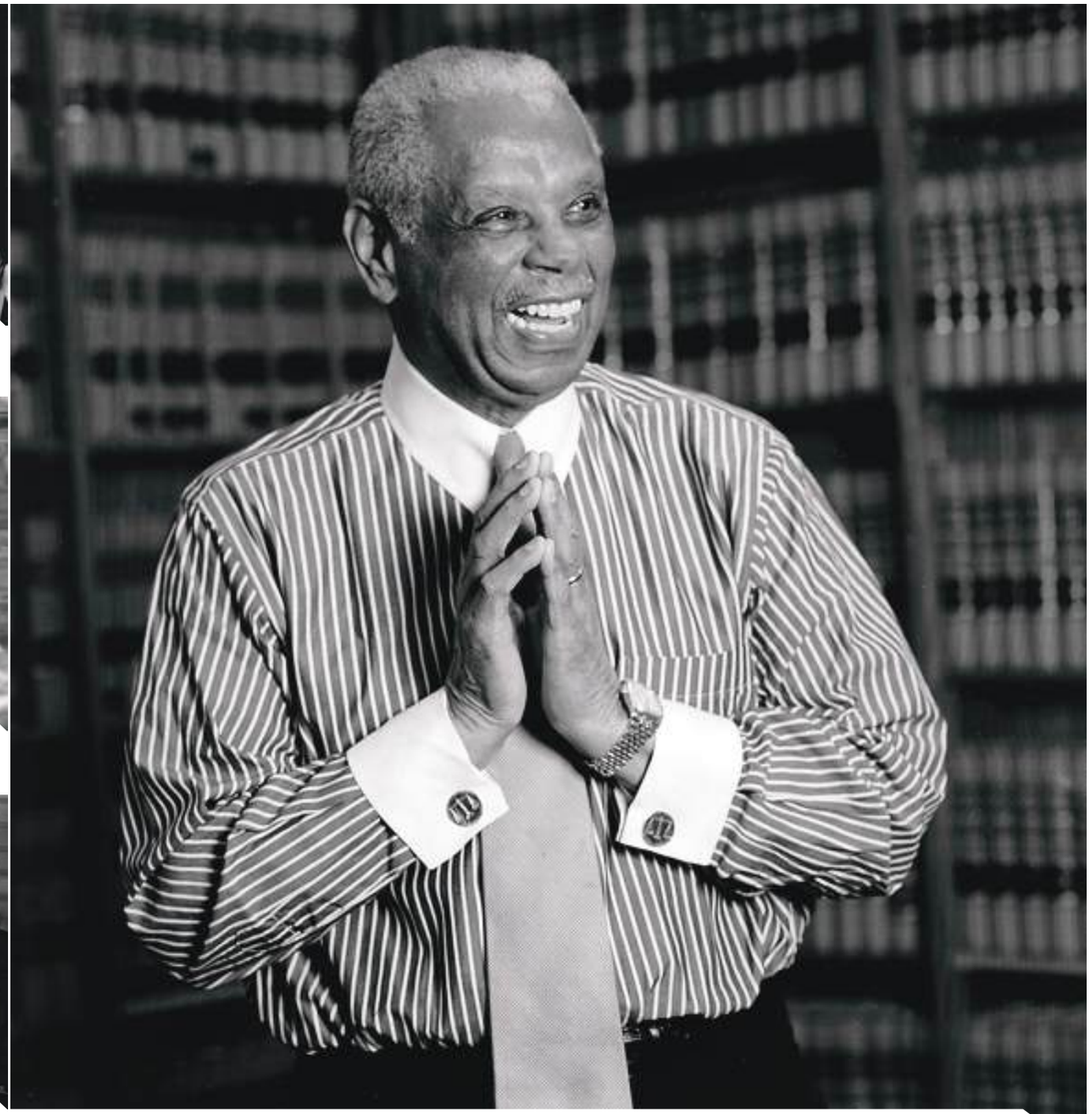
Judge Keith and his wife, Rachel Boone Keith, M.D.



Judge Keith, Dr. Keith and daughters Debbie, Gilda and Cecile



Judge Keith, Chief Justice Earl Warren and Justice Thurgood Marshall



KEITH

A Personal Reflection

MY UNCLE DAMON, THE PERSON BEHIND THE JUDGE'S ROBES

To most folks, he is rightfully known as a judge whose decisions changed the course of the nation's history. He is the judge who stood up to presidents and stared down bus bombing segregationists. He is a judge who loves the Constitution and hates injustice. He has won the admiration and respect of numerous celebrities while also becoming one.

But to me, first, foremost and always, he is my Uncle Damon, my father's youngest brother. He is the last of the six children of Perry Alexander and Annie Keith who grew up in a west side Detroit neighborhood. My association with him began when I was very young. In fact, he drove me and my mother home from the hospital when I was born in October, 1950. At the time, he was a young lawyer with no idea that he would go on to be one of the most prominent judges in our nation issuing decisions that made history.



JUDGE KEITH AND LUTHER KEITH

One of my earliest memories of my uncle came from my love of baseball. I was sure I was going to grow up to play centerfield for the Detroit Tigers. That, obviously, didn't happen. However, some of the happiest times of my childhood were playing baseball in the alley with my brother, Terrance; my cousins, Cedric and Tony, and our friends. The alleys were only about 12 feet wide. How we played baseball in them is truly amazing. One day my Uncle Damon was visiting and decided to join us in the alley while we were playing baseball. He was still a young man at the time, in his late 30s. He asked if he could take a few swings with the bat. I don't think any of us youngsters really thought he could hit. Boy, we were wrong! My uncle was a left-handed hitter and whacked the first pitched ball a good ways down the alley. I always looked at him a little different after that. He wasn't just my Uncle Damon – he was my "cool" Uncle Damon.

I learned that he was representing the young Detroit Tiger slugger, Willie Horton. The conversation in our household was often about how Uncle Damon was doing great things. Even though I didn't see him that often, I always felt close to my uncle. I found how close when in 1966 as a 16-year-old, I somehow worked up the nerve to ask him for a loan. A baseball coach named John Wrobel, who became one of my closest friends, invited me to join him on a camping vacation through Montana and Wyoming. Mr. Wrobel gave me a taste of camping a year earlier when he took myself and some friends on our first camping adventure to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. For a city boy, exploring the great outdoors was a revelation. Now, I had the opportunity of going to the "Big Sky" states of Wyoming and Montana, to experience the western mountains and camping under the stars. I absolutely had to go!

The problem was I needed $75 to cover the cost of gas and food for the two-week adventure. My parents told me they did not have it in their budget. After all, they were paying for four kids to attend Catholic schools. Somehow, to this day I don't know how, I worked up the courage to ask my uncle for the money. I went down to his office in the Detroit Federal court house and explained to him what I wanted to do. He never flinched. Sure, he said, no problem. Of course, I promised to pay him as soon as I could make some money. Up until that point, I had never had a job. Fortunately, that winter, I got my first job as a stock boy at Hudson's Department Store for the Christmas rush. As soon as I received my first pay check, I visited Uncle Damon to pay him back. "Keep your money," he said. "Don't worry about it." I still owe him that $75 and he doesn't want it back!

It was during this period, that I truly became aware that my uncle was "Big Time." He began appearing in the newspapers for various court decisions. In addition, when I visited him in his office, there were often as many as forty attorneys outside of his chambers waiting – sometimes for hours – for an audience with him. One day, after one of my visits, he told me that one attorney said he wasn't happy about waiting so long to see him. "And by the way, who is this young kid that came in and walked by all of the attorneys and got to talk to you right away without waiting?" "That young man is my nephew, sir," ending the attorney's complaint.

When I decided to pursue journalism as a career, Uncle Damon became an enthusiastic supporter. In fact, even though I had obtained my journalism degree, I had serious doubts about my ability to get a job and become a successful professional journalist. Uncle Damon never wavered in his support, telling me "Don't worry about it, son. You can do it."

I like to think he was right to believe in me. I went on to a very successful newspaper career, becoming an editor and eventually being named to the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame. Oh, I know all about the lauded and accomplished Damon J. Keith. He deserves all the accolades and all the honors. But I will always know him, and revere him, as the uncle who loved me, inspired me and believed in me.

Luther Keith is the Executive Director of *ARISE Detroit*

ARISE DETROIT! Be Part of the Change

The Writing of African American Life Stories:

LESSONS AND LEGACIES OF BLACK AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND BIOGRAPHY

by Stephen M. Ward, Ph.D.

The writing of life stories in the form of autobiography and biography is a foundational and enduring part of African American literary life. From enslaved Africans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to a range of intellectuals, leaders, and artists in the post emancipation period and the twentieth century, to the varied and ever expanding voices of contemporary African American society, writers have passionately and powerfully narrated, documented, illuminated, and celebrated black lives. This body of writing represents at once a major thread of African American literary production and a record of collective historical experience.

The two genres, of course, are not interchangeable, but they hold comparable and complementary places within the overlapping histories of black intellectuals and creative writers. Autobiography (understood broadly to include memoir and other forms of autobiographical practice) and biography are in fact distinct forms of writing. The first distinguishing factor is the different narrative voices in which they are written. From this difference also follows differences in the sources from which they draw and the types of stories they can tell. Autobiographies and biographies, then, are structured to give us different ways to see a life, different ways to think about its meaning and significance. In their respective ways of rendering a life story, they each have been deployed to offer moving, informative, and often beautiful narratives of black life.



AN AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILY

WRITING THE RIVER

The strongest and most consistent impact of black autobiographies and biographies as a body of writing has been their illumination of African Americans' ongoing struggle for freedom. Historian and activist Vincent Harding used the metaphor of a river to represent this centuries-long struggle. He explained that the "history of the freedom struggle of black people in this country, beginning before there was a country" was characterized by "its long, continuous movement, flowing like a river, sometimes powerful, tumultuous, and rolling with life; at other times meandering and turgid, covered with the ice and snow of seemingly endless winters, all too often streaked and running in blood." He emphasized that "the river of black struggle is people, but it is also the hope, the movement, the transformative power that humans create and that create them," thereby showing how the telling of life stories is crucial to illuminating the river. "So we black people are the river; the river is us. The river is in us, created by us, flowing out of us, surrounding us, re-creating us and this entire nation."

The writing of black life stories is crucial to capturing and illuminating the river. Indeed, throughout African American history, autobiographies and biographies have emerged to provide some of the most imaginative and inspiring works documenting, theorizing, and advancing the river of black struggle. These works, produced by an impressive array of artists, intellectuals, activists and others spanning nearly three centuries, have built a rich tradition of autobiographical and biographical writing, a tradition marked by its capacity for rendering an individual life within the larger scope collective experience, the sweep of tectonic historical change, and the continuing yet shifting struggle for personhood, human dignity, and freedom.

SLAVE NARRATIVES: THE FIRST BLACK AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

This tradition began with the slave narratives. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, enslaved and formerly enslaved men and women produced autobiographical accounts of their lives as a way to proclaim their humanity while exposing the brutality of the slave system and advocating for its abolition. Scholars have identified a total of 204 slave narratives, half of them written between the 1740s and the end of the Civil War and the other half written by former slaves after 1865. Among the earliest was *A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African Prince, As Related By Himself*, published in 1770, which helped to establish the slave narrative form. The widely read *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* (1789), further solidified the genre and served as the prototype for even more popular narratives written in the nineteenth century. Each narrative described that individual's experiences in slavery and path to freedom, but as a group slave narratives reflect a collective striving and self-fashioning. As such, slave narratives established themes and frameworks for exploring racial identity, a quest for home, notions of progress, and conceptualizations of freedom that would continue in subsequent black autobiographies and other literary works after emancipation and into the twentieth century.



SOJOURNER TRUTH

The most active period for the publication of slave narratives was the 1840s and 1850s, the two decades preceding the Civil War and the height of the abolitionist movement, when fifty-five slave narratives were published. Among them are Sojourner Truth, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth, a Northern Slave, Emancipated from Bodily Servitude by the State of New York, in 1828* (1850); Williams Wells Brown, *Narrative of William W. Brown, a Fugitive Slave, Written by Himself* (1847), and Solomon Northrup, whose *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853) was the basis of the 2013 Academy Award-winning film of the same name. Frederick Douglass, the best known African American leader, intellectual, and spokesperson of the nineteenth century, published two of his three narratives in this period: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by* Himself, in 1845, and *My Bondage and My Freedom*, in 1855.

Another slave narrative of particular note is Harriet Jacob's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*. Published in 1861 under the pseudonym Linda Brent, this pioneering and influential narrative exposed the conditions of black women under slavery as few if any previous works had done. Detailing the mechanisms of sexual abuse in the slave system, the book movingly revealed the types of choices women made under the threat of sexual violation. Male slave narrators and abolitionists had previously spoken to the suffering of enslaved women and raised their voices in defense of black womanhood, but *Incidents* was the first full-length work by an enslaved woman in the United States pleading and it marked a milestone for the black women's collective voice. Literary scholar Joanne Braxton credited Jacobs's narrative with initiating black women's autobiography as a "tradition within a tradition" in which black women have shaped their experiences into a new type of literary language.

TO TELL THE TRUTH FREELY

By the early twentieth century, African American autobiographical writing achieved a new stage in its development. Evolving from the slave narrative form, these new works established an expanded set of rhetorical strategies, narrative structures, and ideological concerns. These concerns reflected, in particular, black people's changing place in American society and their ongoing freedom struggle as it unfolded through the monumental changes of the final decades of the nineteenth century, including emancipation, Reconstruction and its collapse, and the rise of Jim Crow. Black people writing their life stories in this period, therefore, confronted new opportunities, challenges, and imperatives. Many of these works were written by figures recognized as "race leaders" and spokespersons for the race, and their autobiographies represented an intersection of personal narrative and political discourse. They used the genre to give a personal account of what freedom meant and to reflect, through their own individual and in many ways unique experiences, on the larger context and circumstances facing African Americans in the new century.

Two books initiating this period of black autobiographies: Alexander Crummell's *Jubilate: The Shades and Lights of a Fifty Years' Ministry, 1844-1894*, published in 1894; and Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*, published in 1901. *Jubilate*, which recounted its author's half century in the Episcopal ministry in the United States and Liberia along with his celebrated efforts as an educator and a scholar, prefigured black thinkers' use of the autobiographical form to articulate the relationship between personal experience and ideological development. *Up from Slavery* gives an account of Washington's childhood in slavery, describes his educational journey and rise to prominence as an educator and race leader, and presents his program of racial uplift. Still recognized as one of the most widely known and read black autobiographies of any period, the book was published six years after Washington delivered his Atlanta Exposition speech, known as the "Atlanta Compromise" because of its conciliatory tone and deferential posture toward the prevailing racial hierarchy.

Black autobiographies during the first half of the twentieth century were written by an expanding group of activists, intellectuals, and artists with varied and at times competing political perspectives, but they shared a nearly universal concern with the overlapping themes of racial identity and race advancement. These authors told their life stories through various formats and with very different points of emphasis. Some explicitly articulated a political program, while others did not, but they all in some way spoke to a collective racial consciousness and engaged the political meanings of blackness. As such, each autobiography was a political statement. Among the explicit goals of black autobiographers was to counter the characterization of black life by white historians and the emerging theories purporting to scientifically prove racial differences in intelligence and other attributes. These writers also used autobiography as a vehicle for open and authentic expression, unfiltered by whites. As a genre, and for some writers in particular, autobiography functioned as a well-spring for novels and other creative fiction, forging a link in broader black literary traditions. For still others, the genre was a major forum for black protest.

> **Expect nothing. Live frugally on surprise.**
>
> - Alice Walker

The autobiographies of James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, and Richard Wright are significant works and notable examples of this period's autobiographical output. Johnson's *Along This Way*, published in 1933, tells the story of his upbringing and his career as a distinguished poet, lawyer, educator, diplomat, civil rights leader, and songwriter. It presents his life through a narrative of personal transcendence and the trope of "race vindication" that had been a fundamental theme in the slave narratives and was common to many works of this period.

Hurston and Wright, two of the most celebrated figures in African American literature, each wrote an autobiography five years after the publication of their classic novel: Hurston's *Dust Tracks On a Road: An Autobiography* (1942) followed her *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, while Wright's first autobiography, *Black Boy* (1945) followed his *Native Son* (Wright's second autobiography, *American Hunger*, was also written during the 1940s but was published posthumously in 1977). The two writers famously clashed over the question of how black writers should represent the race, and they each took to the genre of autobiography to further develop their respective interpretations of black life and culture. Hurston and Wright each used autobiography to make a statement about the role of black literary artists in the mid-twentieth century United States. These and other writers made autobiography a prominent form of black political discourse in the twentieth century.

The autobiographical writings of W. E. B. Du Bois especially illustrate the prominent place of the genre in the development of African American intellectual and literary traditions. Du Bois was the most important African American intellectual of the twentieth century and a towering figure in the history of black protest. Like

Frederick Douglass before him, Du Bois wrote three full-length autobiographies: *Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil* (1920); *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept* (1940); and *The Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century* (1968). As the titles suggest, the first two books were not traditional autobiographies. In *Darkwater*, Du Bois interspersed poems, short stories, and essays throughout the narrative of his background and life experiences. In *Dusk of Dawn*, which foregrounded social and historical analysis, DuBois offered his personal reminisces and experiences as a way to illuminate his analysis. "My autobiography," Du Bois writes in the book's penultimate chapter, "is a digressive illustration and exemplification of what race has meant in the world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries." As such, these two works departed in style, organization, and content from the standard autobiographical format, making unique contributions to African American autobiographical practice. *The Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois* more closely conforms to the "life and times" autobiographical form, but it too presented his personal history through black people's history. In all three of these works he approached the telling of his life story as a mechanism for examining the social, political, and cultural matters facing African Americans during the years of his active participation in and analysis of the black struggle.



W.E.B. DU BOIS

BIOGRAPHIES AND AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

Du Bois was not the only writer to see in his life story something worth investigating. Several scholars have written biographies of Du Bois, producing books that vary widely in scope and focus. Some of them attempt to examine his entire life, the most comprehensive and authoritative being historian David Levering Lewis's two-volume biography, *W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race, 1868-1919*, and *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century, 1919-1963*, both of which won the Pulitzer Prize for biography. Many other biographies of Du Bois explore particular periods of his life and facets of his activism, ideas, and influence. All of these works have his autobiographies as rich sources from which to draw in their interpretation and presentation of his life story. Just as Du Bois used the telling of his own life story to theorize race and present an interpretation of black people's circumstances and lived experience during his life, his biographers have chronicled his life as a way to deepen our understanding and appreciation for his life as well as the history of which he was a part. Such has been the same for other historical figures as well. Du Bois clearly is exceptional in writing three autobiographies and in the high number of biographical works about him, but many others—Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, to name the most prominent—have also written autobiographies and been the subject of biographies.

Indeed, a vibrant relationship exists between autobiography and biography as two distinct but often parallel and complementary forms of narrating and analyzing African American life stories. Biographies draw from, build upon, and extend what we know about important figures from their autobiographies. Biographies can also fill in voids or silences, as well as correct errors or offer alternative interpretations. The result is we have a richer, fuller, more useful picture of the person, the contributions they made, and the history they helped to shape.

> "The biggest adventure you can ever take is to live the life of your dreams."
>
> - Oprah Winfrey

Beyond its relationship to autobiographical writing, black biography has been an indispensible genre in the development, legitimizing, and popularizing of African American history. Biography is one of the oldest genres of African American historical writing, beginning with amateur black historians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who wrote individual and collective biographies of prominent African Americans to show black accomplishments in the face of oppressive circumstances and offer testimony to what the race could achieve. The years in which they wrote coincided with the consolidation of "Negro history," as it was called then, into a coherent field of historical study and knowledge production, and these biographical works helped to establish the foundation for the documenting and transmitting of black history that flourished in the decades ahead. The number and type of black biographies started to expand mid-century, with black historian Benjamin Quarles' book *Frederick Douglass* in 1948, one year after the publication of John Hope Franklin's now classic textbook of African American history *From Slavery to Freedom*. Throughout the rest of the century, biographies played an increasing role in constructing knowledge about the black historical experience.

As the genre of black biography continued to grow and mature, it has come to serve two primary functions. The first is to make available new information, insights, and critical analyses of an ever-expanding range of individuals and their contributions to black life. This includes works on well-known people as well as less-known and even obscure figures. Authors of traditional and mainstream biographies generally select as their subjects people who are prominent, powerful, or famous and therefore already known to their reading audience. Black biographies, by contrast, often chronicle the lives of people whose significance does not derive from their prominence. Indeed, the explicit goal of such works is to bring attention to lives of historical significance that have not been recognized and would otherwise remain hidden from the historical record and popular consciousness. To cite one of numerous examples, historian Mary Frances Berry's remarkable biography *My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House and the Slave Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations* (2005) tells the extraordinary and powerful story of a largely unknown historical figure and how she led an equally unknown grassroots social movement at the turn of the twentieth century.

Berry's book also exemplifies the second function of black biographies: using life stories to recount and reconceptualize African American experiences within specified periods of American history. This involves highlighting moments of rupture and continuity in black lived experience and, equally important, disrupting dominant historical narratives about the nation's history and its distorted rendering of black lives, communities, and struggles.

> **How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these.**
>
> - George Washington Carver

Callie House's activism took place during the period that the mainstream historical profession has termed the Progressive Era, from the end of Reconstruction to the 1920s. However, black historian Rayford Logan labeled this period – which saw the erosion of African American citizenship rights through the defeat of Reconstruction, the establishment of Jim Crow segregation, and the rise of lynching – as the "nadir," or the lowest point, in the African American historical experience. Berry's resurrection and careful analysis of Callie House, the Ex-Slave Association, and their movement for reparations illuminates Logan's conceptualization and deepens our understanding of this period. Moreover, this study provides context and critical commentary on subsequent calls for reparations for African Americans, a topic that has recently been revived by the widely read 2014 essay, "The Case for Reparations" by Ta-Nehisi Coates (*The Atlantic,* June, 2014).

THE QUEST THAT'S JUST BEGUN

The final decades of the twentieth century brought a tremendous increase both in the number of African American autobiographies and biographies published and in the types of life stories they told. These works were part of a broader explosion of black literary output largely generated by or coinciding with the Civil Rights, Black Power, and Black Arts movements from the 1940s through the mid-1970s. The political protest, artistic production, institution building, and cultural awakening of this period reshaped African Americans' collective identity and transformed their place in U. S. society. From this emerged an impetus in the 1960s and 1970s to recover, chronicle, and celebrate the lives of historical and contemporary black figures. One dramatic expression of this was *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, written with Alex Haley and published in September 1965, seven months after Malcolm's assassination. Widely recognized as a classic of American autobiography, and arguably the most popular of all African American autobiographies, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* made immediate and lasting impacts as both a powerful documentation of the historical moment that produced it and as an enduring statement on black identity, racial consciousness, and historical experience. The book sold over two million copies by the end of the 1960s and more than six million a decade later, with several new editions published over the past three decades as it garners new generations of readers.

Malcolm X's autobiography, like his activism, helped to spark the renewed interest in black history with an emphasis on African Americans telling their own stories that characterized this period. This manifested itself in the subject matter of black writers of various genres, in the establishment of independent black institutions, and in black educators at all levels stressing the importance of black history and the need for more books on African Americans. An important dimension of this was the emergence in the late 1960s of Black Studies as a formal area of study in U.S. universities, which both fueled this growing interest and inspired further study. Black Studies also played the crucial roles of developing more black scholars and creating institutional spaces for the flourishing of research into black history and culture. This created a new, rich environment for the writing, publishing, and reading of black life stories. Some works that are now considered classics of black literature were rediscovered, republished, or given renewed scholarly attention and critical analysis in the 1960s and 1970s.



MALCOLM X

One of the most extraordinary aspects of this was the recovery of previously published autobiographies and the recognition or discovery of people worthy of biographies. This was particularly the case for the rediscovery of black women artists, activists, and intellectuals who have since become celebrated historical figures. For example, Ida B. Wells-Barnett's autobiography was published in 1970, the same year in which Toni Cade Bambara's groundbreaking collection *The Black Woman* appeared. Though she had been one of the most prominent and important black leaders at the beginning of the century, Wells-Barnett's leadership had been obscured, by many of her contemporaries and in historical accounts of her era. Thus, her name and her contributions were barely known at the time her book was published. Edited by her daughter, Alfreda M. Duster, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* was published in the newly established "Negro Americans Biographies and Autobiographies" series of the University of Chicago Press, edited by the preeminent African American historian John Hope Franklin. "For more than forty years Ida B. Wells was one of the most fearless and one of the most respected women in the United States. She was also one of the most articulate," Franklin wrote in the book's Foreword. "Few documents written by an American woman approach this one either in importance or interest."

> I have discovered in life that there are ways of getting almost anywhere you want to go, if you really want to go.
>
> - Langston Hughes



LORRAINE HANSBERRY

Along with such recovery of important if forgotten figures from previous periods, these years produced powerful accounts of contemporary black lives. By way of illustration, we can consider the autobiographies of three very different black women published during the five-year span of 1969-1974. Lorraine Hansberry, Shirley Chisholm, and Angela Davis became well-known public figures through their accomplishments and contributions in distinct fields of activity during the 1960s and 1970s, and they wrote very different types of autobiographies. *To Be Young, Gifted and Black: Lorraine Hansberry in Her Own Words*, tells the writer's life story through a compilation of her letters, speeches, journal entries, interviews, plays, and artwork, adapted by her husband Robert Nemiroff, who described the book as "the portrait of an individual, the workbook of an artist, and the chronicle of a rebel who celebrated the human spirit." The book accompanied a play of the same title, both appearing in 1969, four years after Hansberry's death at the age of thirty-four. *To Be Young, Gifted and Black* is an unconventional autobiography – perhaps best described as a combination of autobiography and biography – offering readers an internal window onto her artistic vision and inviting them to contemplate the enduring presence of Hansberry's short life and spectacular artistry within the history of African American cultural expression.

In contrast to Hansberry, Chisholm and Davis wrote autobiographies about two distinct sets of political spaces and experiences. Chisholm's *Unbought and Unbossed* (1970) uses a conventional autobiographical format to tell her unconventional path to becoming, in 1968, the first black woman elected to the U. S. Congress. The book situated her at the intersection of electoral politics, women's liberation, and Black Power and contributed to Chisholm's national profile, upon which she launched her unlikely but impressive candidacy for president in 1972. During the years that Chisholm ascended within national electoral politics, Davis participated in black activist politics and came to be one of the most recognized radicals in the country. She wrote *Angela Davis: An Autobiography* (1974) at the age of twenty-eight, shortly after the celebrated acquittal that concluded her high-profile and taxing ordeal of living underground, arrest, extradition, imprisonment, and trial. The book's conventional and non-descript title betrays its author's rather specific focus and purpose. "When I decided to write the book after all," she explains in the Preface, after indicating her initial reluctance, "it was because I had come to envision it as a *political* autobiography that emphasized the people, the events, and the forces in my life that propelled me to my present commitment." In language and sentiment that echoed earlier autobiographers, Davis ultimately hoped that readers of the book "might be inspired to join our growing community of struggle."

Davis was one of many activists from the Civil Rights and Black Power movements who wrote an autobiography or had their life story examined in a biography. Davis and Malcolm X were among the relatively few who published their autobiography during or in the years immediately following the movement. Many more activists wrote autobiographies in the decades that followed, and an even greater number of biographies of activists have been and continue to be published. A partial list of such activists, some well-known leaders, others lesser known, and still others fully removed from historical memory but for these works, would include: Amiri Baraka, Elaine Brown, H. Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, Septima Clark, James Farmer, Fannie Lou Hamer, John Lewis, Benjamin Mays, Ivory Perry, A. Philip Randolph, JoAnn Gibson Robinson, Bayard Rustin, Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, and Assata Shakur. Among the earliest were Anne Moody's celebrated classic autobiography *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, and Eldridge Cleaver's extremely popular but troubling *Soul On Ice*, both published in 1968. The first major biography of Martin Luther King Jr., *King: A Critical Biography* by David Levering Lewis, was published in 1970, two years after his assassination.



AMIRI BARAKA

Over the ensuing decades several biographers have recounted, uncovered, and examined the lives of other important activists, giving us not only powerful portraits of these figures but also deepening our understanding of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Some of these works have even reshaped our narratives about these individuals or about the movements. Three excellent examples of such transformative biographies include: Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (2003); Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (1999); and Sherie M. Randolph, *Florynce "Flo" Kennedy: The Life of a Black Feminist Radical* (2015).

These decades also produced an array of works that collectively expanded the writing of black life stories with an ever-widening array of voices chronicling and examining a still broader range of experiences and endeavors. This includes black artists and entertainers – Motown artists, jazz greats, actors, comedians, athletes, and many others – whose autobiographies and biographies illuminated the lives, rise to prominence, contributions, and influence on American culture. Billie Holiday, to cite just one example, published her autobiography *Lady Sings the Blues* in 1956 (the film of the same name was released in 1972), and more than a dozen biographies of her have followed. Most of these were published in the last two decades, with the most recent in 2015.

More generally, the works in this period continued the practice of recovering historical figures while also presenting contemporary writers and thinkers who spoke to the new realities of black life, including the opportunities and the challenges they faced after the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. These new voices also exposed the promise, perils, and pitfalls of integration, the emerging realities of black urban communities, and the evolution of racial consciousness in this period. A small sample of the autobiographies and biographies published in the 1980s and 1990s illustrates this broad range of life stories: Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1982); John Edgar Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers* (1984); Arnold Rampersad, *The Life of Langston Hughes (vol.1): I, Too, Sing America, 1902-1941* (1986); Lorene Cary, *Black Ice* (1991); Sanyika Shakur, *Monster: The Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member* (1993); Nathan McCall, *Makes Me Wanna Holler: A Young Black Man in America* (1994); Randall Robinson, *Defending the Spirit: A Black Life in America* (1998); and Asha Bandele, *The Prisoner's Wife: A Memoir* (1999).



BILLIE HOLIDAY

NEW DREAMS

A creative expansion in the writing of black life stories at the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first is the bringing together multiple lives in one work. The collective biography is one such form. Examples include Dorothy Sterling, *Black Foremothers: Three Lives* (1988) and Angela Y. Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma'" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday* (1998). Two more recent works are particularly noteworthy for demonstrating the sophisticated analyses and new insights that can come from collective biography: Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality* (2004); and Farah Jasmine Griffin, *Harlem Nocturne: Women Artists and Progressive Politics During World War II* (2013). In 2010, six former Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) activists, Faith S. Holsaert, Martha Prescod Norman Noonan, Judy Richardson, Betty Garman Robinson, Jean Smith Young, and Dorothy M. Zellner, demonstrated another format to engage multiple life stories with their groundbreaking and powerful book *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts of Women in SNCC*. Presenting the testimonies of more than fifty women, the book gives a rich and unique personal history of SNCC filled with compelling insight into the dynamics of civil rights, Black Power, anti-war, and feminist activism. Oral history offers yet another format of telling life stories, as exhibited by *Untold Tales, Unsung Heroes: An Oral History of Detroit's African American Community, 1918-1967*. Edited by Elaine Latzman Moon and published in 1994, this book combines dozens of oral history interviews recounting individual life experiences in a vibrant story of a community as it evolved over time.

> **People pay for what they do, and still more for what they have allowed themselves to become. And they pay for it very simply, by the lives they lead.**
>
> - James Baldwin

Family biographies tracing multiple generations provide another fruitful format for exploring multiple black life stories. One of the earliest is Pauli Murray, *Proud Shoes: The Story of an American* Family, published in 1956. Alex Haley's *Roots*, the 1974 book that led to the monumental television mini-series in 1977, has had by far the greatest impact of any such work. Haley tapped into and inspired black people's rising exploration and quest for information about black history, identity, and ancestry. Most recently, Gail Lumet Buckley, the daughter of famed singer, actor, and activist Lena Horne, follows six generations of her family in her just released book, *The Black Calhouns: From Civil War to Civil Rights with One African American Family* (2016).

Some works creatively explore the lives of couples. For example, in *With Ossie and Ruby: In This Life Together* (1998), the celebrated artists-activists Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee tell, through a combination of their individual voices and shared voice, their story of two remarkable lives and equally remarkable shared life. While joint autobiographies such as this are rare, they are nevertheless an intriguing expression of the genre. Even more rare are dual biographies, but they too offer a fruitful way to explore black life stories, as demonstrated by the recently published *James and Esther Cooper Jackson: Love and Courage in the Black Freedom Movement* (2015), by Sara Rzeszutek Haviland.



RUBY DEE & OSSIE DAVIS

As these works suggest, the writing of black life stories in the twenty-first century has carried forward, built upon, and extended the intellectual traditions and narrative practices of preceding autobiographical and biographical works. One of, if not the most well-known and popular autobiographies of the young century is Barack Obama's *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*. The book was originally published in 1995 but took on a second life after being reissued in 2004, generating much more interest and a far wider audience as he became Senator and then President Obama.

Similar levels of attention and acclaim have come to Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me*, published in 2015 and winner of that year's National Book Award. Taking its title from a poem of the same name by Richard Wright, the book is a lyrical meditation on the meaning of race in U. S. history, the practice

and persistence of white supremacy, and the lived experience of blackness in the contemporary moment, a moment that is framed by Michael Brown and Ferguson, the murders of Eric Garner, Renisha McBride, and Tamir Rice, a rising national awareness and debate about police killings of African Americans, and the insistence that "Black Lives Matter." Inspired by James Baldwin's classic 1963 book *The Fire Next Time*, Coates's book is presented in the form of a letter to his fifteen year-old son. Though not a traditional autobiography, the book is grounded in Coates's personal narrative and uses his life experiences to reflect and register larger forces, giving *Between the World and Me* an autobiographical quality.

While certainly among the most celebrated works of the twenty-first century, *The Fire Next Time* and *Between the World and Me* should not be taken as representative of contemporary black life stories. Now a decade-and-a-half into the new century, black autobiography and biography constitute a fully entrenched yet widely diffuse part of African American literary and scholarly life. The scope of black autobiographies and biographies is now wider than it has ever been. This range includes commercially-driven works by or about popular culture icons like Beyonce Knowles and Tyler Perry, journalistic accounts of public figures such as Michelle Obama, autobiographies by established writers, musicians and other artists of today and past eras, and scholarly biographies of historical figures, well-known and obscure. Just in the last three years, we have seen works by or about musicians Duke Ellington, Aretha Franklin, Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, Prince, Mary Wells, George Benson, Gil Scott-Heron, Toni Braxton, Whitney Houston, George Clinton, and Phillip Bailey. These years also produced autobiographies by journalist Charles Blow, writers Jesmyn Ward and Pearl Cleage, gold medal Olympian Gabrielle Douglass, basketball legend Julius "Dr. J" Erving, and actor Jimmy Walker. Of special significance is the first comprehensive scholarly biography of Rosa Parks, *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*, by Jeanne Theoharis, published in 2014.

Contemporary black life stories are, in important ways, quite different from previous periods. Unlike before, there is no unifying theme or social imperative driving them. This moment is unlike the slave narratives, for instance, which tended to share the common characteristics, namely establishing a connection between literacy and freedom, exposing the horrors of slavery,

> "Life loves to be taken by the lapel and told: "I'm with you, kid. Let's go!"
>
> - Maya Angelou

seeking to inspire their enslaved sisters and brothers to escape, and advocating for abolition. Similarly, for most of the twentieth century, some combination of widely recognized motivations – vindicating or defending the race, presenting or arguing for particular political programs, exploring racial identity and the meaning of blackness – animated the writing of black autobiographies and biographies. Rather, contemporary works are borne of a much more diverse range of concerns and opportunities, which themselves are both product and indication of the expanded and varied places that African Americans hold in U.S. society.

As a body of writing, contemporary autobiographies and biographies help to reveal the many ways that black people continue to impact and shape American culture, the broad diversity of black life, and the ways race and racial identity overlaps, intersects, and interacts with gender, class positions, and sexuality. Contemporary works and those that will follow cannot and should not be expected to reproduce what has come before, but they have the benefit—and some might say the responsibility—to draw on the insights and frameworks and opportunities created by the previous works. Contemporary and future writers of black autobiographies and biographies are the inheritors of the legacies left by these generations of writers of black life stories.

Dr. Stephen M. Ward is an Associate Professor in the University of Michigan's Department of Afroamerican and African Studies and the Residential College. He is also the faculty director of U of M's "Semester in Detroit" program.

SOURCES

Ards, Angela A.
Words of Witness: Black Women's Autobiography in the Post-Brown Era. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015.

Braxton, Joanne M.
Black Women Writing Autobiography: A Tradition Within a Tradition. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989.

Dagbovie, Pero Gaglo.
What is African American History? Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2015.

Franklin, V. P.
Living Our Stories, Telling Our Truths: Autobiography and the Making of the African American Intellectual Tradition. New York: Scribner, 1995.

Harding, Vincent.
There is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1981.

Mostern, Kenneth.
Autobiography and Black Identity Politics: Racialization in Twentieth-Century America. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1999

AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE STORIES

MUST READS: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STEPHEN M. WARD, PH.D.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Maya Angelou
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings
Ballantine, 2009 [1969]

Ta-Nehisi Coates
Between the World and Me
Spiegel and Grau, 2015

Edwidge Danticat
Brother, I'm Dying
Vintage, 2007

Henry Louis Gates, ed.
The Classic Slave Narratives
Signet 2012 [1987]

Ann Moody
Coming of Age in Mississippi
Random House, 1992 [1968]

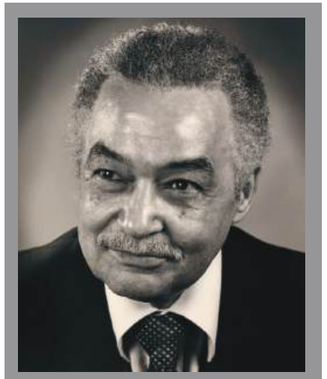
Barack Obama
Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance
Three Rivers Press, 2004 [1995]

Assata Shakur
Assata: An Autobiography
Zed, 2014 [1987]

Booker T. Washington
Up From Slavery
Dover Publications, 1995 [1901]

Richard Wright
Black Boy (American Hunger)
HarperCollins, 1993 [1945]

Malcolm X, as told to Alex Haley
The Autobiography of Malcolm X
Ballantine Books, 1999 [1965]



Coleman Young



Aretha Franklin

DETROIT AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Grace Lee Boggs
Living for Change: An Autobiography
University of Minnesota Press, 1998

Erma Henderson with Michael Kitchen
Down Through the Years: The Memoirs of Detroit City Council President Emeritus Erma Henderson
Author House, 2004

Arthur L. Johnson
Race and Remembrance: A Memoir
Wayne State University Press, 2008

Yusef Shakur
The Window 2 My Soul: My Transformation from a Zone 8 Thug to a Father and Freedom Fighter: A Political Memoir
Urban Guerrilla Publishing, 2010

Coleman Young with Lonnie Wheeler
Hard Stuff: The Autobiography of Mayor Coleman Young
Viking, 1994

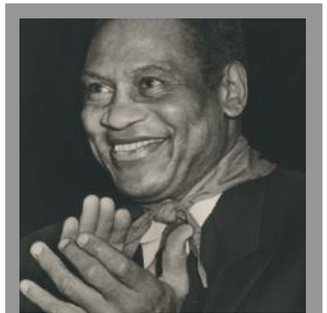
BIOGRAPHIES

Mary Frances Berry
My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations
Knopf, 2005

Nadine Cohodas
Princess Noire: The Tumultuous Reign of Nina Simone
Pantheon, 2010

Paula Giddings
Ida: A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching
Amistad, 2008

Robin Kelley
Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original
Free Press, 2009



Paul Robeson



Nina Simone

David Levering Lewis
W. E. B. Du Bois: A Biography, 1868-1963
Henry Holt and Co., 2009

Nell Irvin Painter
Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol
Norton, 1996

Sherie M. Randolph
Florynce "Flo" Kennedy: The Life of a Black Feminist Radical
University of North Carolina Press, 2015

Barbara Ransby
Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision
University of North Carolina Press, 2003

Paul Robeson, Jr.
The Undiscovered Paul Robeson: Quest for Freedom, 1939-1976
Wiley, 2010

Scott Saul
Becoming Richard Pryor
HarperCollins, 2014

DETROIT BIOGRAPHIES

Melba Joyce Boyd
Wrestling with the Muse: Dudley Randall and the Broadside Press
Columbia University Press, 2003

Angela D. Dillard
Faith in the City: Preaching Radical Social Change in Detroit
University of Michigan Press, 2007

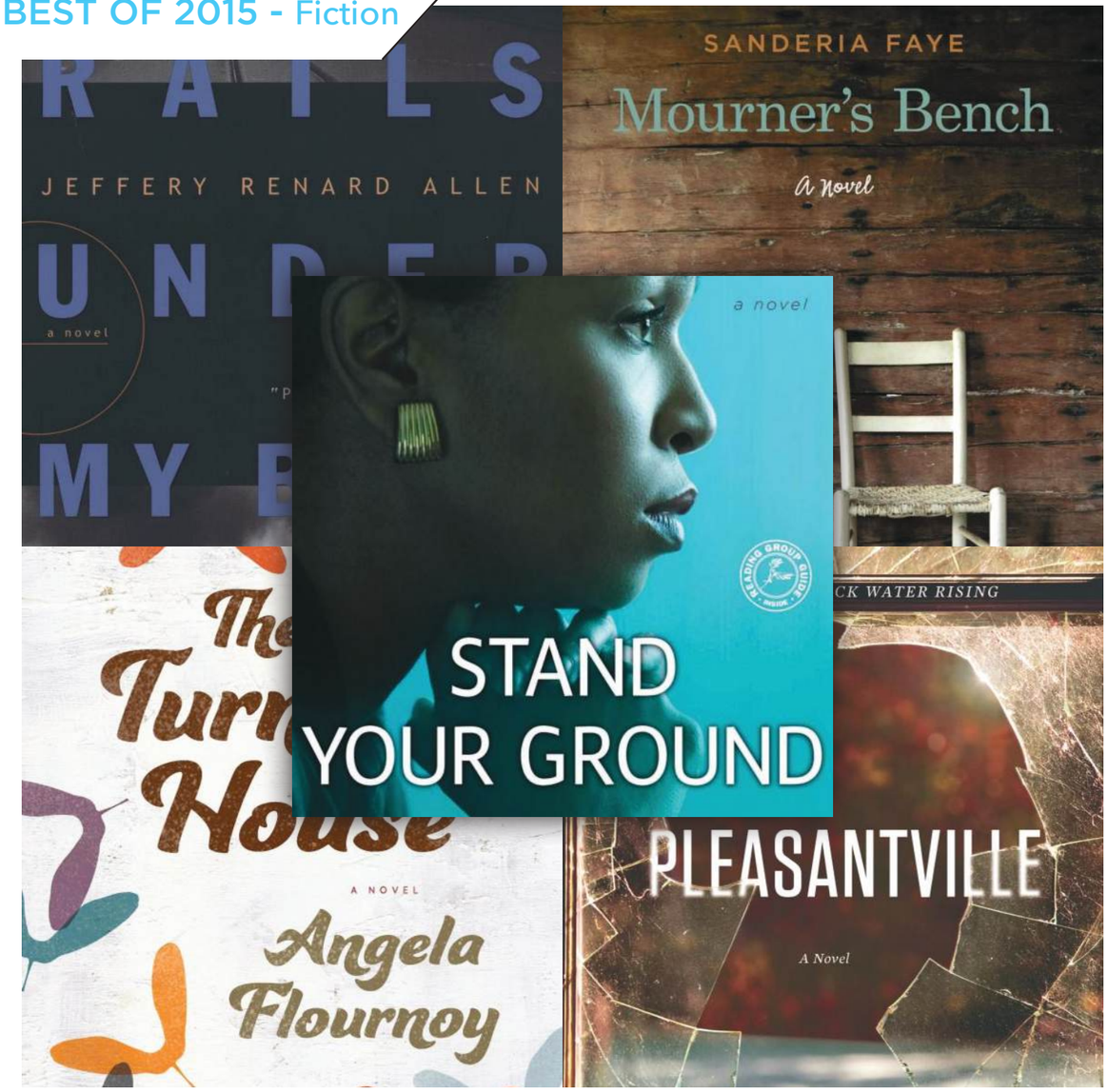
Peter J. Hammer and Trevor W. Coleman
Crusader for Justice: Federal Judge Damon J. Keith
Wayne State University Press, 2013

David Ritz
Respect: The Life of Aretha Franklin
Little, Brown and Company, 2014

Jeanne Theoharis
The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks
Beacon, 2013

STORIES

BEST OF 2015 - Fiction



BEST OF 2015

Allen, Jeffrey Renard
Rails Under My Back
Graywolf Press, 2015

Faye, Sanderia
Mourner's Bench
University of Arkansas Press, 2015

Flournoy, Angela
Turner House
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015

Locke, Attica
Pleasantville
HarperCollins, 2015

Murray, Victoria Christopher
Stand Your Ground
Touchstone, 2015

Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem; Anna Waterhouse
Mycroft Holmes
Titan Books, 2015
Sherlock Holmes's older brother's career begins with the disappearance of his fiancée.

Antoinette, Ashley
Luxe
St. Martin's Griffin, 2015
Earning a scholarship to UCLA is a dream come true but life becomes a nightmare for Bleu when her roommates get her caught up in a life of addiction and violence.

Asim, Jabari
Only the Strong
Bolden, 2015
The lives of three strangers from the same community overlap in a changing city.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

Billingsley, ReShonda Tate
Mama's Boy
Gallery Books, 2015
A mother fights to save her son after an encounter with the police goes wrong.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Black, Daniel
The Coming
St. Martin's Press, 2015
The story of the strength and resilience of those who crossed over in the Middle Passage.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Brown, Carlton M.
2 Sides of a Penny
Life Changing Books, 2015
Italy and Jason try to cope with street life.

Deese, Allyson M. and Paul Isaiah David
Try a Little Tenderness
Urban Christian, 2015
Two young people called to serve in their community seek a romantic connection.

Dickey, Eric Jerome
Naughtier than Nice
Dutton, 2015
Three sisters experience life, love and relationships during the holiday season.
***EBook and Audiobook available on Overdrive**
***Audiobook on CD**

Faye, Sanderia
Mourner's Bench
University of Arkansas Press, 2015
Sarah Jones is confronted with the issues of race, religion, and politics at a very young age in 1960s Arkansas.

Fletcher, Deborah Mello
Playing for Keeps
Dafina, 2015
Malcolm Cobbs is a good man, but he has a lot of baggage. Can Cilla Jameson handle a relationship that's full of drama?

Flournoy, Angela
Turner House
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015
Family members have trouble deciding if they want to keep the ancestral home.
***EBook and Audiobook available on Overdrive and Hoopla**

Hampton, Brenda
Slick 2
Urban Renaissance, 2015
Even though he thought he had moved on, Jonathan finds that he is still tempted by by his ex-wife's best friend.

Herbert, A.L.
Murder with Fried Chicken and Waffles
Kensington, 2015
Restaurant owner discovers she also has detective skills when a dead body is discovered at her establishment.

Hill, Donna
My Love at Last
Harlequin Kimani, 2015
Sparks fly between an anthropologist and a very handsome restoration specialist.

Holmes, Shannon
Caught Up
Akashic, 2015
Dixyn is forced to make some hard choices after her boyfriend is sent to prison.
***Audiobook on CD**

Jackson, Naomi
The Star Side of Bird Hill
Penguin Press, 2015
Two sisters from Brooklyn spend the summer with their

grandmother in Barbados.
***Ebook available on Overdrive.**

Jenkins, Beverly
Forbidden
Avon, 2016
Rhine has built a successful life but will have to make a dangerous sacrifice if he continues to pursue the love of Eddy Carmichael.

Johnson, Mat
Loving Day: A Novel
Spiegel & Grau, 2015
Warren Duffy returns home from Europe to the house he inherits from his father and is surprised to discover that he has a daughter.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

Joy, E.N.
When All Is Said and Prayed
Urban Christian, 2015
A once divorced, once widowed single mother wonders if she should try to rekindle an old flame.

King, Joy Deja
Bitch: The Beginning Of The End
King Production, 2015
The battle for street supremacy gets even hotter as Aaliyah and Precious work together to protect their loved ones.

Lido-Rice, Michelle
My Soul Then Sings
Urban Christian, 2015
Secrets and lies challenge the faith of family and friends.

Locke, Attica
Pleasantville
HarperCollins, 2015
Attorney Jay Porter is ready to step back from high profile cases to focus on raising his children, but he is lured by the financial benefit of a case involving a missing woman.
Audiobook on CD

Mason, J.D.; ReShonda Tate Billingsley and Bernice L. McFadden
Finding Amos
Simon and Schuster, 2015
Three sisters have to decide how to find peace with the father that abandoned and neglected them.

Miles, Tiya
The Cherokee Rose: A Novel of Gardens & Ghosts
John F Blair, 2015
Three women are led to an old plantation to help preserve its history and to find peace in their own spirits.

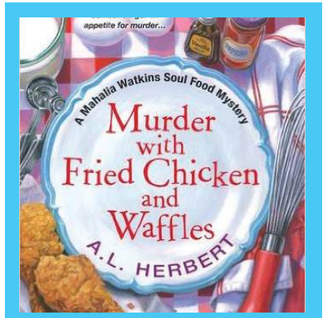
Monroe, Mary
Bad Blood
Dafina, 2015
A woman plots revenge on her trifling ex-fiancé.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Morrison, Mary B
Baby, You're the Best
Dafina, 2015
Deceptions and secrets surround sisters as they come together to plan a birthday party for their mother.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

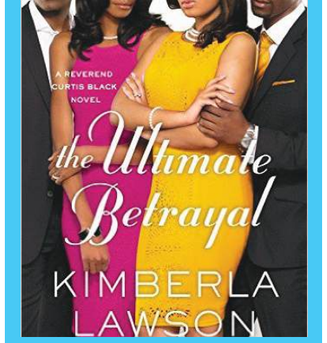
Mosley, Walter
And Sometimes I Wonder About You
Doubleday, 2015
Leonid McGill feels compelled to investigate after he declines a case and the potential client ends up dead.
***EBook and Audiobook available on Overdrive**
***Audiobook on CD**

Murray, Victoria Christopher
Stand Your Ground
Touchstone, 2015
Two women have to decide what steps to take in the wake of the death of a teenage boy.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Noire
Stone Cold Liar: The Misadventures of Mink LaRue
Dafina, 2015
Mink continues to juggle all of her lies to retain her multi-million dollar lifestyle.



A.L. Herbert
Murder with Fried Chicken and Waffles



Kimberla Lawson Roby
The Ultimate Betrayal

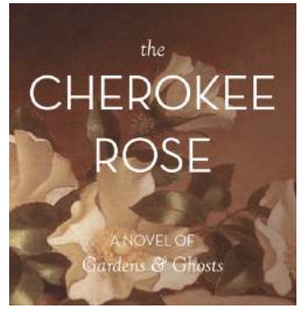
Piazza, Tom
A Free State: a novel
HarperCollins, 2015
Henry, a runaway slave and entertainer, protects his identity while working with a minstrel troupe.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

Pitts, Leonard
Grant Park
Bolden, 2015
An African American journalist disappears after publishing a very controversial column on the morning of President Obama's first election.
***EBook and Audiobook available on Overdrive and Hoopla**
***Audiobook on CD**

Riley, Vanessa
Unmasked Heart
BM Books, 2015
A young woman is shocked to discover the real reason she is treated differently than the rest of her siblings.

Roby, Kimberla Lawson
The Ultimate Betrayal
Grand Central Publishing, 2015
Rev. Curtis Black's daughter, Alicia, wants to work on her marriage but her heart still belongs to another man.
***EBook available on Overdrive**
***Audiobook on CD**

Simmons, D. Bryant
Blue Sky
Bravebird, 2015
Belinda tries to escape the scars from her tumultuous past and keep her children from making the same mistakes.



Tiya Miles
The Cherokee Rose: A Novel of Gardens & Ghosts

Simmons, Pat
Driven to be Loved: The Carmen Sisters, Book Three
Whitaker House, 2015
A car salesman is drawn back to his faith after he starts dating a pediatrician.

Saundra
Her Sweetest Revenge 2
Dafina/Kensington 2015
A Detroit hair stylist wants to live a normal life with her husband, but the streets keep calling.

Sister Souljah
A Moment of Silence: Midnight 3
Simon & Schuster, 2015
Midnight thought he finally had his personal and business lives on the right path but a moment of anger derails the life he has created.
***Ebook available on Overdrive**

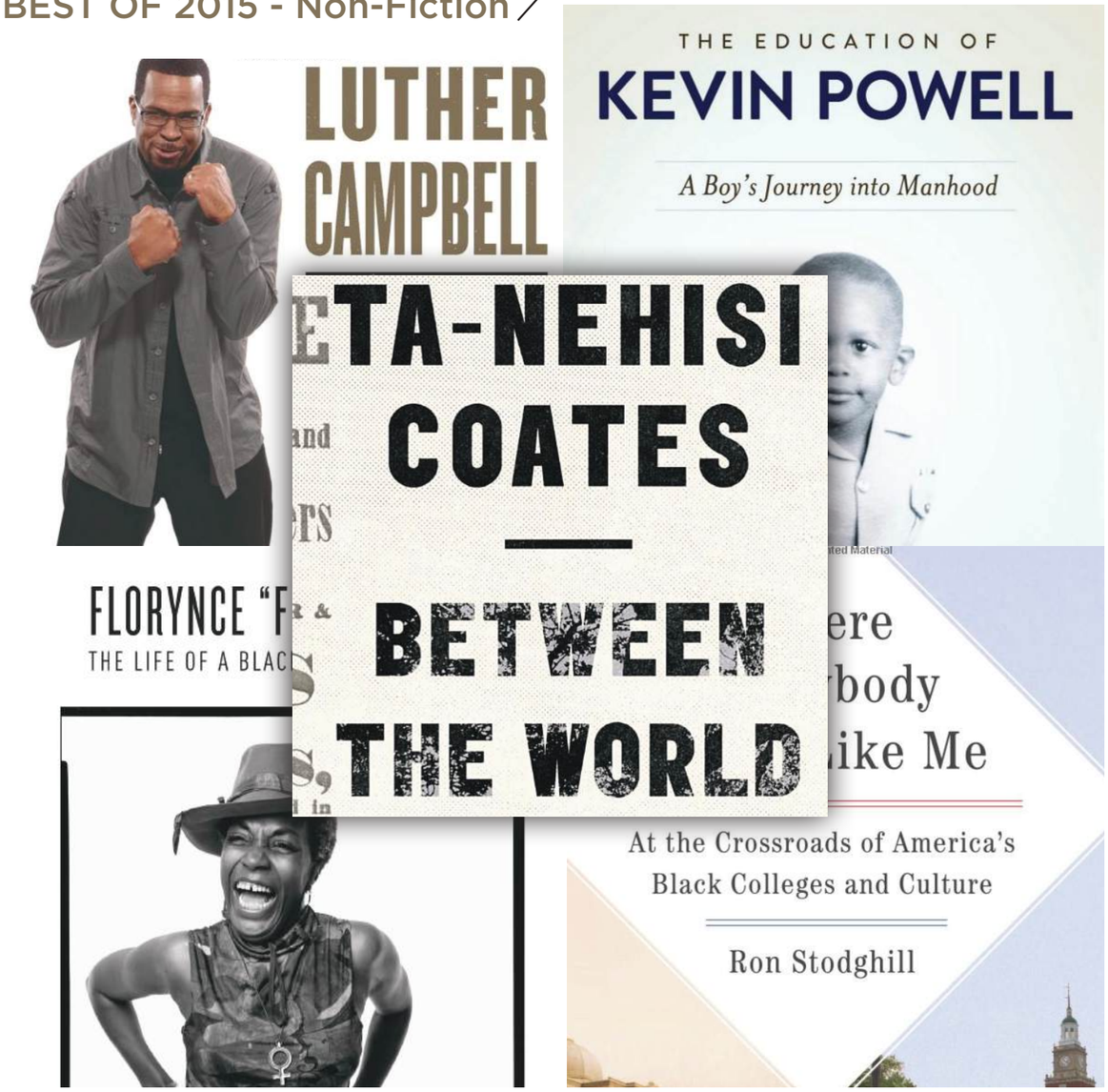
Valdez-Perkins, Dolen
Balm
Amistad, 2015
Three spiritually connected people move to Chicago after the Civil War and search for peace in their hearts.
***Audiobook on CD**

Weber, Carl; Eric Pete
Grand Opening: A Family Business Novel
Three brothers work together to get themselves out of poverty.
***EBook available on Overdrive**



Michelle Lido-Rice
My Soul Then Sings

BEST OF 2015 - Non-Fiction



BEST OF 2015

Campbell, Luther
The Book of Luke: My Fight for Truth, Justice, and Liberty City

Coates, Ta-Nehisi
Between the World and Me

Powell, Kevin
The Education of Kevin Powell: A Boy's Journey Into Manhood

Sherie, Randolph M
Florynce "Flo" Kennedy: The Life of a Black Feminist Radical

Stodghill, Ron
Where Everybody Looks Like Me: At The Crossroads of America's Black Colleges and Culture

NON-FICTION

ART, MUSIC, AND POETRY

Angelou, Maya
Maya Angelou : The Complete Poetry
Random House, 2015
Complete collection of poetry includes never before published poems and her final long form poems.

Baram, Marcus
Gil Scott-Heron: Pieces of a Man
St. Martin's Press, 2015
Artist and activist fought social injustice with words and music.

Betts, Reginald Dwayne
Bastards of the Reagan Era
Poems reflect the sometimes harsh reality of the black man in America.

Big Freedia; Nicole Balin
Big Freedia: God Save the Queen
Gallery Books, 2015
Entertaining memoir tells how the "Queen of Bounce" found healing, acceptance and joy through music.

Campbell, Luther
The Book of Luke: My Fight for Truth, Justice, and Liberty City
Amistad, 2015
Fighter for First Amendment rights, father of southern hip-hop, family man, football coach, community and civil rights activist -- these are the monikers that make rap artist most proud.

Haye, Terrance
How to be Drawn
Penguin, 2015
Collection of poems examines perceptions, how we see, and how we are seen.

Hancock, Herbie
Herbie Hancock: Possibilities
Viking, 2015
Innovations in synthesized music are accomplished by musicians' musical and engineering talents.

Jones, Grace
I'll Never Write My Memoirs
Gallery Books, 2015
Singer, model, and actress, her memoir offers a revealing account of a spectacular career and turbulent life. ***EBook available on Overdrive**

Jordan, Brad "Scarface"
Diary of A Madman: The Geto Boys, Life, Death, and the Roots of Southern Rap
Dey Street Books, 2015
Honest and very raw personal revelations drive this narrative of a groundbreaking musician.

Knopper, Steve
MJ: The Genius of Michael Jackson
Scribner Book Company, 2015
Exhaustive biography chronicles the successes, pitfalls and untimely death of the "King of Pop."

Szwed, John
Billie Holiday: The Musician and the Myth
Penguin Books, 2015
Emphasis is placed upon the brilliant jazz singer's vocal technique and song interpretation instead of her turbulent life.

Taraborrelli, J Randy
Becoming Beyonce: The Untold Story
Grand Central Publishing, 2015
Comprehensive biography details the beloved pop icon's career, struggles and sacrifices that led to her success.

Ward, Jervette R.
Real Sister: Stereotypes, Respectability, and Black Women in Reality TV
Rutgers University Press, 2015
Thoughtful conversation addresses concerns about how reality TV depicts and reinforces stereotypes and the affect on the black community.

NON-FICTION (con't)

Wiley, Kehinde
Kehinde Wiley: The World Stage: France 1880-1960
Galerie, 2015
Collection of lush portraitures depicting young black men in classic heroic poses rarely seen in western art, includes 33 vividly colored photos.

Wilson, Charlie
I Am Charlie Wilson
Atria/37 Ink, 2015
One of the most celebrated musicians of his generation shares his story of triumph over adversity and what helped him survive to launch an unprecedented comeback.

BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIRS

Alexander, Elizabeth
The Light of the World: A Memoir
Grand Central Publishing, 2015
Poet shares her infinite love for her husband and the agonizing grief that enveloped her upon his death.
***Audiobook on CD**

Gaye, Jan; David Ritz
After The Dance: My Life with Marvin Gaye
Amistad, 2015
Former wife reveals the details of the ups and downs of loving the mercurial superstar.
***Audiobook on CD**

Gifford, Justin
Street Poison: The Biography of Iceberg Slim
Doubleday, 2015
The first biography of the pimp-turned-popular author, offers insights on his life and writings that made him an icon.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

Jefferson, Margo
Negroland: A Memoir
Pantheon, 2015
Young woman must come to terms with the expectations of her upper middle-class family and the realities of life in the United States during the 1950's and 60's.

Johnson, Beverly
The Face That Changed It All: A Memoir
Atria Books, 2015
The first black model to grace the cover of American Vogue shares her personal tragedies and triumphs.
***EBook available on Overdrive**



John Szwed
Billie Holiday: The Musician and the Myth

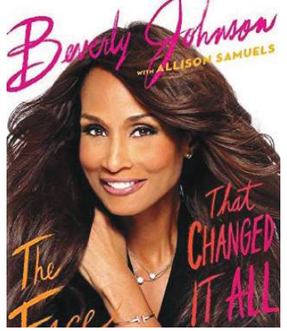
Little, Benilde
Welcome to My Breakdown: A Memoir
Atria Books, 2015
A series of personal losses sends author into a depressive tailspin.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

Morgan, Debbi
The Monkey on My Back: A Memoir
Infinite Words, 2015
Candid exploration of the domestic abuse cycle endured by three generations of women and the steps actress takes to break the chain.

Norrell, Robert
Alex Haley: And the Books That Changed a Nation
St. Martin's Press, 2015
Biography of one the most influential writers of the 20th century.

Powell, Kevin
The Education of Kevin Powell: A Boy's Journey Into Manhood
Atria Books, 2015
Compelling memoir details the pitfalls and triumphs that led to a life dedicated to justice and equality for all.

Rhimes, Shonda
Year of Yes: How to Dance it Out, Stand in the Sun and Be Your Own Person
Simon & Schuster, 2015
Successful television producer and writer steps out of her shell.
***EBook available on Overdrive**



Beverly Johnson
The Face That Changed It All: A Memoir

Sherie, Randolph M
Florynce "Flo" Kennedy: The Life of a Black Feminist Radical
The University of North Carolina Press, 2015
Often forgotten, this firebrand was an architect of modern feminist thought and a leader in the Black Power and Civil Rights movements.

BUSINESS, FINANCE & PROFESSIONAL

Anthony, La La
The Power Playbook: Rules for Independence, Money and Success
Celebra, 2015
Entrepreneur and actress offers advice on obtaining professional and personal success, while maintaining balance in one's private life.

Barnes, Riché J.
Raising the Race: Black Career Women Redefine Marriage, Motherhood, and Community
Rutgers University Press, 2015
Groundbreaking study examines how black married career women juggle relationships, expectations of the black community, and their desires to raise healthy, independent children.

Brooks, F. Erik, Ph.D.; Glenn L. Starks
African American Student's Guide to College Success
Greenwood, 2015
Practical advice, strategies and motivation for students beginning an undergraduate degree.

Branch, Miko
Miss Jessie's: Creating a Successful Business from Scratch -- Naturally
Amistad, 2015
Inspired by their stylish, beloved grandmother, sisters create a revolutionary addition to the hair-care industry.

Clingman, James
Black Dollar$ Matter: Teach Your Dollars How to Make Sense
Professional Publishing House, 2015
Provides useful tactics and solutions to achieve economic empowerment.

Sherrod, Egypt; Noble-Garland, Amber
Keep Calm . . . It's Just Real Estate: Your No-Stress Guide to Buying a Home
Running Book Press Publishers, 2015
Informative and accessible tips and strategies for new home buyers.

COOKING

Adams, Jocelyn Delk
Grandbaby Cakes
Agate Surrey, 2015
Collection of inventive reinterpretations of nostalgic desserts inspired by treasured family recipes.

Charles, Dora
A Real Southern Cook: In Her Savannah Kitchen
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015
Low Country southern cooking, personal stories and mouth-watering photographs introduce readers to this Savannah area treasure.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Kelis
My Life on a Plate: Recipes From Around the World
Kyle Books, 2015
Inspired by her mother and by the foods she savored while on tour, Cordon Bleu trained singer/chef creates her first cookbook.

Montgomery, Robbie; Tim Norman
Sweetie Pie's Cookbook: Soulful Southern Recipes, from My Family to Yours
Amistad, 2015
Television personality shares meal ideas along with stories from her restaurant and her life on the road as a backup singer.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

HEALTH & SCIENCE

Paul, Richard
We Could Not Fail: The First African Americans in the Space Program
University of Texas Press, 2015
Fascinating account of several pioneers who worked diligently to be a part of history, even if behind the scenes.

Tweedy, Damon
Black Man in a White Coat: A Doctor's Reflections on Race and Medicine
Picador, 2015
Author uses personal experiences, observations, and lessons from his career to demonstrate the recurrent role race plays in doctor-patient interactions.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Rainey, Cortez, R
Free Your Mind: An African American Guide to Meditation and Freedom
Author uses an historical context to explain the benefits of meditation principles and techniques.

Simmons, Russell; Chris Morrow
Happy Vegan: A Guide to Living a Long, Healthy, and Successful Life.
Practitioner of yoga and meditation advocates plant-based nutrition and mindful, conscious eating.

HISTORY

Anderson, Devery S.
Emmett Till: The Murder That Shocked the World and Propelled the Civil Rights Movement
University Press of Mississippi, 2015
The definitive account looks at the story of Till's death and its significance in the long road to social justice.

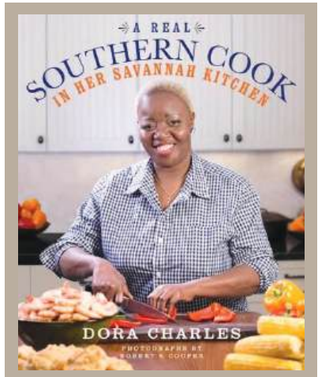
Cosgrove, Stuart
Detroit 67: The Year That Changed Soul
Stuart Cosgrove, 2015
The music of Motown is the thread that unites historic events.

Gates, Henry L.; Kevin M. Burke
And Still I Rise: Black America Since MLK
Ecco Press, 2015
Companion book to Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s PBS series with more than 300 photos.

Hervieux, Linda
Forgotten: Untold Story of D-Day's Black Heroes, at Home and at War
Harper, 2015
Recounts the contributions of the only African-American combat unit to land at Normandy.

Nadasen, Premilla
Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built a Movement
Beacon Press, 2015
History of organizing among African American household workers who tirelessly organized to bring dignity and legal recognition to their occupation.

Tipton-Martin, Toni
Jemima Code: Two Centuries of African American Cookbooks
University of Texas Press, 2015
This anthology offers a history of our contributions to American foodways.



Dora Charles
A Real Southern Cook: In Her Savannah Kitchen

White, Shane
Prince of Darkness: The Untold Story of Jeremiah G. Hamilton, Wall Street's First Black Millionaire
St. Martin's Press, 2015
Historian illuminates the story of the little known entrepreneur who during the 1800s made his fortune in the high pressure world of stocks and bonds trading.

LIFESTYLE/ ENTERTAINING

Campbell, Tina
I Need a Day to Pray
Gee Tree Creative, 2015
Gospel singer and reality TV star offers her insights on prayer and faith.

Felder, Dr. H. C.
The African American Guide to the Bible
Authorhouse, 2015
Examines and evaluates the relevance of the Bible from the perspective of people of color.

Jakes, T.D.
Destiny: Step Into Your Purpose
Faith Words, 2015
Practical advice on finding and fulfilling the role you were created to play in life.

Nichols, Lisa; Janet Switzer
Abundance Now: Amplify Your Life & Achieve Prosperity Today
Dey Street Books, 2015
Outlines steps to creating abundance and leaving a legacy for others to follow.
***EBook available on Overdrive**

Raybon, Patricia
Undivided: A Muslim Daughter, Her Christian Mother, Their Path to Peace
Thomas Nelson, 2015
Mother and daughter must come to terms with their religious choices.

Shier, Pricilla
Fervent: A Woman's Battle Plan to Serious, Specific and Strategic Prayer
B&H Books, 2015
A guide on how to use prayer to defend and fight for your family and others.

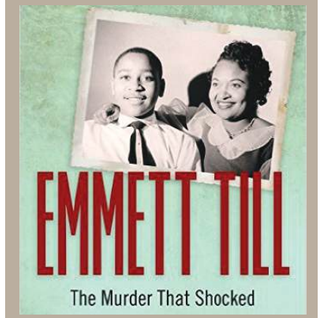
Vanzant, Iyanla
Trust: Mastering the 4 Essential Trusts: Trust in God, Trust in Yourself, Trust in Others, Trust in Life
Smiley Books, 2015
Defines the four essential trusts author believes necessary for growth and survival.

POLITICAL/SOCIAL SCIENCES

Carson, Ben; Candy Carson
A More Perfect Union: What We the People Can Do to Reclaim Our Constitutional Liberties
Sentinel, 2015
Explanation of the Constitution and why it is still relevant to our everyday lives.
***Audiobook on CD**

Coates, Ta-Nehisi
Between the World and Me
Spiegel & Grau, 2015
A love letter from father to son about being a black man in the twenty-first century.
***EBook and Audiobook available on Overdrive and Hoopla**
***Audiobook on CD**

Haygood, Wil
Showdown: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court Nomination That Changed America
Knopf Publishing Group, 2015
Fascinating examination of the confirmation battle over the first African-American nominated to the Supreme Court of the United States.



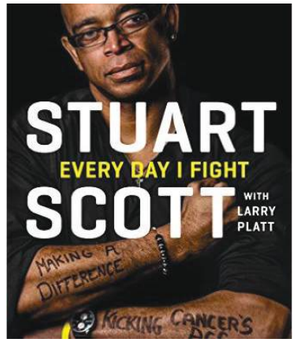
Devery S. Anderson
Emmett Till: The Murder That Shocked the World and Propelled the Civil Rights Movement

Leap, Jorja
Project Fatherhood: A Story of Courage and Healing in One of America's Toughest Communities
Beacon Press, 2015
Black and Latino men, some ex-cons or former gang members come together to support and learn from one another, the art of good parenting, sustaining relationships and community involvement.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

Madhubuti, Haki R.
Taking Bullets: Black Boys and Men in Twenty-First Century America, Fighting Terrorism, Stopping Violence and Seeking Healing
Third World Press, 2015
Empathic discussion on the current plight facing young black men today and the challenges of confronting systemic problems in the community.

Stodghill, Ron
Where Everybody Looks Like Me: At the Crossroads of America's Black Colleges and Culture.
Amistad, 2015
Low enrollment figures, declining revenues and poor management are some of the challenges facing historically black colleges and universities.

NON-FICTION (con't)



Stuart Scott; Larry Platt
Everyday I Fight.

Taylor, Keeanga
From #Blacklivesmatter to Black Liberation
Haymarket Books, 2016
Insightful analysis of the structural problems such as mass incarceration and black unemployment which hold the potential to reignite a push for Black Liberation.

Winfrey-Harris, Tamara
The Sisters are Alright: Changing the Broken Narrative of Black Women in America
Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2015
Examination of marriage, motherhood, health, sexuality and beauty exposes the pervasive stereotypes black women face.
***Audiobook available on Hoopla**

RELATIONSHIPS

Goldberg, Whoopi
If Someone Says "You Complete Me," RUN!: Whoopi's Big Book of Relationships
Hachette Books, 2015
Comedienne offers advice based upon the concept that marriage is not for everyone and that being single does not equate failure.
***Ebook available on Overdrive.**



Tina Campbell
I Need a Day to Pray

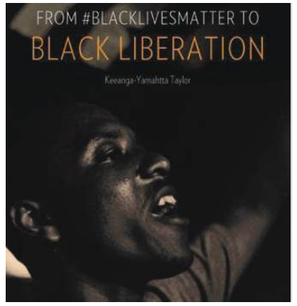
SPORTS & RECREATION

Austin, Isaiah
Dream Again: A Story of Faith, Courage, and the Tenacity to Overcome
Howard Books, 2015
Inspiring story of a college athlete's courageous stance when his hopes for a career in the NBA became impossible.

Baab, Kent
Not a Game:The Incredible Rise and Unthinkable Fall of Allen Iverson
Atria Books, 2015
A cautionary tale detailing the once premier athlete's descent into addiction and poverty.

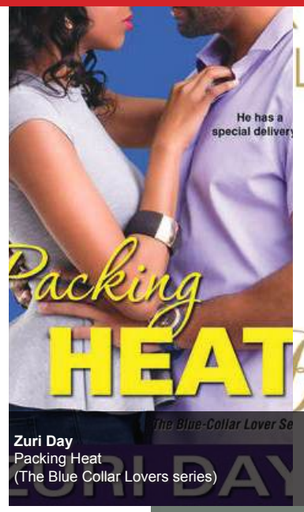
Miller, Davis
Approaching Ali : A Reclamation in Three Acts
Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2015
In a collection of essays, journalist offers a literary tribute to one of the most beloved figures of our time.

Scott, Stuart; Larry Platt
Everyday I Fight.
Blue Rider Press, 2015
Released posthumously, this work by well-known sports anchor and commentator relates not just the story of his life, but the story of his battle with cancer.
***EBook available on Overdrive**
***Audiobook on CD**

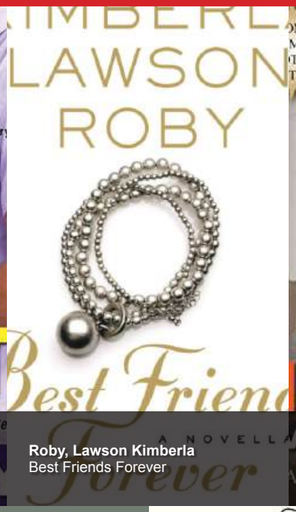


Keeanga Taylor
From #Blacklivesmatter to Black Liberation

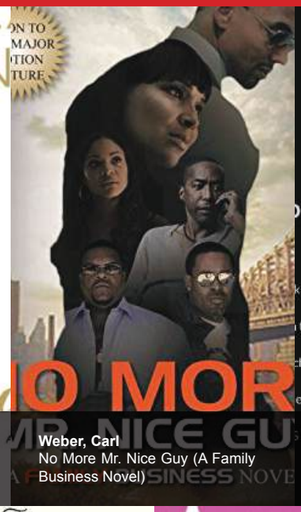
FORTHCOMING TITLES IN 2016



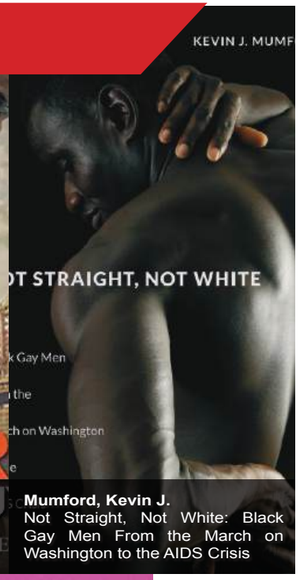
Zuri Day
Packing Heat
(The Blue Collar Lovers series)



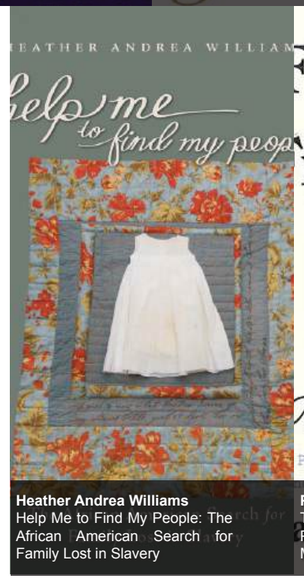
Roby, Lawson Kimberla
Best Friends Forever



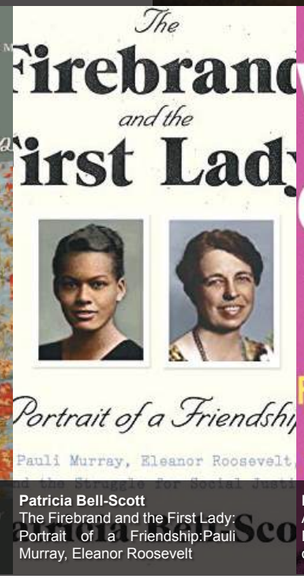
Weber, Carl
No More Mr. Nice Guy (A Family Business Novel)



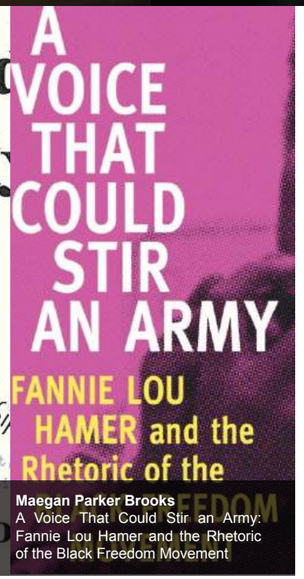
Mumford, Kevin J.
Not Straight, Not White: Black Gay Men From the March on Washington to the AIDS Crisis



Heather Andrea Williams
Help Me to Find My People: The African American Search for Family Lost in Slavery



Patricia Bell-Scott
The Firebrand and the First Lady: Portrait of a Friendship:Pauli Murray, Eleanor Roosevelt



Maegan Parker Brooks
A Voice That Could Stir an Army: Fannie Lou Hamer and the Rhetoric of the Black Freedom Movement

PICTURE BOOKS

Bandy, Michael S.
Granddaddy's Turn
Candlewick, 2015
True story of one family's struggle for the right to vote.
Age: 6 - 9

Bildner, Phil
Marvelous Cornelius
Chronicle Books, 2015
A modern day folk tale of a New Orleans street sweeper during the well-known Hurricane Katrina.
Age: 5 – 8

Brown, Marc
Monkey: Not Ready for Kindergarten
Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2016
First day of school "jitters" encourage a family to use creative thinking to prepare the student for the classroom.
Age: 3 – 7

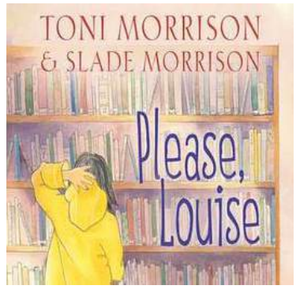
Carey, Mariah
All I Want for Christmas is You
Doubleday, 2015
A classic song that will bring holiday spirit to young readers.
Age: 3 – 6

Copeland, Misty
Firebird
G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, 2014
A young girl with fragile confidence learns the value of self-worth.
Age: 5 – 8

Garcia-Williams, Rita
Bottle Cap Boys: Dancing on Royal Street
Marimba Books, 2015
Tap dancing on the streets and sidewalks in the French Quarter teaches poor kids how to survive by putting bottle caps on the bottom of their shoes and never miss a beat.
Age: 2 – 4

Morrison, Toni
Please, Louise
S & S Wiseman, 2015
A young girl's fateful trip to the library turns her dull day into one of surprises, ideals, and super fun.
Age: 4 – 8

Nolen, Jerdine
Irene's Wish
Simon & Schuster, 2014
A girl's wish for her father to be home more often comes true in an unexpected way.
Age: 5 – 9



Toni Morrison
Please, Louise

Sosin, Deborah
Charlotte and the Quiet Place
Plum Blossom, 2015
A little girl's wish is to find a place without noise.
Age: 5 – 8

FICTION

Alexander, Kwame
Surf's Up
NorthSouth 2016
A frog named "Dude" and his "Bro" learn to compromise on their individual hobbies.
Age: 4 – 8

Draper, Sharon
Stella By Starlight
S & S Atheneum, 2015
Eleven-year-old girl and her brother witness a late night Ku Klux Klan activity.
Age: 9 – 13

Humphreys, Dee Jessica
Child Soldier: When Boys and Girls Are Used in War
Kid Can Press, 2015
Five-year-old boy is abducted from school and forced to become a brutal military fighter.
Age: 10 – 14

Mills, Claudia
Izzy Barr, Running Star
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015
The baseball star of the family has a hard time gaining her father's attention.
Age: 7 – 10

Rhodes, Jewell Parker
Bayou Magic
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2015
Ten-year-old Maddy gets swept up in the mysteries of New Orleans and her ancestors.
Age: 8 – 12

NONFICTION

Bolden, Tonya
Cause: Reconstruction America 1863 – 1877
Knopf, 2014
During the Civil War the ugly eyes of racism and the struggle of freed slaves lead to the adoption and passage of Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments.
Age: 12 – 14

Robbins, Dean
Two Friends: Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass
Scholastic, 2016
Short biographies of two 19th century crusaders for civil rights.
Age: 4 – 8

Smith, Charles R.
28 Days: Moments in Black History That Changed the World
Roaring Book, 2014
Source highlights lesser-known facts, figures, and incidents in Black History.
Age: 4 – 10

Smith, Tamara
Another Kind of Hurricane
Schwartz & Wade, 2015
This poignant story barrels across the pages and into the reader's heart, reminding us that magic can arise from the deepest tragedy.
Age: 9 – 12

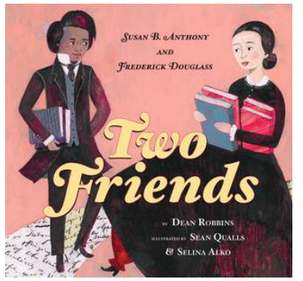
Willen, Janet
Speak a Word for Freedom: Women Against Slavery
Tundra Books, 2015
History of female abolitionists from 18th century to the present.
Age: 12 & up

BIOGRAPHY

Armand, Glenda
Ira's Shakespeare Dream
Lee & Low Publishers, 2015
Background of Ira Aldridge, the acclaimed Shakespearean actor.
Age: 7 – 12

Dakers, Diane
Oprah Winfrey: Media Legend and Inspiration to Millions
Crabtree Publishing, 2016
An accomplished woman who has experienced both admiration and scrutiny to become one of the world's most influential people.
Age: 10 – 13

Tate, Don
Poet: The Remarkable Story of George Moses Horton
Peachtree Publishers, 2015
Self-taught poet rises to fame despite his enslavement.
Age: 6 – 10



Dean Robbins
Two Friends: Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass

Schwartz, Simon
First Man: Reimagining Matthew Henson
Graphic Universe, 2015
The story of an African American explorer.
Age: 8 – 12

Winter, Jonah
How Jelly Roll Morton Invented Jazz
Roaring Book Press, 2015
History of a musician's hardships and his influence on helping to "invent" jazz.
Age: 5 – 8

Winter, Jonah
Lillian's Right to Vote
Schwartz & Wade Books, 2015
After generations of discrimination, the right to vote becomes a law.
Age: 5 – 9

TEEN

Abrams, Amir
Diva Rules
Kensington Publishing Corporation, 2015
Breaking her own code: Fiona allows a boy to get close to her heart.

Abrams, Amir; Carter, Nikki
Lights, Love and Lip Gloss: Hollywood High
Kensington Publishing Corporation, 2015
Four young ladies compete to be the top socialite.

Alexander, Kwame
Crossover
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015
Twins, Josh and Jordan, both basketball stars, until a series of new people and events change their lives.

Billingsley, Reshonda Tate
Eye Candy: Rumor Central
Kensington Publishing Corporation, 2015
Young adult gossip reporter works to keep her new relationship and brand intact.

Colbert, Brandi
Pointe
G.P. Putnam, 2015
Theo's dream of becoming an elite ballet dancer, is shattered when she's haunted by memories of her friend Donovan's abduction.

Kuehn, Stephanie
Complicit
St. Martin's Griffin, 2015
A psychological thriller of adopted siblings, Jamie and Cate have a past that is clouded with tragedies of their mother.

Latham, Jennifer
Scarlett Undercover
Little Brown, 2015
Teen sleuth tries to solve the mystery of a friend's suicide.

Magoon, Kekla
How it Went Down
Henry Holt and Company, 2014
An African American teen is shot and killed by a white gang member who claims the incident was justified.

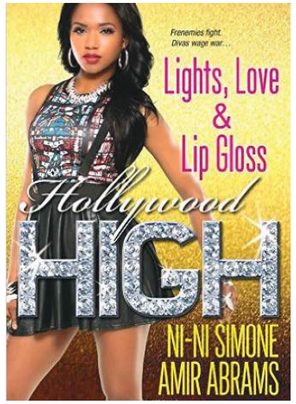
Moore, Stephanie
Give It Up
Lerner/Darby Creek, 2015
Seventeen-year-old Sanaa finds herself an outcast at Jackson High School.

Myers, Walter Dean
Juba!
Miriam Altshuler, 2015
A story of a free black man with a gift and passion to dance.

SERIES

Moore, Stephanie Perry
The Swoop List
Lerner Publishing Group, Inc., 2015
#1 Give It Up
#2 On Your Knees
#3 Back That Thing
#4 Feel Real Good
#5 Sit On Top
Five female Jackson High students are forced to overcome adversity together.

Slater, Calvin
Coleman High Novel
Game On
Hold Me Down
Kensington Publishing Corporation, 2015
Xavier and Samantha navigate high school and tumultuous back and forth relationships.

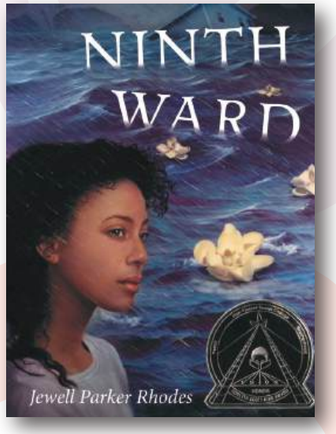


Amir Abrams ; Nikki Carter
Lights, Love and Lip Gloss: Hollywood High

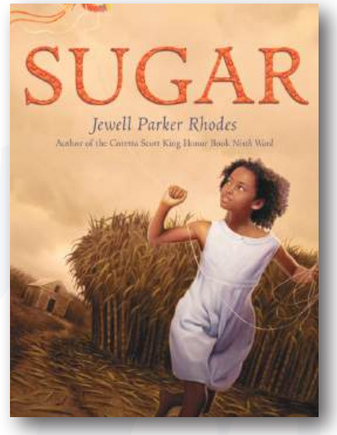
AUTHOR DAY
VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE AUTHOR

2016 AUTHOR DAY CELEBRATION

Author Day Winner: Jewell Parker Rhodes
Ninth Ward & Sugar
Monday, May 16 & Tuesday, May 17, 2016







Presentation & Book Signing
Monday, May 16, 2016 - 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Clara Stanton Jones-Friends Auditorium

Presentation & Book Signing
Monday, May 16, 2016 - 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm
Clara Stanton Jones-Friends Auditorium

Presentation & Book Signing
Tuesday, May 17, 2016 - 10:00 a.m.- 11:30 am
Clara Stanton Jones-Friends Auditorium

***Free Admission - Open To Public**
RSVP by: April 29, 2016

Children's/Teens Services Office
(313) 481-1360/61

DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

LOCATIONS

BOWEN BRANCH LIBRARY
3648 W. Vernor
Detroit, MI 48216
313.481.1540



CAMPBELL BRANCH LIBRARY
8733 W. Vernor
Detroit, MI 48209
313.481.1550



CHANDLER PARK BRANCH LIBRARY
12800 Harper
Detroit, MI 48213
313.481.1560



CHANEY BRANCH LIBRARY
16101 Grand River
Detroit, MI 48227
313.481.1570



CHASE BRANCH LIBRARY
17731 W. Seven Mile
Detroit, MI 48235
313.481.1580



CONELY BRANCH LIBRARY
4600 Martin
Detroit, MI 48210
313.481.1590



DOUGLASS BRANCH FOR SPECIALIZED SERVICES
3666 Grand River
Detroit, MI 48208
313.481.1707



DUFFIELD BRANCH LIBRARY
2507 W. Grand Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48208
313.481.1710



EDISON BRANCH LIBRARY
18400 Joy Road
Detroit, MI 48228
313.481.1720



ELMWOOD PARK BRANCH LIBRARY
550 Chene
Detroit, MI 48207
313.481.1730



LOCATIONS

FRANKLIN BRANCH LIBRARY
13651 E. McNichols
Detroit, MI 48205
313.481.1740



HUBBARD BRANCH LIBRARY
12929 W. McNichols
Detroit, MI 48235
313.481.1750



JEFFERSON BRANCH LIBRARY
12350 E. Outer Drive
Detroit, MI 48224
313.481.1760



KNAPP BRANCH LIBRARY
13330 Conant
Detroit, MI 48212
313.481.1770



LINCOLN BRANCH LIBRARY
1221 E. Seven Mile
Detroit, MI 48203
313.481.1780



MAIN LIBRARY
5201 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, MI 48202
313.481.1300



MONTEITH BRANCH LIBRARY
14100 Kercheval
Detroit, MI 48215
313.481.1800



PARKMAN BRANCH LIBRARY
1766 Oakman Blvd.
Detroit, MI 48238
313.481.1810



REDFORD BRANCH LIBRARY
21200 Grand River
Detroit, MI 48219
313.481.1820



SHERWOOD FOREST BRANCH LIBRARY
7117 W. Seven Mile
Detroit, MI 48221
313.481.1840



SKILLMAN BRANCH LIBRARY
121 Gratiot Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226
313.481.1850



WILDER BRANCH LIBRARY
7140 E. Seven Mile
Detroit, MI 48234
313.481.1870



LOCATIONS

2016 CALENDAR

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					

March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

April

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

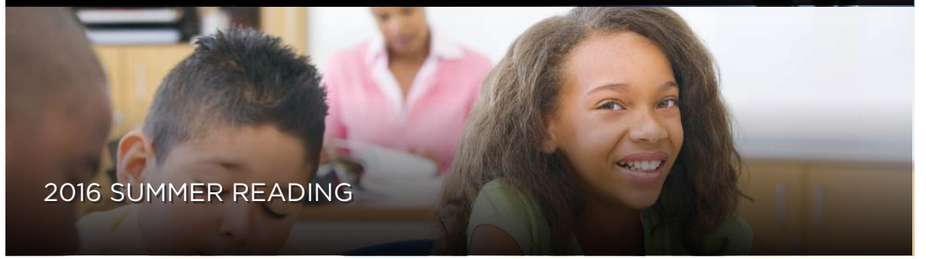
UPCOMING EVENTS

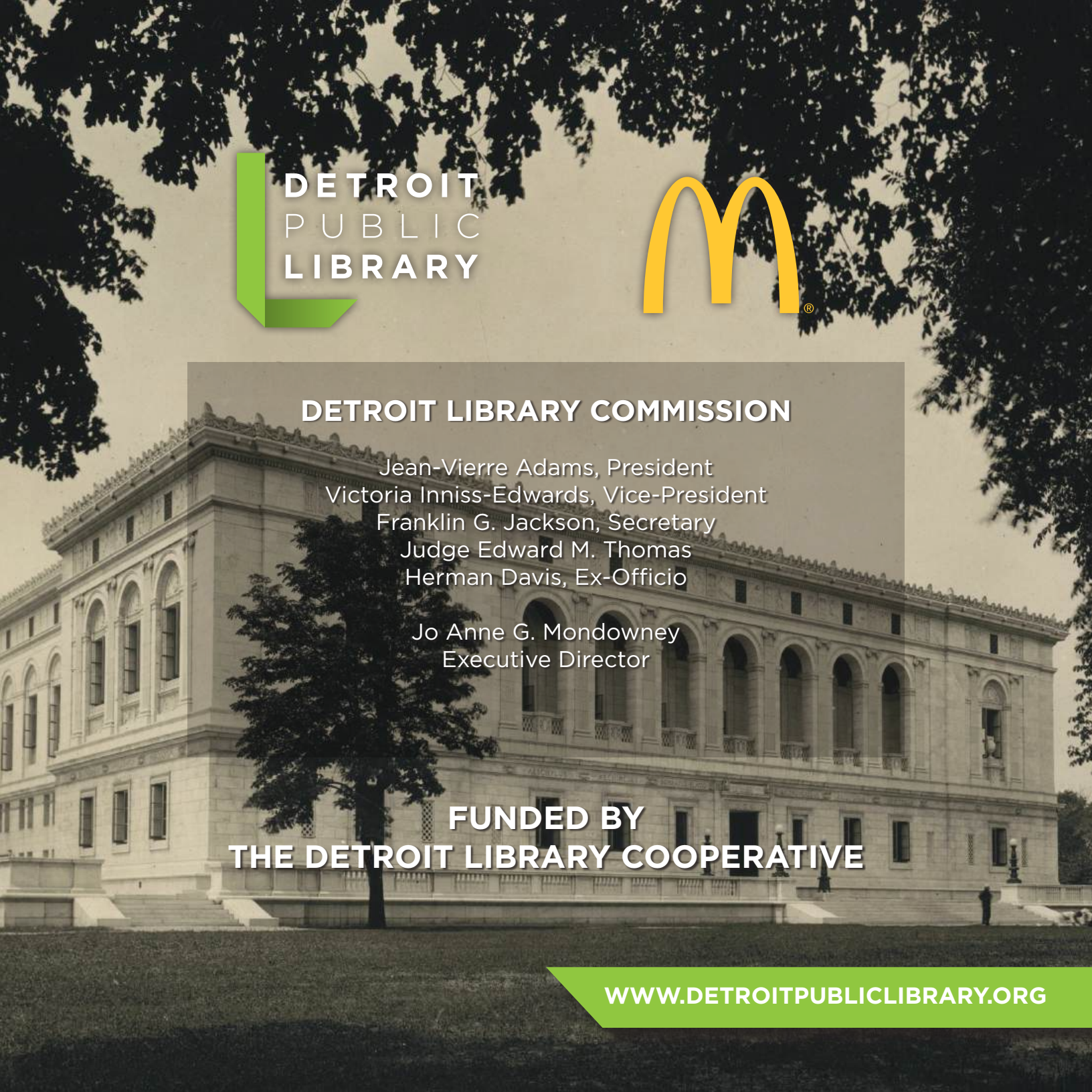


CRASH DISCOURSE LECTURE SERIES









DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

DETROIT LIBRARY COMMISSION

Jean-Vierre Adams, President
Victoria Inniss-Edwards, Vice-President
Franklin G. Jackson, Secretary
Judge Edward M. Thomas
Herman Davis, Ex-Officio

Jo Anne G. Mondowney
Executive Director

FUNDED BY THE DETROIT LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

WWW.DETROITPUBLICLIBRARY.ORG