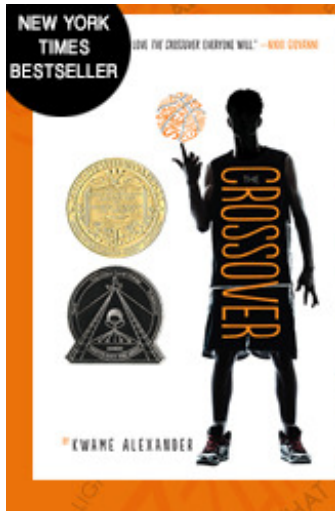


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# eNewsletter

April 28, 2015 — Issue 225

*Black Literature is for Everyone*



★ "A SLAM DUNK."\*

WINNER OF THE  
2015 NEWBERY MEDAL  
AND A CORETTA SCOTT KING HONOR

## Authors You Should Know



### **Dwayne Alexander Smith on Winning the 2015 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work – Debut Author**

When I reached the podium, after the applause had faded, the first words out of my mouth were, "I did not expect to win." Yet, there I was standing before a roomful of amazingly talented people accepting an NAACP Image Award for best debut author for my novel *Forty Acres*.

Not only was the win a surprise, the nomination was a surprise as well. Many people might not know this but in order to be nominated for an Image Award your material has to be submitted to the committee along with a submission fee. Pamela Samuels Young a friend and fellow author, and winner of the same award last year, kept urging me to submit my book, but I kept forgetting. When I finally did remember the submission deadline had passed. [More](#)

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## Henry Dumas

Henry Dumas (July 20, 1934 - May 23, 1968) was shot and killed in 1968 in Harlem months before his thirty-fourth birthday by a white transit policeman under circumstances never fully explained. After his death he became a kind of literary legend, but one whose full story was unknown. A devoted cadre of friends and later admirers from the 1970s to the present pushed for the publication of his work. Toni Morrison championed him as “an absolute genius.” Amiri Baraka, a writer not quick to praise others, claimed that Dumas produced “actual art, real, man, and stunning.” Eugene Redmond and Quincy Troupe heralded

Dumas’s poetry, short stories, and work as an editor of “little” magazines. #blacklivesmatter [More](#)

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## Gregory Pardlo

**Pardlo’s book of poems, *Digest* earns him the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry**

His poems have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Boston Review*, *The Nation*, *Ploughshares*, and *Tin House*, as well as anthologies including *Angles of Ascent*, the *Norton Anthology of Contemporary African American Poetry*, and two editions of *Best American Poetry*. He is the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship and a fellowship for translation from the National Endowment for the Arts. An Associate Editor of *Callaloo*,

he is currently a Teaching Fellow in Undergraduate Writing at Columbia University. [More](#)

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## Gwynne Forster

AALBC.com mourns the loss of pioneering Author Gwynne Forster, who transitioned this past January. She was 7 years shy of 100.

Forster is considered one of the first authors to publish a romance novel featuring Black main characters. She published more than 20 books in the genre. She always had a kind word and was supportive of AALBC.com. Gwynne introduced me to her publisher, Walter Zacharias (Kensington Books), and AALBC.com interviewed them both back in 2007. [More](#)

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### Gary Hardwick

Hardwick, pseudonymously known as a.a. clifford, is the author of several novels including his first, *Cold Medina* and *City Wide*. The Seattle Times called Hardwick “the Elmore Leonard of black mystery writers.”

The former attorney, is also an acclaimed screenwriter, director, and filmmaker whose hit films include; *The Brothers* and *Deliver Us from Eva*. He is also an executive producer for television as well. [More](#)

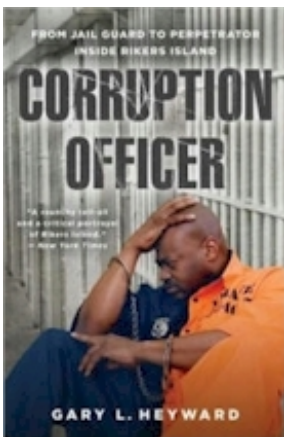


### Shay Spivey

Spivey is a professional social worker with an overwhelming passion for helping others and sharing resources. *Writing, How to Submit a Winning Scholarship Application: Secret Techniques I Used to Win \$100,000 in College Scholarships*, fills a need in our community by unlocking the mystery of “scholarship applications” for high school and college students, families, teachers, and counselors.

Shay Spivey is a scholarship and financial aid advisor specializing in helping students understand and prepare to win scholarships for college. Shay earned her Bachelor and Master of Social Work from Indiana University. [More](#)

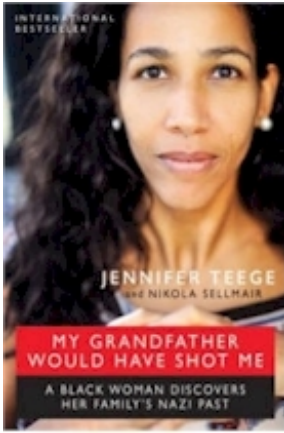
## Book Reviews



### Corruption Officer: From Jail Guard to Perpetrator inside Rikers Island by Gary L. Heyward

Gary eventually escalated to pimping in an attempt to cater to his captive clientele's carnal needs, too. He referred to his whores as “copstitutes” since they were fellow corrections officers secretly supplementing their modest civil service salaries by fellating and fornicating with felons in Rikers' utility closets.

All of the above is recounted in riveting fashion in *Corruption Officer: From Jail Guard to Perpetrator inside Rikers Island* (Atria Books, March 2015), a jaw-dropping memoir that's as demoralizing as it is shocking. After finishing this eye-opening page-turner, one can't help but wonder how much hope there can be for a country where the cops are just as crooked and as degenerate as the outlaws they're supposed to be protecting society from. [More](#)



## My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me: A Black Woman Discovers Her Family's Nazi Past by Jennifer Teege

If Gary L. Heyward's book was not shocking enough for you, fasten your seat belts for Jennifer Teege's bizarre tale, recounted in *My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me* (The Experiment, April 2015).

How do you think you'd react if you were Black and you inadvertently uncovered evidence that the mother who callously left you at an orphanage at less than a month-old was the daughter of an infamous Nazi who ran a concentration camp?

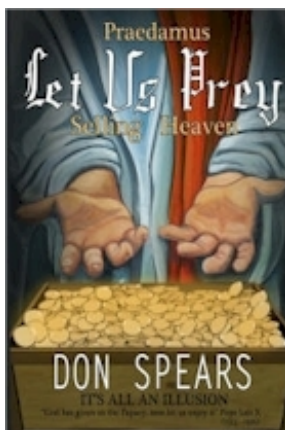
That's precisely what happened to Jennifer Teege who learned at 38 that her grandfather was Amon Goeth, a monster who not only ordered the extermination of thousands of Jews, but took a certain sadistic pleasure in participating in all the torture, maiming and killing. [More](#)



## Black Male Frames: African-Americans in a Century of Hollywood Cinema, 1903-2003 by Roland Leander Williams, Jr.

Professor Williams sets out to show how black male movie characters have basically been either submissive or subversive to suit the fluctuating needs of the dominant culture.

He sets about proving his thesis by closely examining the careers of five African-American acting icons, starting with Sam Lucas (1839-1916), the first black film star. He was not only the first black to play Uncle Tom onscreen, but he was also the first to portray the deferential character onstage. (Syracuse University Press, January, 2015) [More](#)



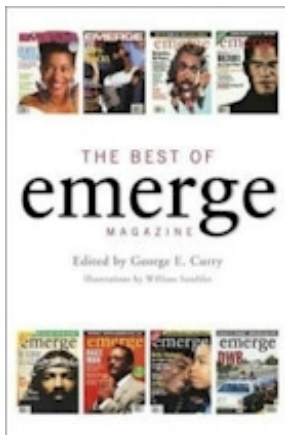
## Praedamus Let Us Prey Selling Heaven: It's All An Illusion by Don Spears

Televangelist Creflo Dollar recently asked members of his congregation to tithe the \$60 million he needs to buy himself a luxurious Gulfstream jet so he could travel in style while spreading the word of the Lord around the world. Is the popular prosperity preacher sincere or just another hustler in a collar?

Before you answer, you might want to read *Praedamus: Let Us Prey* (Spears Publishing, December 2014), a jaw dropping expose' written by Don Spears, a brother who is not one to mince words while making a full frontal assault on organized religion.

This very timely tome represents the culmination of 9 years of research in religious history stretching back centuries from the present. [More](#)





## The Best of Emerge Magazine

The 1990's. African Americans achieved more influence—and faced more explosive issues—than ever before. One word captured those times. One magazine expressed them. *Emerge*.

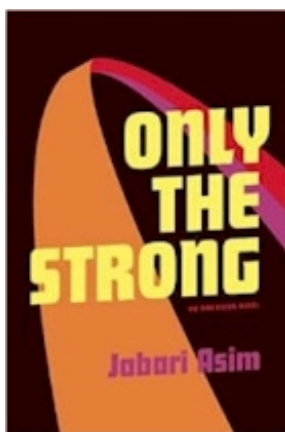
In those ten years, with an impressive circulation of 170,000 and more than forty national awards to its credit, Then, after nearly a decade, *Emerge* magazine closed its doors. But a collection of the finest articles from *Emerge* is still available. These articles will resonate with you today just as they did 20 years ago. Today however, the issues are even more pressing, and you will truly be hurt by the tremendous void left when the magazine died. *The Best of Emerge Magazine*, edited by George Curry (One

World/Ballantine, July 29, 2003) represents the best of American journalism. [More](#)



## The Jumbies by Tracey Baptiste

Tracey Baptiste was born in Trinidad, where she grew up on jumbie stories and fairy tales, and decided to be a writer at the wise old age of three. Her debut, a young adult novel titled *Angel's Grace*, was named one of the 100 best books for reading and sharing by New York City librarians. *The Jumbies* (Algonquin Young Readers, 4/28/2015) is her second novel. [Buy](#)



## Only the Strong: An American Novel by Jabari Asim

Jabari Asim's debut novel, *Only the Strong* (Agate Bolden, May 12, 2015) explores the challenges and rewards of love in a quintessential American community where heartbreak and violence are seldom far away.

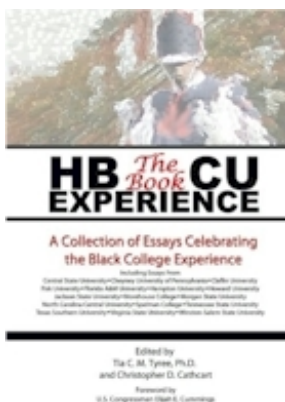
Moved by the death of Martin Luther King Jr., Lorenzo "Guts" Tolliver decides to abandon his career as a professional leg-breaker and pursue a life of quiet moments and generous helpings of banana pudding in the company of his new, sensuous lover. His erstwhile boss, local kingpin Ananias Goode, is also thinking about slowing down—but his tempestuous affair with Dr.

Artinces Noel, a prominent pediatrician, complicates his retirement plans. Meanwhile, Charlotte Divine, the doctor's headstrong protégée, struggles with trials of her own. [Buy](#)



## Stunt by Jet Black

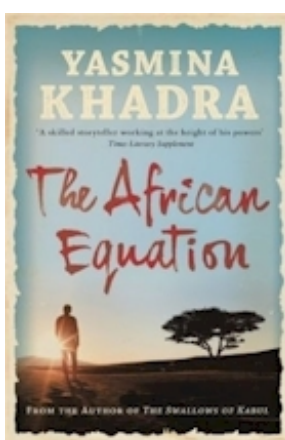
CEO and ex-OSI agent Ricky Stunt must moonlight in the seedy adult film world to search for the truth after his fiancé Denise is murdered. To find her killer he will do whatever it takes, even if it means screwing his way to the top. But can Stunt find the murderer before the people at his day job discover what he's been up to at night? It's Kill Bill meets Boogie Nights in this erotic thrill ride full of sex, action, and revenge. (Jet Black Ink, December 18, 2014) [Buy](#)



## HBCU Experience - The Book: A Collection of Essays Celebrating the Black College Experience

Co-edited by Black college alumni Dr. Tia Tyree and Christopher D. Cathcart, *HBCU Experience* celebrates the rich legacy and experiences of those who attended HBCUs. Further, with the debate still raging over the relevance and need for HBCUs in the new millennium, this collection of more than 60 essays showcases the unique journey of HBCU graduates, highlights the important need for these institutions and accentuates the overall benefits of having an HBCU education.

The groundbreaking anthology chronicles undergraduate realities such as dating and relationships, dorm living, road trips, pledging fraternities and sororities, student activism and leadership, athletics and much, much more. [Buy](#)



## The African Equation by Yasmina Khadra

A giant of francophone writing, Algerian author Yasmina Khadra takes current events as a starting point to explore opposing views and myths of Africa and the West, ultimately delivering a powerful message of friendship, resilience, and redemption.

Yasmina Khadra: Yasmina Khadra is the pen name of the Algerian author Mohammed Moulessehoul. He became director of the Algerian Cultural Center in Paris in November 2007 and in November 2013 announced his candidacy for the presidency of Algeria. (Gallic Books, March 17, 2015) [Buy](#)



### Rich Woman's Fetish by Naleighna Kai

Gina escapes a hellacious life by doing the unthinkable—selling the use of her womb to the highest bidder among rich, childless couples from more affluent areas of Chicago. She even accommodates their “special” requests ranging from participating in forbidden fetishes to more complicated liaisons. Years later, Gina learns that one of her surrogate daughters has been forced into the illicit world of drugs and prostitution. When the police and FBI turn a blind eye, Gina risks the anger of her former sponsors and lovers to have their children search for the younger sister they know nothing about. The women soon learn how to depend on each other to do the impossible (Macro Publishing Group, April 2015). [Buy](#)

## Interviews

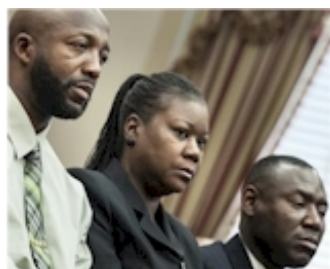


### Q&A with Poet, Patricia A. Saunders

When you talk about your books--and share reflections of your past—some parts are very painful and personal. How challenging was it to reveal the inner aspects of your life?

It was challenging because I talk about being almost homeless, raped, molested, and some baggage that my family didn't want me to share. I prayed that my pain would be a testament to someone that I am still standing after going through it all. I took my family's feelings into consideration and chose not to do some pieces in

public settings rather allow readers to read it themselves.



### Attorney for the Brown Family Responds to Shooting of Police in Ferguson, MO

Ben Crump: It was literally shocking that, based on what we see in that surveillance video, this 12 year-old child could be called responsible for his own death because he wasn't being careful, versus what we see and know happened there; how these officers violated all their procedures, training and department regulations, and drove up to the scene recklessly

in a way which escalated the situation. Tamir Rice was killed in less than one second which was totally disrespectful. And the pattern of disrespect continued when his 14 year-old sister ran up crying, “You killed my baby brother!” Instead of showing her any compassion, they tackled her, handcuffed her, manhandled her, dragged her through the snow and threw her into the back of the police car where she had to sit helplessly 4 to 5 feet away from where her brother lay kicking as he died. [More](#)

## Events

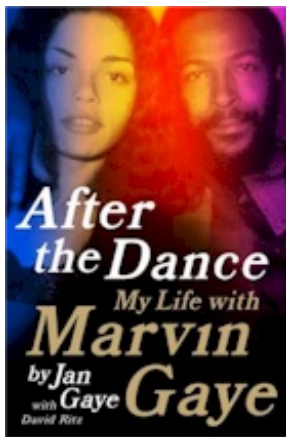
**Blogger Week 2015 Networking Mixer  
& Unconference, May 1st & 2nd,  
Washington, DC**



Blogger Week is a multicultural festival of bloggers, journalists & social media mavens. Live events will take place at the University of the District of Columbia and the Impact Hub in Washington, DC.

Speakers will include: Danielle Belton, Associate Editor, The Root; Joi-Marie McKenzie, Creator of The Fab Empire; Ni'cola Mitchell, Founder of NCM Publishing; Marc W. Polite, founder Polite On Society; Troy Johnson, Founder AALBC.com; and many others.

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**Reading and Book Signing with Jan Gaye author of  
After the Dance: My Life with Marvin Gaye - May  
20th 7PM - Harlem, NY**

LeRoy Neiman Art Center in Harlem, 2485 Frederick Douglas Blvd. (at 148th St.), New York, NY 10039 - Refreshments will be served. *Troy will be there with at least one free book to the first person who presents a print out of this page of our newsletter.*

Gay's memoir, *After the Dance* (Amistad, May 19, 2015), reveals how she met Marvin in February 1973. Despite a seventeen-year age difference and Marvin's marriage to the sister of Berry Gordy, Motown's founder, the enchanted teenager and the emotionally volatile singer began a scorching relationship.

"With raw and penetrating honesty, this memoir reveals everything audiences ever wanted to know about Marvin Gaye's life. Offering a holistic understanding of Gaye's obsession with finding love, his addictions, and most especially the philosophy behind the music. Sympathetic, caring, this is a must read for anyone who wants to learn the traumatic backstory that shapes Gaye and all of his relationships. Most importantly, this is also a story of a woman courageously sharing her voice, her story." —bell hooks, author of *Ain't I A Woman*

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**BLACK PACK PARTY IX — Save the Date, Wednesday, May 27th. Details TBA  
on AALBC.com #BPPIX — Sponsored by Amistad Books**





## Book Expo America

**In Search of Diverse Book Buyers**, 5/28, 12:30 - 1:00 p.m., Downtown Stage

Where are diverse book buyers? What are the best ways to reach African American book buyers? Where do African American book buyers shop for books? Join in the discussion with publishing experts as they share their insight and knowledge of successful strategies to reach African American book buyers. Speakers include Troy Johnson, Moderator, Founder of AALBC.com, Marva Allen, Founder and CEO of Hueman Books and Wade Hudson, Founder of Just Us Books."



**Spotlight on African American Children's Authors & Illustrators** - 5/29, 2:30 - 3:00 p.m., Uptown Stage

Award winning authors and illustrators will open the pages of their book and share their inspiration and experiences to encourage the next generation of readers. The panel will feature Caldecott Medalist Jerry Pinkney – *The Grasshopper & the Ants*, Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; EB Lewis, illustrator - *First Step: How One Little Girl Put Segregation On Trial* - Bloombury, and *Shane Evans* - *28 Days: Moments in Black History that Changed the World*, Roaring Brook Press.

## Film Reviews



### Brotherly Love - Very Good ( )

Twins Jackie (Keke Palmer) and Sergio Taylor (Eric D. Hill, Jr.) already had it tough enough growing up in the ghetto before the untimely demise of their dad a few years ago. But then their mother (Macy Gray) stopped functioning and started hitting the bottle.

That's when their big brother, June (Cory Hardict), became the family breadwinner, and it's been a struggle for him to keep a roof over their heads ever since. So, he started dealing drugs hoping that his becoming an outlaw would at least enable his siblings to keep their noses clean and continue pursuing their dreams. After all, Sergio is one of the top high school basketball players in the

nation, while Jackie is an aspiring singer in need of a big break.

[More](#)



### The Girl Is in Trouble Headline - Fair ( ):

Executive produced by Spike Lee, *The Girl Is in Trouble* marks the feature-length directorial debut of Julius Onah. The movie is narrated by its star, Columbus Short, in an attempt to emulate the tone of the hard-nose hero of your typical pulp fiction novel.

Regrettably, that's where any similarities to the film noir genre ends, as this predictable whodunit proves a tad too transparent for this critic to recommend. [More](#)



### Supremacy - Fair ( ½ )

Directed by Deon Taylor (Chain Letter), *Supremacy* is a hostage thriller ostensibly inspired by actual events which transpired in Sonoma County, California on the night of March 29, 1995. At 11:30 that evening, Sheriff's Deputy Frank Trejo was assassinated by a recently-paroled member of the Aryan Brotherhood and his gun moll, just before they forced their way into a nearby house and held the owners captive.

The resolution of this Hollywood version of the standoff relies on an empathetic Mr. Walker's rising to the occasion. His philosophizing ("Prison does something to a man.") miraculously manages to induce a couple of the most menacing and

despicable screen characters in recent memory to have an 11th hour conversion. [More](#)

## Related Articles & News



## 8 Ways Bookstores Can Engage the eReading Community by Shawna Marks

Embracing ebooks is important to the financial health of independent bookstores by helping store owners maximize exposure by offering all literary formats, creating relationships with a new generation of readers and writers as well as generating more revenue.

I'll admit there are no absolutes so it is possible there are communities where eBooks and social media engagement aren't detrimental to the bottomline of a bookstore. However from a financial standpoint any business owner hoping their store will outlive them must consider today's youth. [More](#)



## Tracking Black Bloggers

Huria Search, the directory that tracks the "Best of the Black Web," has just added a section for Black Blogs. Yes, there are still talented writers including authors, journalists and everyday people sharing ideas and opinions on subjects relevant to, and from the perspective of, Black people. Enter your Blog, the password is "bloggerweek," (without the quotes).

Use Huria Search to share information about your blog, to learn about new ones and to share what you've discovered with others. [Discover Great Blogs Here](#)



## Dyson versus West

"IMO, West and Dyson are like a pair of divas ridiculing each other's plastic surgery. Their feud has been reduced to a sideshow, and doesn't even reach the level of rivals vying for the Alpha Male status because neither one of them wields any power other than an ability to polarize their black social media audience.

Meanwhile, President Obama is able to remain above the fray, probably amused by how 2 of his most relentless critics are neutralizing each other." —Cynique [Join the Conversation](#)

**“Black lives don’t matter, but Black dollars do.”  
–Charles W. Ethridge**

**WE MUST BOYCOTT!**



Dear Troy,

When the Montgomery Bus Boycott was launched, many of the people involved did not have a TV or a telephone, let alone a Twitter account. How did they accomplish the amazing feat of forcing the end of racial segregation on the public transit system in Montgomery, Alabama and become a major factor in changing the United States' Constitution making the practice illegal? Perhaps a better question would be; why did they have boycotts back then, and why don't we now? [What do you think?](#)

Remember to show your support for the writers and institutions we cover, with [your paid subscription to our newsletter](#).

Peace & Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Troy Johnson".

Troy Johnson,  
Founder & Webmaster, AALBC.com  
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AALBC.com eNewsletter – April 28, 2015 - Issue #225





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