

# AFAS



AFAS: African American Studies Librarians Section  
Association of College and Research Libraries - ALA

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## GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Dear AFAS Members:

First, we were genuinely inspired by a stimulating presentation by Dr. Donald Bogle on "African Americans in Hollywood" this summer at annual. A special thank you is due the 2008 AFAS Program Planning Committee and its chair Lisa Pillow. Great program! During the months since June, AFAS has embarked on several new activities that bode well for our future.

Our Vice-Chair/Chair Elect, Vivian Fisher, has submitted a proposal to the ACRL Board for AFAS to recruit students into the profession at library school career fairs. Also submitted for approval to the Board is the Policy & Research Committee's proposal to establish the Monroe Nathan Work Award for reference works. The plan calls for developing and endowment to fund this biennial award. This committee is chaired by Akilah S. Nosakhere. Also our section has established a new members-only discussion list called ACRL-AFAS-L. This is now the official discussion list of the African American Studies Librarians Section of ACRL. Special thanks to our ACRL Liaison Adam Burling for implementing this so promptly. The moderators for the list are Heather Martin and I (although Heather has done the lion's share of the work). Membership on the list is voluntary so please subscribe. To subscribe you will need to go to <http://lists.ala.org/sympa/info/acrl-afas-l>. It really is time to create a professional community space for ourselves. So I hope that sometime in the near future the new discussion list will surpass the current twenty-five percent membership enrollment it now enjoys.

When the spring announcement for proposals came, we submitted a proposal for a full-day pre-conference divided into three sections: Black Studies databases, Black Studies and information technology and a panel discussion of issues such as author's rights, reference books, and serials. Alas, it was not to be. The proposal for a pre-conference was not approved.

On the brighter side, because there was a silver lining in this cloud, our plan for an annual conference program was approved. ALA's new policy allowing extended morning time slots for conference programs was the next piece of the puzzle to fall into place. The next best thing to a pre-conference is the four hours (8:00 am to 12:00 pm, Sunday, June 13th) we now have for our annual program "Black Studies and Information Technology. Tentatively, the program includes a panel of database vendors: ProQuest Black Studies Center, Oxford African American Studies Center, and the Alexander Street Press, which will discuss and demonstrate several Black Studies databases. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Abdul Alkalimat who will discuss informatics and the relation between information technology and Black Studies. The three hour time-slot will provide our membership an opportunity to showcase an informative program as well as present an avenue to attract perspective new recruits.

Thomas Weissinger  
Chair 2008-2009  
African American Research Center  
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## COMMITTEE REPORTS: NOMINATING AND POLICY & RESEARCH

### AFAS NOMINATING COMMITTEE PRESENTS THE 2009 SLATE OF CANDIDATES

#### Vice Chair:

Allison Sutton

Joyce K. Thornton

#### Member at Large

Carol Ritzen Kem

Sylvia A. Nyana

#### Secretary

Isabel Espinal

As noted in our previous year, AFAS continues to build on a strong foundation of devoted and qualified leadership. This year's slate of candidates illustrates that AFAS is stronger and more focused on its mission of service to scholars in the field of African American studies. As we thrive, the membership has to volunteer for committee work, be willing to serve in leadership positions, and support its leaders. We have a slate of qualified individuals running for office. Now it is our turn as a membership to elect a Board of devoted and qualified leaders.

**Do your part and vote!**

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### AFAS Policy and Research Committee Report: *The Research Agenda*

- **August 2008** - The Chair submitted to the ACRL Board of Directors a report regarding the activities of AFAS members at the Atlanta conference of the National Council for Black Studies held March 19-23, 2008. AFAS members organized a panel to share with Africana Studies professionals recent product developments related to scholarship in the field. I would like to thank Past Chair Carmelita Pickett and Publications Chair Harry Murphy for providing the AFAS Ad Copy for the conference bulletin. Also, special thanks to AFAS Librarians Eric Acree, Dr. Mustafa Abdelwahid and Ms. Eleanor Hunter for their superb panel presentations.

- **August 2008** – The Chair submitted to the ACRL Board of Directors the approved proposal to establish the **Monroe Nathan Work Award for Outstanding African American Studies Reference Resource**. Special thanks to Lisa Pillow, Bennie Robinson, and Mark McManus for their contributions to this project.

- **August 2008** – The Committee worked with Incoming AFAS Chair Vivian Fisher to submit an action plan for FY2010. If approved by the ACRL Board this action plan will enable AFAS librarians to participate in selected nation-wide career fairs to promote librarianship among recent college

and university graduates. This action plan complements ACRL strategic goal in the area of 'Leadership' and seeks to increase ACRL's efforts to "support recruitment of new and diverse talent to academic and research librarianship and encourage research and programming on the changing workforce in academic libraries and the implications for library education and training." [ACRL Strategic Objectives 3 & 4]

The Policy and Research Committee will convene at Midwinter Conference (January 23-28, 2009) in Denver, Colorado to examine ways to keep the online Africana Journal Bibliography updated and review a book project recently proposed by AFAS Chair Thomas Weissinger. If you are interested in working with the Policy and Research Committee on these initiatives please complete a volunteer form located on the AFAS website. We request your valuable input.

See you in Denver!

--Akilah S. Nosakhere, Chair

## MEMBER NEWS

**Allison Sutton** was selected as a 2008-2009 Donald C. Gallop Fellow in American Literature by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. This award is a one month visiting scholars grant in support of research using their collections to write and publish an article I have tentatively titled "Ties that Bind: Langston Hughes, the Librarians and the Libraries of the Harlem Renaissance" and other related writings in the future.

**Kathleen E. Bethel**, African American Studies Librarian at Northwestern University Library, Evanston, IL, was recently interviewed for the video oral history archive, *The HistoryMakers*. To quote from the project's description, "The initial goal of *The HistoryMakers* is to complete 5,000 interviews of both well-known and unsung African American *HistoryMakers*. Not since the recording of former slaves during the WPA Movement of the 1930s (1936-1938), when teams of writers/researchers were sent throughout the South resulting in approximately 2,300 mostly hand-recorded interviews, has there been a methodic and wide-scale attempt to capture the testimonies of African Americans." Kathleen's interview can be accessed at [http://www.thehistorymakers.com/biography/category\\_details.asp?&category=EducationMakers](http://www.thehistorymakers.com/biography/category_details.asp?&category=EducationMakers). For more information on *The HistoryMakers*, visit their website at <http://www.thehistorymakers.com/>

AFAS member **Kathleen E. Bethel** has been appointed as Liaison between the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Inc. (ASALH) and ACRL. In this role, Kathleen will join ACRL's Council of Liaisons <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/councilofliaisons/liaisons.cfm>, and will focus on facilitating the communication of issues, strategies, and resource needs between the two groups. ASALH <http://www.asalh.org/index.html> is a non-profit organization founded in Chicago, IL, on September 9, 1915 as the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History by Carter G. Woodson. ASALH's mission is "to promote, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community." ASALH created Negro History Week in 1926. Since 1976, ASALH extended the celebration for the entire month of February. The organization publishes *The Journal of African American History* (formerly *The Journal of Negro History*), and the *Black History Bulletin* (formerly the *Negro History Bulletin*). In 2005, ASALH established the ASALH Press, reissuing Carter G. Woodson's *Mis-Education of the Negro*. The same year ASALH established *The Woodson Review*, a magazine that promotes its Annual Black History Theme. ASALH is a membership organization with over twenty-five branches.

### About AFAS

Established as a section within the Association of College and Research Libraries of the American Library Association, AFAS is the outgrowth of a discussion group consisting of dynamic librarians with interest in and concern for African American Studies and librarianship. Its circle of founding leaders include Clarence Chisholm, Stanton Biddle, Doris H. Clack, William Welburn, and others.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the African American Studies Librarians Section is to study librarianship and collection development as it progresses and relates to African American Studies collections; to conduct ongoing evaluation and discussion of research in African American Studies; to focus on resource sharing, archival materials, bibliographic control, retrospective collecting/purchasing, mechanized information, retrieval selection policies and procedures, oral history, and others as they relate to collection development and librarianship of African American Studies.

## ALA/AFAS MIDWINTER CONFERENCE NEWS

### Meeting Schedule

MTG #	Meeting	Date	Time	Room Set	Attendance #
280348	All Committees	Saturday 1/24/2009	1:30 pm– 3:30 pm	Rounds of 8	32
280350	Cataloging Issues Disc. Group	Sunday 1/25/2009	10:30 am-12:00 pm	Conference U- Shaped	25
280351	Conference Program Planning	Sunday 1/25/209	10:30 am-12:00 pm	Conference	8
230346	Executive	Saturday 1/24/2009	8:00 am-10 am	Conference	15
380347	General Membership Meeting	Saturday 1/24/2009	10:30 am-12:00 pm	Conference U- Shaped	30

**Join us in Denver, Colorado, January 23-28.**

### AFAS is on FACEBOOK

Have a facebook account. If so, look for AFAS on Facebook. AFAS has joined ACRL, the Instruction Section, and other ACRL Sections on the social networking site.

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=22843361484>

### Get Involved!

What do members of the African American Studies Librarians Section do?

- Participate in AFAS committees whose objectives are promoting, supporting and fostering information services in the field.
- Plan programs of interest to members and their constituents.
- Network with librarians with similar interests. Maintain an online list of core resources in African American Studies.
- Promote librarianship among African American Studies organizations.



## ALA/ACRL NEWS

DAWN MUELLER-PRODUCTION MANAGER/ALA

### Registration now open for ACRL 2009

Join your colleagues in Seattle, March 12-15, 2009, at the premier professional development event for academic and research librarians and staff.

ACRL's celebrated line-up of keynote speakers include Naomi Klein, award-winning journalist, activist, and author of *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*; Sherman Alexie, prolific novelist, poet and screenplay writer; and Ira Glass, host and producer of the public radio program *This American Life*. ACRL will offer Virtual Conference presentations and embrace Web 2.0 tools such as podcasts, Flickr, blogs, and more to enhance the impact of the National Conference. ACRL 2009 will also implement more eco-friendly practices than ever before and invites you to help reduce the meeting's ecological footprint by committing to the Green Pledge when you register for the conference.

Registration materials are online at [www.acrl.org/seattle](http://www.acrl.org/seattle). Discounted housing rates, scholarships, and exciting tour options are also available. Contact [acrl@ala.org](mailto:acrl@ala.org) with questions.



### Scholarly Communication Outreach workshop

Librarians supporting scholarly communication outreach programs want to know how to identify issues that will resonate with faculty at their institutions and how to present those issues in ways that generate positive engagement with faculty. If this describes your situation, you won't want to miss the new ARL/ACRL Institute on Scholarly Communication workshop "Scholarly Communication Outreach: Crafting Messages that Grab Faculty Attention," to be held March 11-12, 2009, in Seattle.

This workshop will emphasize active learning and hands-on work by participants, both individually and in groups. Throughout the workshop, participants will have structured opportunities to reflect on how to apply what they are learning to their own institution's outreach activities, to share information and test ideas and to begin planning for future outreach.

Registration will close on January 1, 2009, unless the workshop fills earlier. For further information please visit [www.arl.org/sc/institute/institute-events/0309workshop.shtml](http://www.arl.org/sc/institute/institute-events/0309workshop.shtml) for additional information and to register.

### Clinton, Tennessee to Host ALSC 2009 Arbuthnot Lecturer Walter Dean Myers

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA) is pleased to announce that Clinton, Tennessee, has been chosen as the site of the 2009 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture.

Walter Dean Myers, renowned author of outstanding fiction, poetry and nonfiction for children and young adults, will deliver the lecture, which will be hosted by the Langston Hughes Library of the Children's Defense Fund Haley Farm with the support of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and the Knox County Public Library.

The Langston Hughes Library of the Children's Defense Fund, a national nonprofit organization that advocates for the welfare of all children, is a special library housed in a traditional cantilever barn (building) that was redesigned by noted architect Maya Lin. The Library has established a reputation for offering opportunities to gather for discussions and workshops on literature and literacy and their importance to society. It will celebrate its tenth anniversary in the spring of 2009. The Haley Farm and Langston Hughes Library art collection includes original artwork by Bryan Collier, Tom Feelings, Tyrone Geter and Jacob Lawrence.

Lecture attendance is free, but tickets must be reserved ahead of time. Information about reserving tickets will be posted when available on the ALSC Web site at [www.ala.org/alsc](http://www.ala.org/alsc).

Members of the 2009 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Committee are: Chair Amy Kellman, Children's Literature Consultant, Pittsburgh, PA; Bruce Farrar, Manager of Branch Services, Harris County Public Library, Houston, TX; JoAnn Jonas, Children's Specialist, Chula Vista Public Library, Bonita CA; Ellen Riordan, Coordinator of Children's Services, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD; and Sue Sherif, Head of Library Development, Alaska State Library, Anchorage, AK.

## News of Interest

### Avery Research Center

**Georgette Mayo** will take over from Marvin Dulaney as executive director of the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture at the College of Charleston on July 1st. Mayo, who has been an archivist at the center for more than two years, has earned a bachelor of arts, a master of arts and a master of library and information science degree from the University of South Carolina. The Avery Research Center collections include primary and secondary source material of nearly 4,000 holdings that encourage scholarship, research, and presentations by scholars, researchers, and students.

The Avery Research Center established in 1985, part museum and part archive, has as its mission to "tells the story of black Americans from their origins in Africa through slavery, emancipation, segregation, migration, the civil rights movement, and the ongoing struggle for social and political equality." The Center's museum is a national historic site with a listing on the National Register of Historic Sites. Avery Center website: <http://www.cofc.edu/avery/index.htm> (source: The Post & Courier, by Wevonneda Minis)

### Library for Congressman James E. Clyburn

House majority whip Congressman Clyburn has secured funding for the James E. Clyburn University Transportation Center at South Carolina State University," his alma mater. The Center will conduct research in alternative fuel sources, and educate transportation innovators of the future. The facility will house the South Carolina State University Historical Collection, a modern, user-friendly, environmentally controlled, and spacious archival area. The collection will include the personal papers of Congressman Clyburn. (source: The Herald Online, May 27, 2008, "Memorials Help Keep Clyburn in Public Eye," by James Rosen)

### Race Riots and Resistance new book by Jan Voogd

Voogd's *Race Riots and Resistance* uncovers a long-hidden, tragic chapter of American history. Focusing on the 'Red Summer' of 1919 in which black communities were targeted by white mobs, the book examines the

contexts out of which white racial violence arose. It shows how the riots transcended any particularity of cause, and in doing so calls into question many longstanding beliefs about racial violence. The book goes on to portray the riots as a phenomenon, documenting the number of incidents, describing the events in detail, and analyzing the patterns that emerge from looking at the riots collectively. Finally and significantly, *Race Riots and Resistance* argues that the response to the riots marked an early stage of what came to be known as the Civil Rights Movement.

### HBCU Digital Collection

The first digital collection of documents and materials chronicling the founding of America's historically Black colleges and universities is now available online at <http://contentdm.auctr.edu>. It includes over 1,000 scanned pages and represents HBCU libraries first collaborative effort to make a historic collection digitally available. Collections are contributed from member libraries of the Historically Black College and University Library Alliance. Celebrating the founding of the historically black college and university, the collection includes photographs, manuscripts, letters and publications. These images present HBCUs as cultural, social, and political institutions from the early 1800's until today.

The project, which was funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, represents the first collaborative effort by HBCU libraries to make a historical collection digitally available. The online collection, which is hosted by the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center, is the product of a partnership between the HBCU Library Alliance, HBCU institutions, the Southeastern Library Network and Cornell University.

### Rosa Parks Memorabilia for Sale

Parks left nearly all of her estate to the Detroit-based Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development, which was created to teach young people leadership and character development. But her relatives filed a legal challenge to Parks' will six months after she died. A settlement was eventually reached, although terms of the deal were sealed. Arlan

## NEWS OF INTEREST CONTD.

Ettinger's New York City auction house, Guernsey's, has been asked by a Wayne County probate court judge in Detroit to find a buyer -- preferably a museum, university or other institution -- for thousands of Parks' personal items. Guernsey's received 90 cartons of items, ranging from Parks' papers to personal objects such as the pink dress she wore when Clinton presented her with the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom. The proceeds of the sale of the archives will go to the institute and family members. (source: WTOP news.com, Associated Press, "Auction House Seeks to Sell Rosa Parks Collection," July 4, 2008," by Kathy Barks Hoffman)

### **Vivian Harsh Research Collection**

Editorial cartoonist Tim Jackson is donating the original illustrations he did during his eight years as art director of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois' "LifeTimes" publication to the Vivian G. Harsh Research Collection of Afro-American History and Literature at the Carter G. Woodson Regional Library in Chicago.

### **Moses Gunn's Memorabilia Goes to Kansas University**

Gunn (1929-1993) is best remembered for his portrayal of mobster Ellsworth Raymond "Bumpy" Jonas in the first two Shaft movies, and for his brief role of Booker T. Washington in the 1981 movie Ragtime, a performance which won him an NAACP Image Award. He was nominated for an Emmy Award in 1977 for his role in the TV mini-series Roots.

The material was bequeathed by his widow, Gwen Gunn. The decision to offer the collection to KU was fostered through Gwen Gunn's relationship with Kevin Willmott, an associate professor of theater and film at the university who had been invited to her house to view the material. "I donated his collection to the university because it was a place he had always admired ....Gwen Gunn says."

KU received more than 20 boxes of material at the beginning of the year. The items include posters, photographs, artwork, masks and various honors (such as his Emmy and Tony Award nomination plaques). (source: LJWorld.com, July 11, 2008, by Jon Niccum)

### **WSU collection will survive**

The African American Literature Special Collection is a hidden treasure housed on the third floor of the Purdy-

Kresge Library of Wayne State. The collection contains various types of literary works from writers who have grown up in Detroit, studied here for some time or have visited and were influenced by the Motor City. Much of the collection contains original prints of rare works, including a signed book of aphorisms by Booker T. Washington. There are also several miscellaneous items that are kept in acid-free envelopes. In total, the collection contains 4,554 books of all types, 450 archival items and several other works waiting to be processed.

The African-American Literature Special Collection was born in April 2006, when Don Vest - a publisher and chairperson of the collection's leadership group- approached Barton Lessin and discussed the potential of its creation. Lessin then met with Vest and a handful of other WSU and community leaders in order to plan out and create the collection. Now in the summer of 2008, the African-American Literature Special Collection has over thirty members in its leadership group. (source: The South End: the Official Student Newspaper of Wayne State, 7/16/08)

### **Soul Cookbooks Collection**

The growing collection catalogues more than a century of African-American cuisine and culture. Tracing the roots of the soul food movement and beyond, the collection contains more than 450 titles with recipes from African food diasporas - past and present.

According to Louis Pitschmann, dean of the UA Libraries, the reprint version of 'What Mrs. Fisher Knows about Old Southern Cooking,' published in 1881, features recipes by a former Alabama slave and was thought to have been the earliest publication by an African-American chef until Malinda Russell's cookbook 'A Domestic Cook Book: Containing a Careful Selection of Useful Receipts for the Kitchen,' originally published in 1866, came to light. The Lupton collection's reprinted version of Russell's book offers valuable insight into the life and influences of this African-American chef in the 1800s.

"Cookbooks are widely accepted among scholars both as documents of history and works with literary interest,' said Elaine Martin, a professor of German and authority on food in film and literature. 'Their study can illuminate the lives of people in new and innovative ways.'" (Source: TousealooaNews.com, Wednesday, July 23, 2008 by Ashley Boyd, staff writer)

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The *AFAS Newsletter* welcomes contributions from readers. Send articles, items of interest, and news to the editor, preferably in electronic format.

The *AFAS Newsletter* is sent to all AFAS members at no additional cost. Claims and address changes should be sent to the ALA address, Attention: Membership.

### AFAS WEBSITE:

[www.afassection.org](http://www.afassection.org)

### AFAS WIKI

To directly access the AFAS Wiki use the following URL: <http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/AFAS>. You can also access our Wiki from the ACRL Wiki main page: <http://>

[wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wikis.ala.org/acrl/index.php/Main_Page).

### AFAS OFFICERS 2008/2009

Thomas Weissinger,  
Chair

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Vice Chair/Chair-elect

Carmelita Pickett,  
Past Chair

Malaika Grant, Secretary

Gennice W. King,  
Member-at-Large

Adam Burling,  
Staff liaison  
American Library Assn  
ACRL Division

Debbie L. Malone  
ACRL Board Liaison

### Committee Chairs

#### Membership

Allison M. Sutton

#### 2008 Conference Program

Lisa Pillow

#### Cataloging Issues

Elaine Westbrooks

#### Nominating

Carmelita Pickett

#### Policy and Research

Akilah Nosakhare

#### Publications

Heather Martin