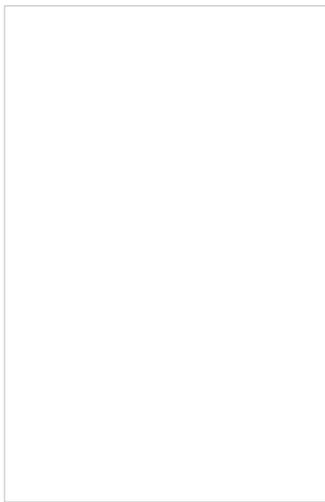


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news-sept-2014-banner

Troy, this month's eNewsletter is sponsored by

Carl Waters, Author of *Burning Uncle Tom's Cabin*



Burning Uncle Tom's Cabin

Eliza can't believe her ears. Master Shelby has always been kind to her and treats her like family. And he loves little Harry. It couldn't be true.

But as the young slave soon realizes, her worst nightmare will come true if she doesn't do something about it. Unwilling to let her son be taken from her, Eliza chooses the danger of escape over the devastation of separation.

When George hears that his wife and son have run away from their master, he must immediately escape from his if he has any hope of finding them before the slave hunters do. But the road to Canada is treacherous and long, and few make it to the end...

Burning Uncle Tom's Cabin reimagines the world of Harriet Beecher Stowe's original novel, dropping the stereotypes and infusing the characters with strength and dignity that will inspire modern readers. [Learn more here.](#)



[AALBC.com's Best Selling Books — July/August 2014](#)

news-jul-aug-vestsellers

Here are the top fiction and non-fiction books sold on AALBC.com for the two month period, July 1st 2014 to August 31 2014. Topping the non-fiction list is *Maya Angelou: Her Phenomenal Life & Poetic Journey* written by the Editors of *Essence Magazine*. On the fiction side, the top selling book—indeed the top selling book overall for this period is Nikki Woods' *Easier Said Than Done*. Woods' novel is also a current **Power List** bestseller. [Check out all 18 titles in each category.](#)



Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence

news-ernest-gaines-winners

These titles are all winners of the Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence. This award honors Louisiana's revered storyteller, [Ernest J. Gaines](#), and serves to inspire and recognize rising African-American fiction writers of excellence at a national level. The book award, initiated by donors of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation has become nationally recognized in its role of enhancing visibility of emerging black fiction writers while also expanding the audience for this literature. The annual award of a \$10,000 cash prize is to support the writer and help enable her/him to focus on her/his art of writing. **Submission are being accepted until October 1st, 2014**, and registration is free. [Learn more about these award winning titles.](#)



2014 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards

news-jane-addams

Since 1953, the Jane Addams Children's Book Award annually acknowledges books published in the U.S. during the previous year. Books commended by the Award address themes of topics that engage children in thinking about peace, justice, world community and/or equality of the sexes and all races. The books also must meet conventional standards of literacy and artistic excellence. The 2014 Jane Addams Children's Book Awards will be presented on Friday, October 17, 2014 in New York City. [Learn more about all of the 2014 award winning titles..](#)

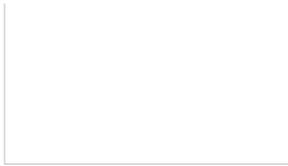


Book Reviews

news-wounded

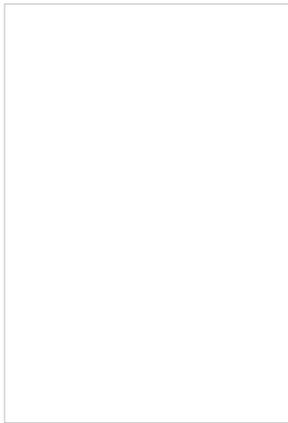
Wounded: A Novel by Ben Burgess Jr.

Wounded shows us that what is most important, is loving yourself and being with people who accept, love and affirm you. As Sam says at the end of the book, "There's an old saying that time heals all wounds... It wasn't time that healed my wounds—it was love." What *Wounded* teaches us is that ultimately, only we can end the cycle of abuse, and that all our hardship and heartbreak is what makes us strong and resilient. It's true, what doesn't



kill us, makes us stronger, even if we don't know it at the time.

Wounded is an honest portrayal of the psychosexual fallout from emotional betrayal and sexual abuse. If you're looking for a fast-paced, readable story that is in turn, touching and heartbreaking, you'll find it here. [Read Carol Taylor's full review.](#)



An Obama's Journey: My Odyssey of Self-Discovery Across Three Cultures by Mark Obama Ndesandjo

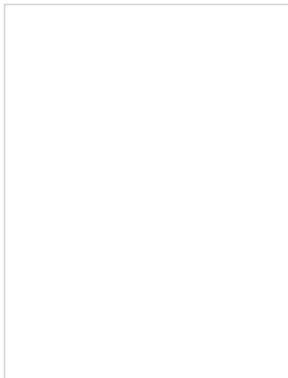
An Obama's Journey is a jaw-dropping memoir which casts a pall not only over Barack, Sr. but over [President] Barack as well. In it, Mark calls his brother "a stuck-up a--hole" and an "arrogant bastard" with a cold demeanor. Perhaps more chilling is his description of a "darker, more insidious presence that was as much a part of him as his DNA."

That almost demonic side of Barack apparently came to the fore when he lied so cavalierly to the press about Mark, minimizing how long the two had known each other, ostensibly for purely political purposes. Mark felt hurt by this display of callousness reminiscent of how the President had similarly thrown [Reverend Wright](#), the pastor of the church where he'd

married and worshiped for 20 years, under the bus when it was expedient for his career to do so. [Read Kam Willam's full review.](#)



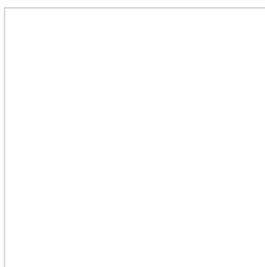
Authors You Should Know



AALBC.com mourns the loss of J. California Cooper

AALBC mourns the passing of J. California Cooper, who transitioned in Seattle, Washington, on September 20th 2014. [Watch a video of Cooper reading from a work in progress, *God Does Not Shoot Dice*.](#)

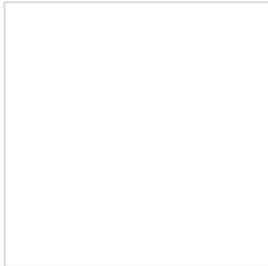
"Her style is deceptively simple and direct and the vale of tears in which her characters reside is never so deep that a rich chuckle at a foolish person's foolishness cannot be heard." —Alice Walker



Allen Ballard

In 1952 Ballard was one of two students to integrate Kenyon College. He related his experiences in the book, *The Education of Black Folk*, "For eighteen hours a day, our manners, speech, style of walking were on trial before white America. Classes, particularly in the freshman and sophomore years, although sometimes intellectually rewarding, seemed frequently to us tests to prove to both teachers and students that Jefferson's views on the Black mentality were incorrect."

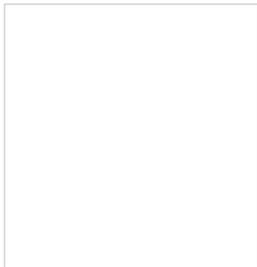
Ballard went on to earn an undergraduate degree, Phi Beta Kappa, from Kenyon; a Ph.D. degree in government from Harvard University; and become a Professor of History and Africana Studies at SUNY-Albany. [Read more about Professor Ballard's novels.](#)



Olympia Vernon

This critically acclaimed author has written three books, *Eden*, *Logic* and, most recently, *A Killing in this Town*. Olympia has received several awards, including a Pulitzer Prize nomination for *Eden*. The winner of Louisiana's 2005 Governor's Award for Professional Artist of the Year, Olympia Vernon has taught creative writing at Southeastern Louisiana University.

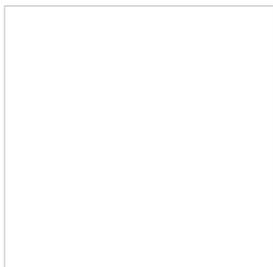
Vernon received a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1999. She also earned a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Louisiana State University in 2002. [Learn more about Olympia.](#)



Ravi Howard

Howard received the 2001 [Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Award](#) for College Writers for his short story "Like Trees, Walking." After graduating from Howard University, he received his MFA from the University of Virginia. His writing also appeared in *The Massachusetts Review* and *Callaloo*.

Howard went on to receive the Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence in 2008 for the now novel *Like Trees, Walking*. *Like Trees, Walking* was also a finalist for both the Hemingway Foundation/PEN Award and the Hurston-Wright Legacy Award for Debut Fiction in 2008. [Learn more about Howard's work.](#)



Carolyn Rodgers

Rodgers is credited with being a star of the [Black Arts Movement](#) of the 1960s and 1970s and helped found [Third World Press](#) in the 1960s. Between 1967 and 1989 she published 11 books of poetry. She also started her own publishing company, Eden Press. Rodgers passed in 2010.

"Between 1968 and 1978 I never believed that any female or male poet was any more crafted or gifted as Carolyn Rodgers. That is a fact."—[Sterling Plumpp](#)

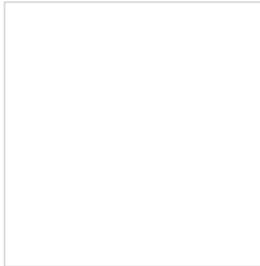


Curtis Bunn

An award-winning sports journalist, Curtis penned his first novel in 2001. His most recent novel, *The Old Man in the Club* (Strebor Books, June 17, 2014), offers an intriguing and humors story of the character, we all wonder, "Why is he in here?"



In 2003 Bunn created the [National Book Club Conference](#), which has become one of the premier annual literary events that support African-American authors and readers. [Learn more about Curtis.](#)



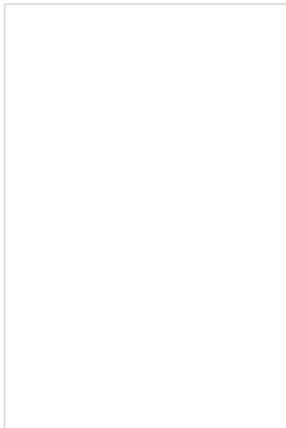
Cheryl Cloyd Robbins

Robbins self-published her first two novels, but has recently signed with Taylor Made Publishing who re-released her works and given them facelifts, both inside and out.

“Over the years, my writing has grown and so has my fan base,” Cloyd Robbins said. “I am so humbled and honored that they have waited patiently for me and I promise I have not let them down in my delivery of one night stand novella style of writing.” [Learn more about Cheryl Cloyd Robbins.](#)



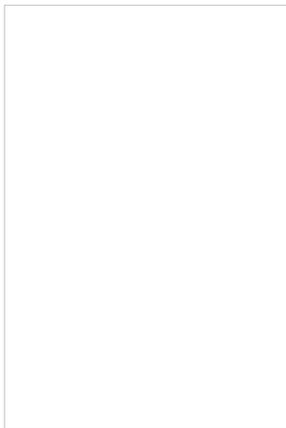
Book Recommendations



The Wonder of All Things by Jason Mott

On the heels of his critically acclaimed and Power List bestselling debut novel, *The Returned*, which is the basis for the ABC television program, “Resurrection,” Jason Mott delivers a spellbinding tale of love and sacrifice.

Better still, *The Wonder of All Things* (Mira, September 30, 2014), is available from our friends at [MahoganyBooks](#) for just \$17.47—the lowest price online. But buy it now, to get the best deal available and to support independent booksellers. This price will only be available until Sunday October 5th.



Men We Reaped: A Memoir by Jesmyn Ward

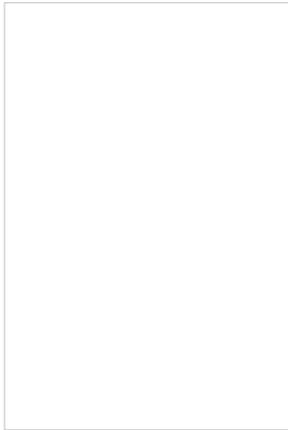
The Power List bestselling book, is now available in paperback.

Jesmyn Ward grew up in poverty with a family struggling to stay together and survive in the rural South. All around her were Black men facing dangers and social ills that are usually only talked about in the context of inner cities. *Men We Reaped: A Memoir* (Bloomsbury USA, September 16, 2014) lays bare all the trials, mourning, and unmatched spirit of her world in a way that only she can.

Ward writes powerfully about the pressure these social ills brings on the men who can do no right and the women who are left to keep the family structure intact. A portrait of the rural South and the sad casualties that have

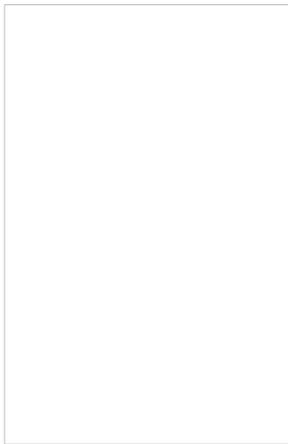
gone unheard about for too long.





Fire Shut Up in My Bones by Charles M. Blow

“It takes a great deal of courage to divulge your deepest secrets to the world, but Charles Blow shares the story of his personal journey from a rare place of honesty, especially for such a celebrated public figure. *In Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, September 23, 2014), Blow has constructed a beautifully crafted, timeless story of coming of age in the face of betrayal, adversity, and self-doubt. I expect this memoir will not only resonate today but will also enlighten and inspire readers for years to come.” —[Keith Boykin](#)



In the Company of Educated Men by Leonce Gaiter

Long time AALBC.com bestselling author tells the story of Lennie Ashland who has graduated from Harvard, but his father's sudden death has shattered his dream life of entitlement and privilege. Aimless, Lennie buys a beat up Delta 88 sedan and takes his two best friends on a road trip to “discover America.”

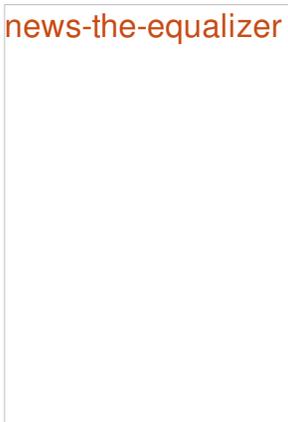
At a nondescript gas station in the hinterlands, a teenaged carjacker and a desperate runaway girl derail Lennie's grand plan, and take him and his friends for the ride of their lives. Now with the Feds, local police, and thugs in hot pursuit, these “Young Turks” meet the blunt edge of a racial underclass reality in a way they could've never imagined.

Who says a Black writer can't write a novel featuring non-Black characters?



Film Reviews

news-the-equalizer



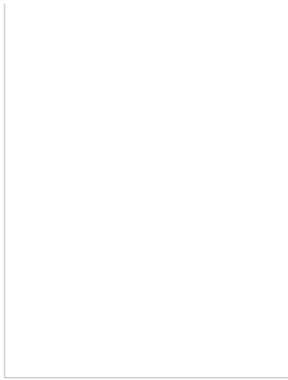
The Equalizer Starring Denzel Washington

The Equalizer, a riveting, relatively-gruesome adaptation of the popular, 1980s TV-series. Directed by Antoine Fuqua, this version is actually more reminiscent of *Death Wish* (1974), as this picture's protagonist behaves less like the television show's British gentleman than the brutal avenging angel portrayed on the big screen by Charles Bronson.

Considerable credit must go to Oscar-winner Mauro Fiore's (*Avatar*) visually-captivating cinematography for capturing Boston in a way which is somehow both stylish and haunting. Nevertheless, the eye-pleasing panoramas simply serve as a backdrop for Denzel who is even better here than in his Oscar-winning collaboration with Fuqua for *Training Day*. [Read the entire review](#) and our interview with [Denzel Washington](#).



Take Me to the River



A lot of great soul music came out of Memphis in the Sixties and early Seventies. Stax Records launched the careers of acts like Otis Redding, Isaac Hayes and Booker T. and the MGs while its cross-town rival Hi Records had Al Green, Ann Peebles and O.V. Wright. *Take Me to the River* is a reverential retrospective which is a combination tribute to the city's impressive legacy and a tip of the cap to some up-and-coming artists still recording in the region.

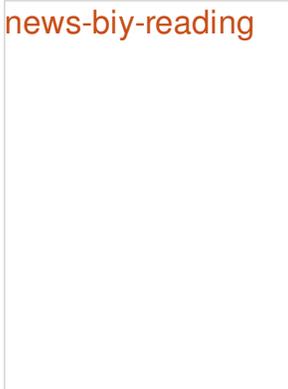
What makes the movie worth its while is hearing such soul greats as Booker T., Mavis Staples, David Porter and Charlie Musselwhite wax romantic about the good ole days. We learn that the bands were often integrated at a time the rest of Memphis was still strictly segregated. [Read](#)

[our entire film review.](#)



Related Articles & News

news-biy-reading



Break the Cycle: Teach Black Boys to Read Well by the 4th Grade

“The Shame of Black America Isn’t that Our Boys Can’t Read; The Shame Is that We Do Little To Help Them Learn To Read!” —Phillip Jackson, The Black Star Project

About 10% of 8th-grade Black males in the United States read at or above a proficient level. In other words; on average, if you count any 100 young Black men, only 10 of them read at a proficient level. [Read Phillip Jackson’s recommendation on what we can do about this.](#)



news-wayne-pharr



Wayne Pharr, former Black Panther who fought the Los Angeles Police in a historic gun battle in 1969, passes

Wayne Pharr passed away on September 6, 2014 at age 64.

Pharr and his fellow Panthers defended themselves from the long violent attack by the newly formed LAPD SWAT unit, he became a political prisoner who was exonerated of attempted murder and all other serious offenses. Pharr eventually became a successful realtor in Southern California, a subject of the documentary film, *41st and Central*, and most recently authored the well received autobiography, *Nine Lives of A Black Panther: A Story of Survival* . [Read Pharr’s](#)

[obituary.](#)

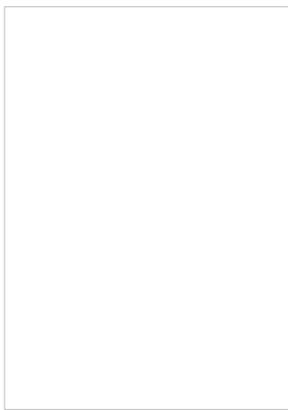


news-don-lemon

Don Lemon: Anchoring the National Conversation on Race - Interview

CNN's Don Lemon has anchored and reported many breaking on-the-scene news stories, including the George Zimmerman trial, the Boston marathon bombing, the Philadelphia building collapse, the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, the Colorado Theater Shooting, the death of Whitney Houston, the Inauguration of President Barack Obama, the death of Michael Jackson, Hurricane Gustav in Louisiana, and the Minneapolis bridge collapse.

Here, he talks about CNN's coverage of the recent shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. [Read our complete interview.](#)

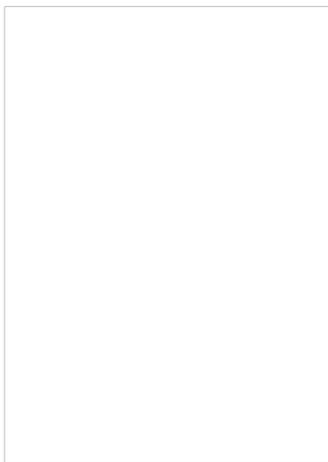


Women's Fiction and Diversity by Renee Swindle

What I've also come to expect, however, is that while the world in these novels might be made up women, it's rare, very rare, that a prominent African American character plays a role in the story. Unless the book is set in the past, as with Katherine Stockett's, *The Help*, or Julie Kibler's *Calling Me Home*, prominent black female characters, or female characters of any color, are nowhere to be found. White author, white world.

But I get it. I do. If I want to read about black women's lives I can pick up [Terry McMillan's](#) latest or a novel by [Victoria Christopher Murray](#), or any number of African American authors. But after all these years, I'm starting to long for a little more "race mixing" as it were. [Read Renee's entire](#)

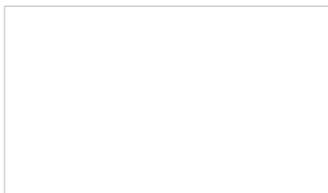
[article.](#)



A Tale of Two Countries By Anthony T. Browder

This is a tale of two countries and their treatment of two African American men named Michael Brown. This is also a tale about the best of times and the worst of times in the lives of both Michael Browns and perceptions of value.

Michael Brown is a phenomenal painter and sculptor, who is probably best known for designing the posters for the Million Man March, the Million Woman March, and the Million Family March. [Read Browder's complete tale.](#)



The Skanner News Website Named One of Nation's Best at NNPA Merit Awards

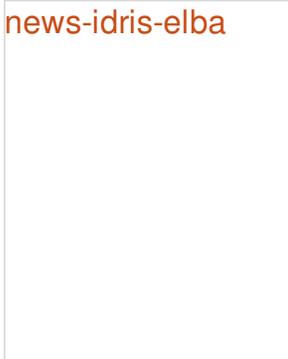
Chicago Defender Publisher, John H. Sengstacke, founded the Negro Newspaper Publishers Association, now the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), in 1940. Newly-elected NNPA



Interim president and CEO Rev. Benjamin Chavis, Jr. and *The Skanner News* Publisher Bernie Foster are pictured here.

At this year’s award ceremony hosted by the NNPA and *Skanner News*, *The St. Louis American* was named the Best Black Newspaper in the nation. *The Final Call* won second. [Read the entire article at The](#)

[Skanner.com](#)



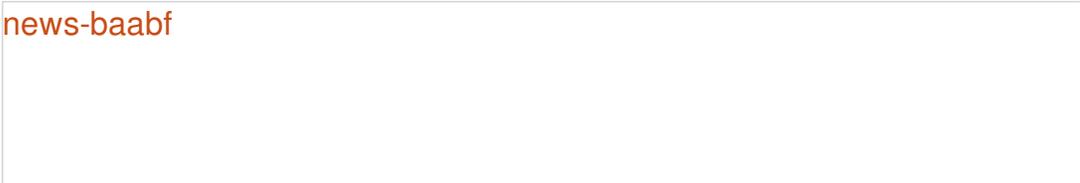
Idris Elba Interviewed

Question: You and a group of British actors wrote an open letter to the BBC and other British broadcasters, arguing that they should better represent minorities. How have they reacted?

Idris Elba: Especially in the television industry, people know this is something of an issue. Television companies have responded in a way that seems positive. Look, you know, it’s not a law or anything — we just decided to stand up and say: “Hey, try to get more diversity on our screen in England because it’s important to the culture and the culture is very diverse. Let’s see it on TV.” [Read Amy Chozick’s complete interview.](#)



Events



The Baltimore African American Book Festival will take place October 11, 2014, from 10am to 5pm, at the Enoch Pratt Central Library, 400 Cathedral St Baltimore Md 21201. Scheduled speakers include; [Trice Hickman](#), author of new novel *Troublemaker*; Sherri Booker, winner of an [NAACP Image Award](#) for her memoir *Nine Years Under: Coming of Age in an Inner City Funeral Home*; [Nikki Woods](#), senior producer of the “Tom Joyner Morning Show” and author of the AALBC.com #1 bestseller, *Easier Said Than Done*; Ella Curry, Owner of [EDC Creations](#); and AALBC.com’s Founder, Troy Johnson. [Learn More >](#)



7th Annual National Black Book Festival October 23-25, 2014

Held at Fallbrook Church Gymnasium, 12512 Walters Rd., Houston, TX. This national event is one of the largest indoor gatherings of African-American authors in the world.



Actor/Author [Eriq La Salle](#), [Pearl Cleage](#) and [Bernice McFadden](#) headline this year's event. Featured authors include, [ReShonda Tate Billingsley](#), author of 20+ books, [Victoria Christopher Murray](#), author of 20+ books, [K’Wan](#), urban fiction phenom and author of a dozen titles, [Curtis Bunn](#), author of six books and founder of Atlanta’s National Book Club Conference, [Elizabeth Nunez](#), author of eight novels and 2012 NAACP Image

Award nominee, [Allison Hobbs](#), author of 12+ novels, [JoyLynn Jossel](#), author of 15+ novels, [Earl Sewell](#), author or co-author of seven novels, [Pamela Samuels Young](#), author of six legal mysteries and recipient of this year's NAACP Image Award.



news-aalas-collage

10th Annual African American Literary Awards Show — October 26, 2014

The 2014 African American Literary Awards Show will be held at the MIST, 46 W 116th St, New York, NY 10026 on October 26th. This year's honorees are [Maya Angelou](#) and [James Earl Hardy](#).

“Get ready for another exciting AALA Show. Come celebrate our 10 year anniversary in style!” —Yvette Hayward, AALAS CEO and Founder



A Note to Authors

We recently lost the bookstore [Azizi Books](#), in Matteson, IL and their website BlackBooksDirect.com. Like so many other stores and websites closing, there was no fanfare, no gnashing of teeth, just the loss of another platform dedicated to promoting our books.

As the number of platforms available, to showcase an author's work, continues to dwindle, the ability to reach readers becomes more difficult. This is an environment that fosters a competitive spirit which does not serve us, or our readers, very well.

I've decided to compile a series of “short notes” in which I will share recommendation on what authors should do. This is will become a regular feature of our eNewsletter, because even the most conscious authors may want to help, but they simply do not know how. If you have a suggestion email it to me at troy@aalbc.com or [share it immediately on my discussion forum](#).

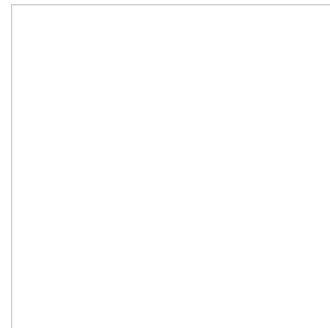
Here is my first recommendation: **Authors add a link on your website to an independent website. [Follow this link to learn why.](#)**



Subscribe to AALBC.com's YouTube channel.

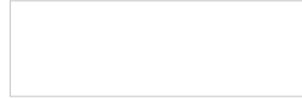
You may discover a writer whose work you'll enjoy. YouTube, for now anyway, is one of the remaining (perhaps the only) major social networking platforms that financially compensates contributors in return for the content shared on their platform. They provide a service to you without trying to completely cannibalize your website's traffic.

If you subscribe to AALBC.com's YouTube channel you will help me spread the word about Black literature. Your support matters. Promoting Black literature has always been a grassroots effort; it is not done by corporations or governments but by individuals like you and me.





Dear Troy,



We need your support. Please consider purchasing and remember to renew your [subscription to AALBC.com's eNewsletter](#)—less than 50 cents an issue.

If you've read something in our eNewsletter, that you enjoyed or felt was important, please share it. Again, **we** are responsible for ensuring our stories are told, shared, and preserved. As the number of platforms promoting our work continue to decrease your active participation is needed.

Peace,
Troy Johnson,
Founder and Webmaster

AALBC.com eNewsletter – September 30, 2014 – Issue # 218

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