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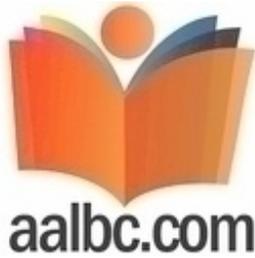
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eNewsletter

Issue #215 — June 26, 2014

Black Literature is for Everyone



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Brown Girls Publishing



Introducing the next four books from **Brown Girls Publishing**: **D.J. McLaurin's** *What if it Feels Good?* —the story of an unconventional romance that may not survive a woman scorned or the public's outrage. *Pink & Patent Leather*, **Candy Jackson's** mind-blowing tale of one-woman's quest for love at all costs, and the spiraling descent she'll travel to get it. *The Next Thing is Joy: The Gospel According to Vivian Grace*, by **Tracey Michael Lewis**, is the story of a woman who is about to find love in a way she never imagined...but what will she have to do to get it? **Roni Teson's** *Twist*, where romance, insanity, mind-altering experiments, and a government conspiracy, all lead to the fight of Beatrice Malcolm's life. Visit browngirlspublishing.com to find out more.



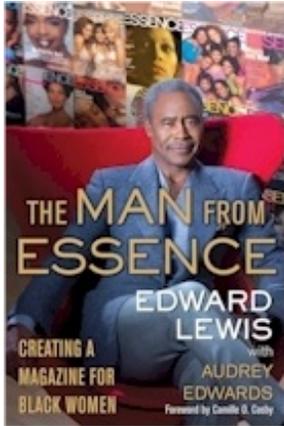
AALBC.com Mourns the Passing of Ellis J. Still

AALBC.com joins the book world in mourning the unexpected passing of Ellis James Still on Tuesday, June 17, 2014. Ellis was the President & CEO, The Burning Bush Christian, Literary, & Scholastic Bookstore. Ellis was a terrific advocate for our literature and was simply one conscious brother. His loss to the book world is incalculable and will be felt for years to come.

He was a member of Abundant Life Family Worship Church in New

Brunswick and was part of their Youth Ministry. He was 46 years old. A **memorial fund** has been started in his honor.

Book Reviews

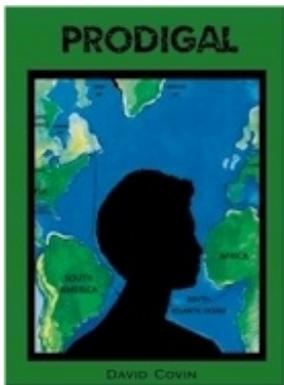


The Man from Essence: Creating a Magazine for Black Women

Despite the irony of four brothers being behind a publication aimed at sisters, the periodical proved phenomenally popular, soon blossoming into the premiere beauty and fashion magazine for its target demographic. And over the intervening decades the Essence brand has been extended to include an annual Fourth of July weekend cultural festival featuring everything from musical concerts to empowerment seminars.

However, the magazine has also experienced considerable behind-the-scenes turmoil, and much of that drama is the subject of *The Man from Essence*, a revealing memoir written by Mr. Lewis with the assistance of his former executive editor, Audrey Edwards. Inter alia, we learn that the

four founders had no experience in the field of publishing, yet ultimately managed to flourish in part because they had identified a need just begging to be addressed.

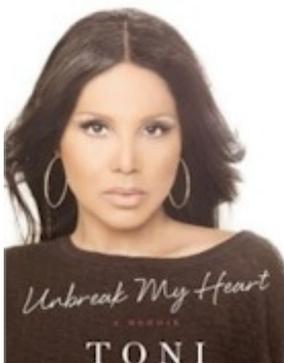


Prodigal: Special Edition by David Covin

Often, fiction can be confusing when the author loses his way. That is not the case with *Prodigal's* author, David Covin, Emeritus Professor of Government and Pan African Studies at California State University, even as he attempts to stuff as much cultural seasoning and action as possible into this bloated plot. The reader, once strapped in, is just encouraged to hold on and go hell-bent for the thrill ride.

In this tale of identity and cultural salvation, Covin displays his incredible capacity to give us a brief history lesson wrapped in a glittering jacket of contemporary urban fiction. It is often brilliant, aware, informative, and somewhat cluttered. If a reader submits to Covin's commanding will and

imagination, *Prodigal* will be an unforgettable, fulfilling experience.

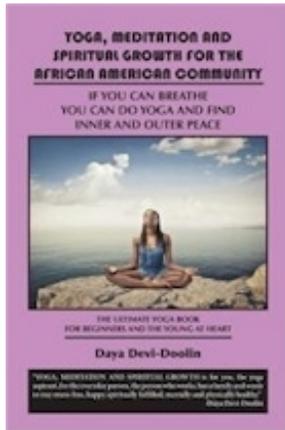


Unbreak My Heart: A Memoir by Toni Braxton

While Toni's blossoming career would catapult her to the heights of superstardom in a matter of months, it also left her haunted with a sense of overwhelming regret. For, although striking that devil's bargain led to fame and a half-dozen Grammys, it also meant temporarily alienating the affection of the folks she was closest to.

Furthermore, over the ensuing years, she would find her faith tested by a host of woes reminiscent of Job in the Bible. Not only did she make and lose a fortune, declaring bankruptcy twice in the process, but she married

Mint Condition's keyboardist Keri Lewis and had a couple of children with him before going through a messy divorce.



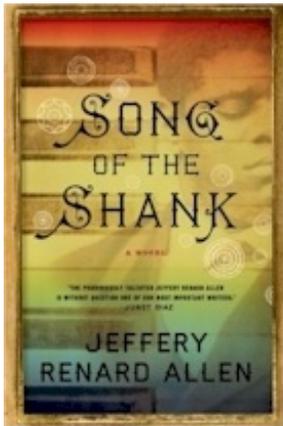
Yoga, Meditation and Spiritual Growth for the African American Community

Daya Devi-Doolin shares her philosophy in an easy-to-read how-to tome with an easy-to-follow illustrated introduction, aimed at beginners and also the young at heart. The book features photographs not of skinny contortionists, but of the author and some of her students who, as you'll see, come in a variety of shapes and sizes.

That lets you know that you don't have to be lithe and limber like a runway model to assume such poses pictures as the Boat, the Butterfly, the Half Lotus, the Cow, the Chair, the Eagle, the Half Bridge, the Dancer, the Cobra, the Tree, the Spinal Twist, or my favorite, The Mountain (which looks the easiest). Why should the uninitiated even consider trying yoga?

"For a new or a renewed body, mind and spirit," Daya suggests.

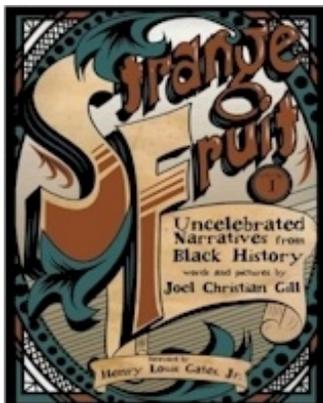
Book Recommendations



Song of the Shank by Jeffery Renard Allen

At the heart of this novel is Thomas Greene Wiggins, a nineteenth-century slave and improbable musical genius who performed under the name Blind Tom." The novel ranges from Tom's boyhood to the heights of his performing career, the inscrutable savant is buffeted by opportunistic teachers and crooked managers, crackpot healers and militant prophets. In his symphonic novel, Jeffery Renard Allen blends history and fantastical invention to bring to life a radical cipher, a man who profoundly changes all who encounter him.

Song of the Shank is also our [Deal of the Week](#) and is available to you at perhaps the lowest price online! But buy it now because this deal is only available until Sunday, June 29th.

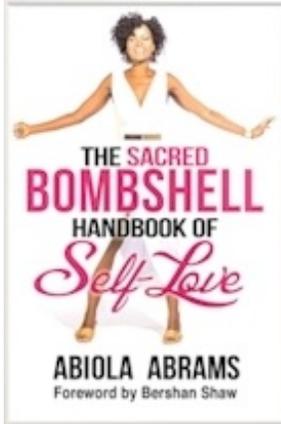


Strange Fruit, Volume I: Uncelebrated Narratives from Black History

Written and illustrated by Joel Christian Gill *Strange Fruit, Volume I* (Grade Level: 4 and up) is a collection of stories from African American history that exemplifies success in the face of great adversity. This unique graphic anthology offers historical and cultural commentary on nine uncelebrated heroes whose stories are not often found in history books.

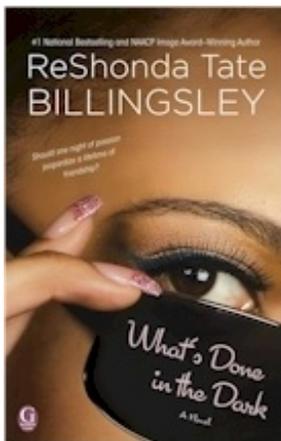
Among the stories included are: Henry "Box" Brown, who escaped from slavery by mailing himself to Philadelphia; Alexander Crummel

and the Noyes Academy, the first integrated school in America, established in the 1830s; Marshall “Major” Taylor, a.k.a. the Black Cyclone, the first black champion in any sport; and Bass Reeves, the most successful lawman in the Old West. Written and illustrated by Joel Christian Gill, the diverse art beautifully captures the spirit of each remarkable individual and opens a window into an important part of American history.



The Sacred Bombshell Handbook of Self-Love by Abiola Abrams

The Sacred Bombshell Handbook of Self-Love is your passport to become the woman you were born to be. If you've been looking for a sign, this is it. Love-Body-Spirit coach, advice columnist, and motivational speaker Abiola Abrams reveals 11 self-worth secrets with assignments to awaken your feminine energy, reclaiming the word bombshell to mean a woman who deliciously embodies her mind, body, spirit - and joy. Abiola's transformational coaching is buoyed by her Guyanese family lessons and overcoming personal challenges from disordered eating to a failed marriage. If you have everything going for you, except what you really want, this journey is for you.

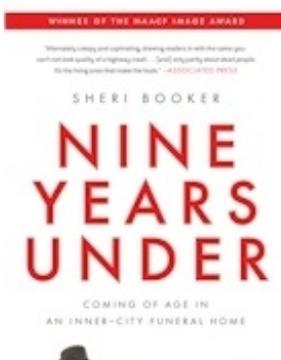


What's Done in the Dark by ReShonda Tate Billingsley

Felise is not the kind of woman to cheat on her husband—especially with her best friend's man. But after one perfect storm of a night, it happened ...and she can hardly believe it herself. To top it off, when she woke up in the morning, she found that the man to whom she guiltily made passionate love died of a heart attack overnight. Felise, who is a nurse and a good citizen at that, leaves the hotel room without reporting his death.

When her best friend, Paula, finds out about her husband's sudden death a day later, Felise is overcome with guilt and grief. She must be there for her friend and her family, but when her husband repeatedly tries to apologize for his absentminded behavior and Paula starts investigating who Stephen was with the night he died, Felise finds it hard to hold herself together.

Should she come clean and tell everyone what she did? Or should she just let it go and move past the mistake on her own?



Nine Years Under: Coming of Age in an Inner-City Funeral Home by Sheri Booker

Sheri Booker was only fifteen when she started working at Wylie Funeral Home in West Baltimore. She had no idea her summer job would become nine years of immersion into a hidden world. With AIDS and gang violence threatening to wipe out a generation of black men, Wylie was never short on business.

This vibrant tour of a macabre world reveals an urban funeral culture where photo-screened memorial T-shirts often replace suits and ties and the dead

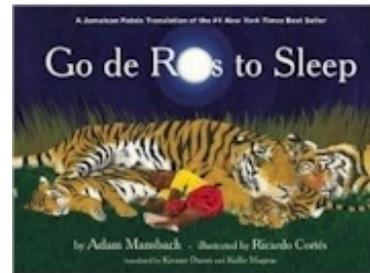


are sent off with a joint or a fifth of cognac. As families came together to bury one of their own, Booker was privy to their most intimate moments of grief and despair. But along with the sadness, Booker encountered moments of dark humor: brawls between mistresses and widows, and car crashes at McDonald's with dead bodies in tow. While she never got over her terror of the embalming room, Booker learned to expect the unexpected and to never, ever cry. *Nine Years Under* offers readers a glimpse into an industry in the backdrop of all our lives.

Shaggy Records Jamaican Patois Version of Go the F* to Sleep

Reggae superstar Shaggy repeats Samuel L. Jackson's reading of *Go the F* to Sleep*, but in a Jamaican fashion. Shaggy's humor and verbal prowess are on full display as he reads the book's stanzas such as:

*Modda puss a hug up har pickney,
Young sheep a lay down wid big sheep.
Yuh wrap up an warm inna yuh bed, putoos,
Beg yuh, go de rass to sleep.*



Related Articles



The ESSENCE Brand—Where Black Women Come First—NOT!

“Community Book Center, owned by a Black woman, had been the sole bookseller for Essence Fest from the beginning. At that time the idea was to do everything possible to strengthen and empower Black owned businesses. Last year [2012] Wal-Mart and local white bookstores were allowed in. This year [2013] CBC was told that they did not have space for them. When another vendor reportedly dropped out, CBC was still not

allowed back in. The local white-owned bookstore had already been approved.

In a nutshell, Essence has evicted, booted, put out the only Black-owned bookstore to make more room for retail giant Wal-Mart and a local white book store. The Black-owned Community Book Center is practicing Self-Determination by hosting its own Home Fest during the same time as Essence, so I'll be making a special trip; hope you will too."

—Minister J. Kojo Livingston



Do Yourself a Favor Authors; Market Your Book by A. Yamina Collins

My fantasy romance novel, *The Last King*, has already been in Amazon's Top 100 Bestseller List in no less than four separate genres: Fantasy, Science Fiction, Christian Women's Literature. And yet I've only sold 210 copies of the book.

To me, the money hasn't been a waste. In fact, I am inspired to now hire a professional publicist. I believe in my book and it's chance to succeed, but that means I have to give it a chance to reach

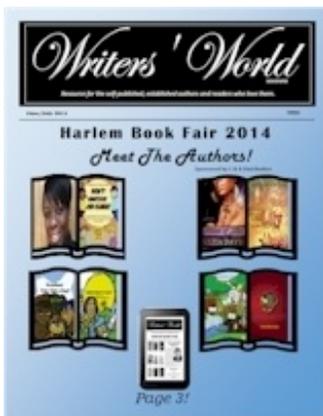
a larger audience.



The Griot Solution

Since black people in large numbers might not read fiction, live storytelling may still resonate in their blood because of the oral tradition. A combination of story telling and controlled psycho-drama—It will necessitate community and traveling theaters, block play parties, or street theater if no buildings will have you—but the big caveat, the silent elephant in the room is the class dynamics within the black community itself or rather not in the community. That is the best and the

brightest with money don't live in the slums.



Writers' World Newspaper

A Resource for the self-published, established authors and readers who love them.

Writers' World will publish positive news and information. We are here to bring good and informative news to our readers. We will also provide valuable information from our authors. *Writers' World* Newspaper is a resource for self-published and established authors and the readers who love them to have a forum to exchange opinions on literature. Readers will be provided with unique and motivational articles, implementing ideas and resources to further enhance their lives.

Black Star Journal

Check out the news and events archive of The Black Star Project. The Black Star Journal is the news and events archive of [The Black Star Project](#)

Founded in 1996 by Phillip Jackson, The Black Star Project is committed to improving the quality of life in Black and Latino communities of Chicago and nationwide by eliminating the racial academic achievement gap.



Interviews



Amma Asante

Writer/director Amma Asante made an unusual entry into filmmaking. As a child, she attended the Barbara Speake stage school in London, where she trained as a student in dance and drama.

Here, she talks about her new film, *Belle*, a fact-based, historical drama starring Gugu Mbatha-Raw about the daughter of an African slave and a British ship captain who was raised in England as an aristocrat.



Michael Ealy

For the last few years, Michael Ealy has been red-hot, jumping from TV to film and back to TV, seamlessly. He recently starred in the sci-fi television series, "Almost Human," for which he earned an NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Leading Actor in a Drama Series.

In terms of the tabloids, the blue-eyed hunk was named one of People magazines' "On the Verge" actors in the magazine's "Sexiest Man Alive" 2002 and 2013 issues. Furthermore, he was named one of E! Entertainment Television's "Sizzlin' 16" of 2004 and appeared on the cover of Essence magazine's "Hollywood Screen Gems" for their April

2004 issue.

Film Reviews



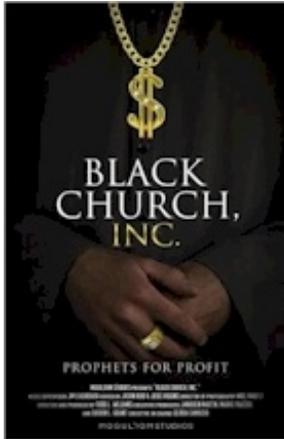
Think Like a Man Too - Film Has Little to do With Thinking Like a Man

The surprise hit Think Like a Man was #1 at the box-office over its opening weekend back in April of 2012. Inspired by Steve Harvey's best-



selling, *Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man*, the original explored some of the serious issues tackled by the popular, relationship advice book by examining the angst of four couples in relationship crisis.

Unfortunately, this relatively-tame sequel fails to measure up to either of those side-splitting descents into debauchery, being basically a vehicle for Kevin Hart's kitchen sink brand of comedy. Here, the motor-mouthed comedian serves as an omniscient narrator who calls the battle-of-the-sexes' play-by-play.



Black Church Inc. - Film Tackles Topic of Financial Abuse in the Black Church

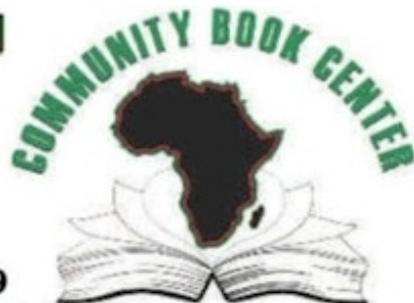
Gone are the days of working class preachers who didn't expect financial gain in exchange for spiritual guidance. A new breed of pastors has emerged: the mega-pastor... one who aims to sell their religious brand and get rich off the gospel.

Black Church, Inc. is a feature-length investigative documentary that examines the sensationalism of the black church and its present day relationship with serving the community. The documentary compares the black church's origins to its modern day cultural relevance. The film focuses on modern mega-churches and asks hard-hitting questions about service vs. the extravagant lifestyles of its multi-million dollar ministers and

ministries. The documentary takes a deep dive into controversial issues clouding the church including "love offerings" (cash payments given to ministers), financial abuse and the deification of the mega-church pastor all while asking... is prayer-for-profit moral?

Upcoming Events

HOMEFEST
2nd Annual
July 4-6, 2014
2523 Bayou Road, NOLA 70119



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Email [Troy Johnson](#) if you are interested in this special price (it is not available for purchase online).

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Some sponsored emails may be fee based, but not every potential sponsor’s message will qualify; this is not a traditional “eBlast” service; messages will be limited to one per month and curated. This past year, we sent two email messages which reflect the type of information we will communicate with a sponsored email, *The National Black Writers Conference Schedule* and *Join Effort to Make “Forever an Ex” a Best-Selling Book*. We may not send a sponsored email each month. However, if we do send a sponsored email you will be automatically entered into a contest to **win \$50!**

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Peace,
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Founder and Webmaster

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