Legend:

1. Zodiac Club
2. Mt. Morris Park
3. Tubby's, Hideout, Purple Manor
4. News Cafe
**5. Hilltop
6. Admiral Bar
7. Tubby's
8. Tubby's
9. Apollo Bar, J. Bar
10. Andre's
11. Blind Charlie's
12. Alice Whitehead's
13. Mary Archer's

** Still in existence

14. Lady Cunard's
15. Snookie's
16. Grapevine
17. L. Bar
18. Tubby's
19. Wellsworth
20. Zambezie Bar
21. Mahogany
22. Renaissance
23. Audobon Ballroom
24. Carlton Terrace
I am trying to identify narratives written by African American lesbians or that deal with themes related to African American lesbian sexuality and racial identity. I want to examine works of the quality of Audre Lorde's "Zami." I would greatly appreciate all suggestions. This is for inclusion for a course I am teaching in the fall on the narrative construction of race, gender, and sexuality.

Thanks,
Elliott Butler-Evans

you might want to look at Carolivia Herron's fabulous novel, Thereafter Johnnie. It deals with lesbianism as well as incest. it is terrifically moving and intelligent. elizabeth meese@english.as.ua.edu

I worked at a terrific conference at WVU last summer, and found some wonderful feminists in the English department there. Have you met Elaine (Mickey) Ginsburg and Dennis Allen? They've been there a long time and are extremely cordial people—feel free to say that I suggested you contact them. elizabeth
Subject: Narratives by Black Lesbians

Are you familiar with Barbara Smith's essay "Home" in _Home Girls_? She creates a fictive homecoming with her now dead female relatives. It's very well written, although I think it deconstructs itself (the home she narrates is already impossible by the time she imagines it). Either way, you can read it "straight" or ironically and it's still a great piece. Also, Beverly Smith's narrative of being at a friend's wedding (I don't remember the title) in _This Bridge Called My Back_. Michelle Cliff's novel _Abeng_ is not explicitly lesbian but it is clearly autobiographical, dealing with a light skinned class-privileged girl's childhood in Jamaica and her friendship with a dark skinned rural girl.

That's all I can think of offhand. Hope it's helpful.

Sarah Chinn
PLEASE POST THROUGH JUNE 1995

Call for Submissions

Wanted: works from Black lesbians for anthology of coming out stories. Your story could be in the form of journal entries, autobiographical fiction, poetry or whatever way the words came together to describe your coming out. Even if you don’t think you’re a writer, your story is important. Send submissions to: Lisa Moore, P.O. Box 861, Decatur, GA 30031. Deadline: June 30, 1995.
DO YOU HAVE PAPERS OR RECORDS ON BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY?

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES FOR BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY

This is the only repository solely devoted to documenting Black Women's History. The Archives collects, preserves and makes available for study the personal papers of individual Black women, the records of Black women's organizations and other materials which document the history of Black women in the United States.

WHY SHOULD PAPERS AND RECORDS BE SAVED?

If there are no documents, the history of Black women cannot be written; that history is too important to be ignored.

WHAT KIND OF PAPERS AND RECORDS ARE WE INTERESTED IN?

Any materials by or about Black women, which cannot be found elsewhere, are appropriate. Diaries, letters, minutes, photographs, reports and speeches are especially valuable. Articles and newscollections are often useful. We are also interested in obtaining paintings, drawings, sculpture and other art work by or about Black women.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH THEM?

Why not entrust them to the care of the National Archives for Black Women's History? We will preserve them and ensure that they receive the exposure that they deserve. We can also photocopy materials.

WHERE SHOULD YOU BEGIN?

Please contact:

Linda Henry, Archivist
National Archives for
Black Women's History
1318 Vermont Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

(202) 332-1233 or 332-9201
History books can be big, dry things filled with the words and deeds of the politically and financially powerful. But herstory is juicy, flexible and various. As defined by author Joan Nestle, mother spirit of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, it can show us "who really is at the heart of history."

On Feb. 28 (6 pm–8 pm), the Archives will hold an opening-night reception to celebrate its new exhibit, *Keepin' On*, devoted to images and other memorabilia representing the lives of African-American lesbians. Co-sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center and the National Museum of Lesbian and Gay History, the show will be mounted in one of the meeting rooms of the Community Center and open from 4 pm to 6 pm every day through April 11.

*Keepin' On* takes the form of panels of bold, vivid color xeroxes of the original materials (some from the Archives holdings, others recently donated for this exhibit) including photographs, fliers from the events of various organizations, tickets, letters, covers of books and other publications, clippings and the like. Produced by photographer-curator Morgan Gwenwald, these lightweight panels travel well, and the Archives hopes to arrange several shows nationwide. One may be planned for the Atlanta Conference and another mounted at Queens College, where Nestle teaches.

Georgia Brooks, an activist from the Hudson County Rainbow Coalition and one of the exhibit's curators, notes the importance of variety in the images. "Although we show what African-American lesbians may have in common," she says, "we all do not do the same things or think the same way." Indeed, the selections I was shown in mid-January (as more donations of materials were being sought and final choices still pending) represented women who lived their lives and styled themselves in very different ways, who were celebrated figures in mainstream society or, mainly or
Left: Mabel Hampton (one of the founders of the Lesbian Herstory Archives) circa 1925. Above: Hampton’s lover of 40 years, Lillian Foster. Right: Ernestine Eckstein, one-time vice president of the New York City chapter of the Daughters of Bilitis, at an early gay rights picket in the mid ’60s.

exclusively, community heroines. And there are everyday dykes doing everyday things. In addition to the very butch, the very femme and the very casually self-created, there are artists such as Lorraine Hansberry, the lesser-known and intriguing writer Hazel Crawley and entertainer Moms Mabley.

Keepin’ On is partially about reclaiming more of our spiritual ancestors, perhaps seeing parts of ourselves shining back at us. The mission of the Archives, Nestle added, is to document that “there has always been more to our lives than oppression.”

“Mabel Hampton is, of course, an icon figure,” says Nestle of her friend who helped found the archives. “She played all the socially expected roles: domestic worker, custodian, entertainer. Yet she never let a racist, homophobic society empty her life of meaning. Before there was a ‘lesbian community,’ there was Mabel. The Archives has pushed the curtains of history apart and said: ‘This woman must be remembered.’”

Gwenwald says that Keepin’ On will also include “found images” from the past—unidentified items that suggest that great dyke tales could be woven around them.

Whatever images are finally selected, the show is bound to be a beauty. Gwenwald’s reproductions are fun, inclusive and warm. They will stir memories, start discussions and move all kinds of women to feel good about themselves—and maybe even begin to pick through their own old boxes and files in search of lesbian memorabilia.

“Yes, we’re always accepting donations,” Gwenwald says. Nestle agrees: “We don’t throw anything away. These items represent whole lives of women.”

To find out how you can submit materials for Keepin’ On (or for the Archives’ general collection), contact Morgan Gwenwald through the Archives at (212) 874-7232.
Black lesbians - history

we also history - journals

"can you keep 'em down on the plantation after they've read Rousseau?"

Eugene Genovese's From Rebellion to Revolution and the problem of the rights of Black Politics

by David Gutin

In Radical America Vol 15 no 6
REGULATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE ARCHIVES

1. A researcher must sign three forms:
   (a) the Daily Registration form, each day s/he visits the Archives.
   (b) the Application for Use of Materials form, once a year.
   (c) the Research Request Form, to obtain specific boxes of materials.

2. Staff will retrieve materials; stacks are closed to researchers.

3. Smoking and eating are not permitted while using materials.

4. Materials must be carefully handled:
   (a) Do not rearrange the contents of folders or the folder order; if records appear to be in disorder or misfiled, please notify the Archives staff.
   (b) Do not mark, fold, press or trace items or handle in any way likely to damage them.
   (c) Only lead pencils may be used; all pens are prohibited.

5. Staff will photocopy material, subject to the Archives’ regulations governing photocopying. The fee is 15¢ per page.

6. The researcher assumes all responsibility for conforming with the laws of copyright, libel and literary property rights.

7. Permission to use materials is not authorization to publish them. Separate written permission to publish the contents of any document, in whole or in part, must be made to the Archivist. If permission is granted, the researcher is required to properly acknowledge the Archives in the publication. A free copy of all publications which rely heavily on the Archives holdings should be presented to the Archives as soon as the work is published.

8. The Archives reserves the right to deny or restrict the use of materials.

August 1980
PERMISSION TO PUBLISH MANUSCRIPT MATERIAL

I hereby request permission to publish the following manuscript material in the collections of the National Archives for Black Women's History. (Identify the collection or collections and describe the material precisely.)

The quotations will appear in (give author(s), title, publisher, anticipated date of publication):

In authorizing the publication of this material, the National Archives for Black Women's History does not surrender its own right to publish it, or to grant permission to others to do so. Nor does this authorization remove the author's and publisher's responsibility to guard against the infringement of rights that may be held by others.

Signature ________________________________ Date __________________

Name ___________________________________

Address ___________________________________

Approved by ______________________________ Date ________________
The National Archives for Black Women's History of the National Council of Negro Women

DEED OF GIFT

________________________________________ give(s) to the National Archives

(name) for Black Women's History of the National Council of Negro Women the following:

as an unrestricted gift, and transfer(s) to the National Archives for Black Women's History legal title and copyright, in so far as I/we hold them except as stated below:

as I/we authorize the National Archives for Black Women's History to make those materials available to the public, to reproduce, otherwise use, or dispose of them as the National Archives for Black Women's History may deem appropriate except as stated below:

Signature _____________________________ Date _____________________________

Address __________________________________________

________________________________________

National Archives for Black Women's History representative:

________________________________________ Date _____________________________
APPLICATION FOR USE OF MATERIALS

Date

Name (please print)

I request permission to examine materials in the Archives. If permission is granted, I agree to comply with the Archives regulations for the use of materials.

I understand that permission to examine materials does not include permission to publish the contents in whole or in part unless such publication is specifically authorized by the Archivist.

I understand further that the Archives may not own the copyright or literary property rights in any unpublished document, and that permission to publish must be obtained from the owner of the copyright.

The subject, scope and purpose of my research are:

Applicant's signature:

Institutional affiliation or employer:

Academic status or employment position:

Permanent address:

Permanent phone number:

Washington, DC, area address:

Washington, DC, phone number:

Permission to examine approved by:  Date:  

November 1979
National Archives for Black Women's History
National Council of Negro Women
1318 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 332-9201

Permission Form for Unpublished Conference Papers or Articles

Name ____________________________________________
(Print or type)

Title of Paper ____________________________________

Institutional Affiliation and Address ________________________________

______________________________

Home Address ____________________________________________

Paper delivered at ______________________________ Date ____________

Place ________________________________ Date ____________

If not a conference paper, written for (indicate occasion or institution as applicable, and date) ______________________________________

Research Use:
This paper may be made available as follows:

____ without restriction to any researcher.

____ only with my written permission for a period of ____ years; thereafter without restriction to any researcher.

____ other: ______________________________________ (specify)

Photocopying:

____ My paper may be photocopied for an individual researcher.

____ My paper may be photocopied for deposit at another library.

____ My paper may be photocopied only with my written permission for a period of ____ years; thereafter upon request for a researcher or another library.

____ My paper may not be photocopied.

____ Other: ______________________________________

I hereby give to the National Archives for Black Women's History a copy of the paper described above to be used under the conditions specified.

_____________ __________________________
(date) (signature)
1. The cost is 15¢ per page; staff will photocopy material.

2. Do not remove items from folders; do not disturb the arrangement of folders. Those documents that you wished to be photocopied should be turned crosswise and be kept in their original place in the folder.

3. Documents which may be damaged will not be photocopied. Large orders and orders for the full text of a pamphlet, diary, notebook or periodical may be refused.

4. Researchers must observe the following:

**WARNING CONCERNING COPYRIGHT RESTRICTION**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

I request the National Archives for Black Women's History to make copies of the material listed below:

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I agree to abide by the above regulations governing photocopying.

Name __________________________ Signature __________________________

Address __________________________ Date __________________________
RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

Name of collection: Records of the National Council of Negro Women

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I have read the rules and regulations governing the use of material in the National Archives for Black Women's History and agree to abide by them.

Signature_________________________ Date____________________

November 1979
LOAN RECORD

Date borrowed:

Date to be returned:

Material:

Purpose:

Borrowed by:

Address:

Telephone:

I acknowledge receipt of the above borrowed materials, I will reimburse the National Archives for Black Women's History for any damage to or loss of the materials, and I will return the materials on the specified date.

Signature:

Loan authorized by:
LIST OF REFERENCES TO WOMEN

COMPILED BY ESME BHAN

NOVEMBER 14, 1975
The Following List Indicates Important Reference to Women Found in the Processed Materials in Manuscript Division

ANDERSON, Marian and the DAR Controversy. 635 items. Three document boxes. Collection consists of correspondence and newspaper clippings relating to the DAR Controversy and Miss Anderson's being denied a concert in Constitution Hall in April, 1939. Centers on the organizational struggle between the Marian Anderson Citizen Committee on the one hand and the Daughters of the American Revolution on the other.


CARTER, Jeanette. Papers (1927-1963). ca. 1 box 40 items. Papers reflect some of her activities as Founder and President of the National Political Study Club and with the Republican Party.

CARY, Mary Ann Shadd. 57 items. Relates to her activities in the United States and Canada as editor of the Provincial Freeman and in the Women's Rights struggle. Mention of Colored Women's Professional Franchise Association.

CHURCH-Broadside
Ladies of St. Thomas Episcopal Church held a fair for the sale of useful and fancy articles for the benefit of the Church December 21, 1965.

COX, Anne. Collection. 1 box 43 items. Theatre material, some scripts on letterheads of the Pelican Stock Theatre Co.


EDDY, L.H.
Letter. 1812 May 18, New York, to John Hartborne. Gives her grandfather an account of voyage made to Sierra Leone by Paul Cuffee "about 18 months ago" and Cuffee's interest in Abolition.

EVANS, Claiborne. Individual Manuscript Deed of emancipation. Freeing of a female slave.

FRASER, Sarah M.
First Black woman to get a degree as a doctor of medicine. See: Georgia Fraser Goins Papers.

GOINS, Georgia Fraser. (1883-1964. 750 items)
Mrs. Goins studied music at Syracuse University and relates the racism there during the early years of the twentieth century. Her career was in music.

GRIGG, Ann. An Individual Manuscript
An agreement dated April 8, 1959 in Newby District S. Carolina by which William H. Harland agrees to pay to Ann Grigger, free woman of color, $400 for purchase of 2 acres of land.

Author and teacher correspondence, diaries, Mss. of plays, short stories and poems, teaching records.

GRIMKE, Archibald. 4,000 items.
Especially interesting is correspondence between brothers, Archibald and James Grimke, with their white aunts Sarah M. Grimke and Angelina Grimke Weld (author and teacher). Mention of women in education and in public life.

GRIMKE, Charlotte Forten - Contained in Francis Grimke Papers. ca. 40 boxes.
Contains personal papers and original diaries of his wife, Charlotte Forten Grimke, writer and poetess.

HOWARD University Drama

HUBBARD, Charlotte Moton. 1912. 5 boxes 1,070 items (1934-1970).
Covers her career in education and public relations. She was the daughter of Robert R. Moton, President of Tuskegee Institute. Mentions of her activities in the Department of State, of women in public life, women biography, American women in radio and T.V.

HUNT, Ida Gibbs. 1,192 items extending from 1898-1941.
Mr. Hunt was a diplomat. Correspondence and manuscripts of his wife.

KANSAS City Federation of Colored Women's Club, Kansas City Mo.
In Frederick Douglass Papers (1874-1943) 28-4-94.

LANKFORD, Charlotte J. Car cover invention, October 20, 1937. Individual Manuscript.

MARSHALL, Harriet Gibbs. 5,619 items.
In Washington Conservatory of Music Records, mostly dealing with personal data and correspondence of Harriet Gibbs Marshall, its founder. Also material relating to her book - The Story of Haiti.

MURRAY, Anna Evans
Autograph album of celebrities

MURRAY, Laura Hamilton.
Of Alexandria, Virginia. Events in her day to day life (1885-1886) Diary.

MURRAY, Pauli. 50 items.
Dealing with her role as tactician and advisor to undergraduate activities during the Civil Rights Committee's activities during the sit-in demonstrations at Howard University, 1943-1944.
NATIONAL Association of Teachers in Colored School.
In Harper Trenholm Council Papers 1900-1963

NEGRO Actors Guild of America, Inc.
In Leigh R. Whipper Papers, 1852-1952. References to show business personalities.

ORPHEUS Glee Club.
Directory of names and addresses of leading colored people in Washington, D.C. around 1894.

OVINGTON, Mary White 1865-1951. Individual Manuscript; 148 pages.
The Walls Came Tumbling Down and notes on a future work.

POOLE, Rosey Eve. 960 items.
Mainly letters with young Black poets for whom she served as patron and critic.
Some of the correspondents include Countee Cullen, Owen Dodson, Mari Evans, Langston Hughes, LeRoi Jones, and Ann Petry.

PORTER, Rosey Burnett. An Individual Manuscript
Afro-American Writings published before 1835 (1700-1835). This M.A.
Thesis (Columbia University, N.Y.) covers American Literature, Academic dissertations and H.U. faculty contributions.

RAZAF, Jennie Waller
Poems by her and also clippings of poems in Andy Razaf Papers 1913-1962

Verses honoring the "Ladies of the Sewing Circle of Philadelphia" 1860.
3 pages on 2 leaves. Unsigned holograph.

SLAVERY in the U.S. Inscribed "Mary C. Monroe's Book."
A scrapbook of clippings from various newspapers relating to slavery, 1850-1854.

SLOWE, Lucy D. 1883-1937. 2,039 items.
Extending with her work as Dean of Women at Howard University between 1922 and 1937. Papers also deal with Association of College Women, and National Association of Deans of Women.

SPAULDING, Myrna L. Papers 1918-1922. 19 letters to her from various people.

SPLINTER, Isabella Taliaferro 1888 -. 295 items covering period 1912-1926).
Including her activities as music teacher and member of the instrumental group. "The Music Spillers."

STEWARD, Mary Delia Weir. Drawing Book of pencil sketches.

STAMPS, Mabel K. 600 items spanning the years 1937-1970) correspondence and clippings related to her attempts toward integrating Black nurses into the broad national fields of professional nursing.

STEWARD, Mary Delia Veir 18 - 1953.
Scrapbook of events relating to her teaching career. A notebook of pencil sketches.

TIBBS, Marie Young. (In the scrapbook #3 in LeRoy Tibbs Collection.) Theatre clippings, programs, announcements, photographs, plays reviews, telegrams relating to her career. New York 1921-1948.


TURNER, Sara. 2 scrapbooks of miscellaneous clippings from various newspapers on the Blacks and other articles of national and international importance 1896-97. All poems, prayers, religious anecdotes and articles.


WASHINGTON, Booker T. (Mrs) Letter to her in Mary Church Terrell Papers. Washington Conservatory of Music.

WHEATLY, Phillis. Broadside, Ballad. An address to Miss Phillis Wheatley Ethiopian poetess in Boston, who came from Africa Hartford, August 4. 177( )

WOOD, Mary Virginia. Album in Francis J. Grimke Papers. Album of poetry and autographs 1834. This album contains poetry of James Forten Jr., Mary Isabela Forten and of Sarah L. Forten.

WILLIAMS, Lucy Cole Collection 1947-1948. 1 box. 5 items letters. To Pearl Graham regarding the relationship of the ancestors of Lucy Cole Williams to Thomas Jefferson.
ANNOUNCEMENT

The National Archives for Black Women's History announces the opening of the records of the National Council of Negro Women dating from 1935 to 1960. A grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission funded processing; other records will be open for research in the near future.

The records of the NCNW, a voluntary social service organization, document a wide variety of subjects: civil rights, women's issues, education, employment, health, housing, consumer issues and international relations. The records also provide information on other black women's organizations which are or were affiliated with the NCNW and on local NCNW councils throughout the United States. Materials include correspondence of founder Mary McLeod Bethune and numerous other black women, minutes, reports, financial and membership records, NCNW publications, such as the Aframerican Woman's Journal, and over 1000 photographs.

The Archives is an institution of the National Council of Negro Women and is open Monday through Friday by appointment. For additional information contact: Linda Henry, Archivist, National Archives for Black Women's History, 1318 Vermont Ave. NW., Washington, D.C., 20005.
NATIONAL ARCHIVES FOR BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY

SURVEY OF HISTORICAL RECORDS OF BLACK WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

The Archives is developing plans for a survey of the historical records of black women's organizations. Preliminary work will be completed in the spring of 1980 to submit a grant proposal in June. In order to receive funding for a proposal the Archives must offer evidence that (1) organizations do have records which can be surveyed, and (2) that organizations are willing to cooperate in a survey.

NEED FOR A SURVEY

The Archives receives frequent requests for information about black women's organizations in addition to the NCNW: sororities, professional, church and auxiliary. To obtain information about holdings of organizations, a survey should be done to determine that records exist and where they are.

WHAT A SURVEY DOES

A survey would determine size and rough dates of records. The types of materials (correspondence, minutes, reports, publications) would also be estimated and whether the materials were generated by the organization or by others. The focus would be on size and the completeness of the records. This preliminary survey is necessary to indicate to grant funding agencies the time a more complete survey would take. The more complete survey, which would be grant funded, and take place next fall, would list contents and dates in a more thorough manner.

WHO WOULD DO THE SURVEY

The Archivist of the National Archives for Black Women's History would do the survey, with whatever assistance the organizations can provide beyond cooperation. The Archives is willing to perform this service because we define our role more broadly than just caring for the records we now have. Our purpose
is to promote the documentation of black women's history. The staff, furthermore, has the necessary archival skills to conduct a survey. Since we expect grant money to fund the survey, we would be able to perform this needed service and still continue to develop the archives.

**BENEFITS OF A SURVEY**

We would serve the needs of all researchers who want to explore the experiences and contributions of black women's organizations. The organizations receive equal benefit, however, since a survey tells them about their own historical records and thus heightens awareness of their own past. By having information about their history, organizations can promote current programs, build membership and achieve greater visibility.

**PROBLEMS**

We anticipate two problems: (1) organizations may not wish to cooperate, believing that a survey will take away time from higher priority programs. Knowing that the Archives will assume the major responsibility may alleviate this concern. (2) records may not be in one place, particularly if an organization had no central headquarters. Records may be in the homes of past officers, or otherwise scattered. The Archives hopes to formulate plans to locate and identify those materials, and otherwise advise on how to address this problem. Undoubtedly, other problems will be encountered. The Archivist has sources of information from other archival surveys and repositories; those sources can provide assistance in meeting problems.

**OTHERS WHO HAVE DONE SURVEYS**

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious is currently completing a survey of the records of 850 motherhouses throughout the United States. The valuable information which this survey is providing would not have been possible without the cooperation of all of the motherhouses. It was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, a possible source of funding for the survey we plan.
SUGGESTED ACTION BY ORGANIZATIONS

The Archives requests that organizations support a survey by cooperating in the preliminary survey to be done this spring. Each organization should designate one person with whom the Archivist can work. That person may wish to enlist the assistance of other members of the organization, but one designated member is essential.

HISTORY AS THE HANDLE ON THE UMBRELLA

The main factor which unites black women's organizations is, of course, the common purpose of serving the many and varied needs of black women. The major programs and projects of organizations change over time, as needs change. What does not change is the common unity which can be achieved by working together to preserve the past and to document history. The promotion of history, therefore, serves an unchanging link among all black women's organizations. Since the Archives focuses exclusively on documenting black women's history and has a trained and experienced staff, it can play an important role in actively unifying organizations through a heightened awareness of history. A survey is one first step.
BLACK WOMEN: An Historical Perspective

FIRST NATIONAL SCHOLARLY RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON BLACK WOMEN

sponsored by

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN, INC.

through the support of

THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Shoreham Americana Hotel
Washington, D.C.                        Noexember 12-13, 1979
BLACK WOMEN: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

FIRST NATIONAL SCHOLARLY RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON BLACK WOMEN

Co-Honorary Chairpersons

Peggy Cooper
Vi Curtis Hinton
Effi Barry

Program Chairperson

Bettye C. Thomas

Conference Committee

Gloria Dickinson
Bettye J. Gardner
Sharon Harley
Linda Henry
Lillian Williams

Consultants

Sheila Gardner, Conference Coordinator
Alice Hayes, Conference Coordinator
Karen Kendricks, Reception Coordinator

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company, Michael Bateman

C & P Telephone Company Community Relations, Rose Wheeler

D. Parke Gibson International, Patsy Gibson

Johnson Products, Inc., George Johnson

Washington, D.C. Chamber of Commerce, Arthur Henderson

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PURPOSE AND HISTORY

The National Council of Negro Women, Inc., with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities is sponsoring the "First National Scholarly Research Conference on Black Women." This Conference, "Black Women: An Historical Perspective," coincides with the National Council of Negro Women's 39th National Convention and the formal opening of the National Archives for Black Women's History and the Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum.

The National Council of Negro Women is a non-profit organization which maintains a national office in Washington, D.C., a field office in New York City, and local council sections throughout the United States. Founded in 1935 by Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, today under the leadership of Dr. Dorothy I. Height, the organization represents a coalition of twenty-seven national black women's organizations. With an outreach to four million women, it is recognized as the major black women's organization in the United States. During the forty-four years of its existence the organization has developed an International Division and has sponsored a variety of domestic programs. The NCNW currently sponsors the following programs:

1. Arts Advocacy Program
2. Fannie Lou Hamer Day Care Center
3. Health Careers
4. International Division
5. Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum
6. National Archives for Black Women's History
7. National Immunization Program
8. Natural Resources Project
9. Operation Sisters United
10. Women's Center
11. Women's Opportunity Program
12. Youth Career Development Program

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES FOR BLACK WOMEN'S HISTORY

In 1939, the National Council of Negro Women established an Archives Committee to document the experiences of black women in America and to ensure that their history would not be lost, forgotten or ignored. Throughout the years, the NCNW maintained an extraordinary historical consciousness and cultural awareness. In 1977, the Council reactivated the National Archives for Black Women's History as part of the Mary McLeod Bethune Historical Development Project.

The National Archives for Black Women's History is the only repository in the United States solely devoted to documenting black women's history. The Archives collects, preserves and makes available for study the personal papers of individual black women, the records of black women's organizations and other materials which document the history of black women in the United States. By maintaining reference files on the location and status of documentation on black women in other repositories or in private hands, the Archives also facilitates research. Biographical files on individual black women and files of scholars doing research in black women's history provide additional information.

The core collection in the Archives consists of the records of the NCNW from its inception in 1935 through the early 1970s. Richly characterizing the many and varied concerns of the Council, the records document activities for civil rights, consumer issues, education, employment, health, housing and international relations. NCNW publications included in the collection are the Aframerican Woman's Journal, Telefact, Women United and the Black Woman's Voice. The records from 1935 to 1959 are open for research; later records are being processed.

The Archives will advise any individual or organization about the preservation of their papers or records. We invite those who know of the existence of materials on black women's history, unavailable for study, to contact the Archives.
THE MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE MEMORIAL MUSEUM

The Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum, an institution of the National Council of Negro Women, was developed for the purpose of preserving and interpreting documents and artifacts which illuminate and explain the historical experience of black women in America. The Museum disseminates information through permanent and travelling exhibitions, educational programs and publications.

The site of the Bethune Museum is "Council House," which served as the first national headquarters of the NCNW and the last official Washington, D.C. residence of Mary McLeod Bethune, the renown educator, public figure and founder of the NCNW. This historical structure, a Second Empire Style Victorian townhouse, was built in 1876 during the flurry of building which developed the Logan Circle area in the 1870s. Positioned adjacent to the corner of Logan Circle, "Council House" is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a part of the Logan Circle Historic District.

Programs of the Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum include topical exhibitions on the history of black women and the black community. A special exhibition, "The History of Black Women's Organizations, 1895-1955," will be a continuing feature of the exhibition program. The current exhibit, "Twenty 19th Century Black Women," will be on view through January, 1980.

The audio visual gallery, located on the second floor, offers slide and video presentations on selected topics on black women's history and the history of Afro-Americans. A lecture series on black women's history and related topics of black history will be available on a subscription basis.

Interpreting the history of black women in the United States is made difficult by the fact that many of the records, documents and artifacts which are critical to establishing the history of black people in America are not widely represented in public repositories. Often they are in the homes of private citizens. The Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum and the National Archives for Black Women's History are actively collecting these materials. We urge those who have items significant to black women's history to contact our staff.

MUSEUM - ARCHIVES STAFF

Director, Dr. Bettye C. Thomas
Bethune Historical Development Project

Museum Specialist, Mr. Guy McElroy
Mary McLeod Bethune Memorial Museum

Archivist, Ms. Linda Henry
National Archives for Black Women's History

1318 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 332-1233
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 12

9:00-10:15 a.m.  REGENCY BALLROOM

OPENING SESSION

PRESIDING:  BETTYE C. THOMAS, NCNW Director of Historical Development

WELCOME:  DOROTHY I. HEIGHT, President National Council of Negro Women

Problems and Priorities in Writing the History of Black Women
GERDA LERNER, Sarah Lawrence College

Only the Exceptional Need Apply: Trends in Afro-American Women's History
SHARON HARLEY, The University of Maryland

Black Women in American Culture: History and Myth
BOBBY AUSTIN, Editor - The Urban Review

10:30-12:00 noon

THE ROLE OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

CHAIR AND COMMENT:  MONROE FORDHAM, State University College at Buffalo

PAPERS:
The Status and Role of Black Women in the Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Churches, 1830-1920
BETTYE C. THOMAS, National Council of Negro Women

A Righteous Discontent: Black Women and the Baptist Church, 1870-1910
EVELYN BROOKS BARNETT, Harvard University

10:30-12:00 noon

TUDOR ROOM

BLACK WOMEN IN LITERATURE

CHAIR AND COMMENT:  DARWIN TURNER, University of Iowa

PAPERS:
Blues Women: Riffin Off a Tradition
ELEANOR TRAYLOR, Cornell University

Black Women Characters in Contemporary African and African-American Fiction
ANDREA BENTON RUSHING, Amherst College

10:30-12:00 noon

EMPIRE 4 ROOM

BLACK WOMEN IN THE FAMILY

CHAIR:  ROBERT HILL, National Urban League

PAPERS:
Urbanization Without Breakdown: Black Families in Buffalo, New York, 1905-1925
LILLIAN WILLIAMS, Howard University

Black Families in St. Helena Island
PATRICIA GUTHRIE, Mt. Holyoke College

COMMENT:  ANDREW BILLINGSLEY, Morgan State University
LUNCHEON SESSION

NCNW: THE EARLY YEARS

PANEL: RUTH A SYKES, NCNW Special Assistant to the Executive Offices

SUE BAILEY THURMAN, Co-Founder - The National Archives for Negro Women's History and First Editor - The Aframeri-
can Woman's Journal

JEANETTA WELCH BROWN, NCNW Executive Secretary, 1943-46, 1948-51

BLACK WOMEN AND MUSIC

CHAIR AND COMMENT: GEORGIA RYDER, Norfolk State College

PAPERS: Black Women and Protest Music

LOU EMMA HOLLOWAY, Tougaloo College

Black Women and the Blues

SAMUEL SHAPIRO, University of Notre Dame

BLACK WOMEN: DOCUMENTATION PROJECTS

CHAIR AND COMMENT: DOROTHY PORTER, Curator Emeritus

The Moorland Research Center, Howard University

PAPERS: The Women's History Sources Survey

ANDREA HINDING, University of Minnesota

The Schlesinger Library Black Women's Oral History Project

RUTH EDMONDS HILL, Schlesinger Library

The National Archives for Black Women's History

LINDA HENRY, National Archives for Black Women's History
3:30-5:00 p.m.       EMPIRE ROOM

BLACK WOMEN, RACISM AND THE AMERICAN LEGAL PROCESS

MODERATOR: RUBY MCZIER, Attorney at Law

PANEL: PAULI MURRAY, Virginia Theological Seminary
       DENISE CARTHY-BENNIA, Northeastern University
       MARY BERRY, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare

3:30-5:00 p.m.       TUDOR ROOM

BLACK WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

MODERATOR: ETHEL PAYNE, Consultant, Bureau of the Census

PANEL: MARCIA GILLESPIE, Editor, Essence
       ALICE DUNNIGAN, author and journalist
       FANNIE GRANTON, Associate Editor, Jet

7:30 p.m.           REGENCY BALLROOM

PRESIDENTS' BANQUET

THE NCNW IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE PRESIDENTS' VIEWS

MODERATOR: LORRAINE WILLIAMS, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Howard University

PANEL: DOROTHY B. FEREabee, President 1949-1953
       VIVIAN CARTER MASON, President 1953-1957
       DOROTHY I. HEIGHT, President 1958-Present
HOUSEHOLD WORKERS

SLIDE AND TAPE PRESENTATION: Household Workers U.S.A.

MODERATOR: DAVID KATZMAN, University of Kansas

PANEL: JO ANN ROBINSON, Morgan State University
       CAROLYN REED, National Committee on Household Employment

8:45-10:15 a.m. TUDOR ROOM

DISCOVERING, PRESERVING AND PUBLICIZING COMMUNITY HERITAGE THROUGH ORAL HISTORY

CHAIR AND COMMENT: ELEANOR RAMSAY, University of California - Berkeley

PAPERS:
- Discovering Local Black Oral History: Methods and Techniques
  GRACE JORDAN MCFADDEN, University of South Carolina
- Publicizing and Administering an Oral History Project
  VINCENT BROWNE, Howard University

10:30-12:00 noon TUDOR ROOM

THIRD WORLD BLACK WOMEN WRITERS

CHAIR AND COMMENT: CAROL TYSON, NCNW International Division

PAPERS:
- A Question of Power: Women Writers on Sexual Roles in Africa
  LLOYD W. BROWN, University of Southern California
- The Prophetic Vision in Soul Clap Hands and Sings
  L. LEE TALBERT, University of Southern California

8:45-10:15 a.m. EMPIRE II ROOM

BLACK WOMEN IN SLAVERY

CHAIR AND COMMENT: JOHN BLASSINGAME, Yale University

PAPERS:
- Black Females and Slave Narratives
  THAVOLIA JOHNSON, Purdue University
- Black Female Slaves: Midwest in Transition
  LILLIAN ANTHONY WELCH, George Mason University
10:30-12:00 noon

BLACK WOMEN: THE ARTS

MODERATOR: LESLIE KING HAMMOND, The Maryland Institute, College of Art

PANEL: MARY CAMPBELL, Studio Museum In Harlem
LOWERY SIMS, Metropolitan Museum of Art
LINDA BRYANT, Just Above Midtown Gallery

10:30-12:00 noon

BLACK WOMEN ORGANIZE (PART I)

CHAIR AND COMMENT: NORALEE FRANKEL, The George Washington University

PAPERS: Caring and Sharing Since World War I: The League of Women for Community Service, A Black Volunteer Organization in Boston
ENA FARLEY, SUNY at Brockport

Vespers and Vacant Lots: The Early Years of the St. Louis Phyllis Wheatley YWCA 1911-1918
JEANNE MONGOLD, University of Missouri - St. Louis

12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m. LUNCH BREAK

2:15-3:45 p.m.

TUDOR ROOM

BLACK WOMEN ORGANIZE (PART II)

CHAIR: SYLVIA LYONS RENDER, Library of Congress

PAPERS: The National Association of Colored Women: Black Women As Agents of Social Change
TULLIA HAMILTON, Ohio State University

The National Council of Negro Women
BETTYE J. GARDNER, Coppin State College

COMMENT: CYNTHIA NEVERDON MORTON, Coppin State College

2:15-3:45 p.m.

EMPIRE I ROOM

FOLKLORE

CHAIR AND COMMENT: BERNICE REAGON, Smithsonian Institution

PAPERS: Harriet Powers' Bible Quilt: A Historical Interpretation
GLADYS-MARIE FRY, University of Maryland, College Park

Images of Women in Black Folklore
DARYL DANCE, Virginia Commonwealth University
2:15-3:45 p.m.  

THE POLITICAL ROLE OF BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

CHAIR: DARLENE CLARK HINE, Purdue University

PAPERS:
- Afro-American Women Suffragists, 1880-1920  
  ROSALYN TERBORG-PENN, Morgan State University
- Woman's Suffrage and the Crusade Against Lynching: 1890-1920  
  BETTINA APTEKER, San Jose State College

COMMENT: HANES WALTON, Savannah State College

4:00-5:30 p.m.  

EMPIRE I ROOM

LORRAINE HANSBERRY: TO RECLAIM HER LEGACY TO ALL BLACK WOMEN

FILM: Lorraine Hansberry: The Black Experience in the Creation of Drama

PANEL: JEWELL HANDY GRESHAM, Nassau Community College

GIL NOBLE, Producer

This program features a prize winning movie "Lorraine Hansberry: The Black Experience in the Creation of Drama." Narrated by Claudia McNeill, the film includes rare footage of the playwright, Lorraine Hansberry. Featuring scenes from her life and highlights from her plays, it explores her artistic growth and philosophy in the context of her commitment to black liberation. Following the film there will be a discussion of the estimable range of the legacy, left by the late playwright to Americans, to black women and to the world of letters.
BETTINA APTEKER is an instructor in the Women's Studies Program at San Jose State University. She is the author of several books, including *The Morning Breaks: The Trial of Angela Davis*.

BOBBY AUSTIN is a sociologist and the Editor of the National Urban League Review. He is the author of *Population Policy and the Black Community* and *The Development of American Culture* (forthcoming).

EVELYN BROOKS BARNETT is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History, University of Rochester. She has presented papers at several scholarly conferences and is the author of "Nannie Burroughs and the Education of Black Women" in *The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images*.

MARY BERRY is Assistant Secretary for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Prior to her present position she was Provost of the Division of Behavior Sciences at the University of Maryland and Chancellor of the University of Colorado. Dr. Berry is the author of several articles and books including the most recent one, *Stability, Security and Continuity, Mr. Justice Burton and Decision Making in the Supreme Court, 1945-1958*.

ANDREW BILLINGSLEY is President and Professor of Sociology at Morgan State University. He is the author of *Black Families in White America*, and many other books and articles on the black family.

JOHN BLASSINGAME is Professor of History at Yale University. He has written several books on Afro-American History, including *The Slave Community* and *Black New Orleans*. He is currently editing the Frederick Douglass papers.

JEANETTA WELCH BROWN was Executive Secretary of the NCNW for the years 1943–46 and 1948–51. Among other accomplishments, in 1949 she organized the National Association of Fashion and Accessory Designers which later became an affiliate of the NCNW.

LLOYD BROWN is a Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California. He has done extensive research on Third World writers, and has edited *The Black Writer in Africa and America*, and *Bits of Ivory: Narrative Techniques in Jane Austen's Fiction*.

VINCENT BROWN was Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Howard University, and is presently Professor of Political Science. He served as Director of the Civil Rights Documentation Project, Washington, D.C. for several years.

LINDA BRYANT is Director/Owner of Just Above Midtown Gallery in New York City.

MARY CAMPBELL is Director of the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York. She has written several articles on the history of American art.

DENISE CARTY-BENNIA is presently Guest Lecturer at Mt. Holyoke College and Professor of Law at Northeastern University in Boston. Last year she was a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy at Howard University where she worked on a forthcoming book analyzing the issues in the Bakke Case. She also prepared the brief on behalf of Affirmative Action in the Brian Webber Case.
DARYL DANCE is Associate Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia. She has lectured and written extensively on black folklore and is the author of *Shuckin' and Jivin': Folklore from Contemporary Black Americans*.

ALICE DUNNIGAN, author and journalist, worked closely with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. She also served as an economist in the federal government. She is the author of *A Black Woman's Experience: from Schoolhouse to White House*.

ENA FARLEY is an Associate Professor in the Department of African and Afro-American Studies at the State University of New York at Brockport. She has published numerous articles on black women's history and is a contributor to *Urban Experiences of Afro-American Women* (forthcoming). She is also a contributing editor to *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*.

DOROTHY BOULDING FEREBEE was NCNW President from 1949 to 1953. A noted physician, she has also served in numerous civic and professional organizations.

MONROE FORDHAM is an Assistant Professor of History at State University College of New York at Buffalo. He is the author of *Major Themes in Northern Black Religious Thought 1800-1860*, and *A History of Bethel A.M.E. Church of Buffalo, New York, 1831-1977*. He is also the editor of *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*.

NORALEE FRANKEL is a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies at George Washington University. Her research focuses on black women in Virginia and Mississippi during Reconstruction.

GLADYS-MARIE FRY is Associate Professor of English at the University of Maryland. She is an eminent folklorist and author of *Night Riders*.

BETTYE J. GARDNER is Associate Professor of History at Coppin State College and has worked with the Bethune Historical Development Project of the NNCNW as Research Associate. She has presented papers at a number of scholarly conferences and has published in *The Journal of Negro History*, *The Negro History Bulletin* and *The Maryland Historical Magazine*.

MARCIA GILLESPIE is currently the Editor of Essence magazine. She has lectured and written extensively, and is active in the National Association of Media Women.

FANNIE GRANTON is a graduate of the Atlanta University School of Social Work. She is an Associate Editor at Johnson Publishing Company, a position she has held since 1956.

PATRICIA GUTHRIE is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Mt. Holyoke College. She has presented papers at several scholarly conferences based upon her research on black families on St. Helena's Island, South Carolina.

LESLIE KING HAMMOND is Dean of Graduate Studies at the Maryland Institute of Art and has a Ph.D. in art history from John Hopkins University. She lectures and is a consultant in the field of black women's visual art. She is the author of "The Impact of Roots on American Society," in *African Directions*.

TULLIA HAMILTON is Assistant Professor of History and Black Studies at Ohio State University. Her research in black women's history includes two studies of the National Association of Colored Women.
SHARON HARLEY teaches in the Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Maryland at College Park. She has done extensive research and writing in black women's history, is co-editor of The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images and editor of Urban Experiences of Afro-American Women (forthcoming).

DOROTHY I. HEIGHT is President of the National Council of Negro Women, a position she has held since 1958. She is the recipient of many honorary degrees and is a board member of numerous organizations and agencies.

LINDA HENRY is Archivist at the National Archives for Black Women's History, a project of the National Council of Negro Women. She was formerly an archivist at the Schlesinger Library and has taught women's history courses.

ROBERT HILL is Director of the National Urban League's Research Department. He has published Strength of Black Families in Formal Adoptions Among Black Families and Illusion of Black Progress: Widening Economic Gaps, and Abridging the Right to Vote.

RUTH EDMONDS HILL has extensive library experience and is Coordinator of the Black Women's Oral History Project at the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College. The project is producing tapes and transcripts of fifty prominent black women.

ANDREA HINDING is Co-director of the Women's History Sources Survey of the Social Welfare History Archives Center and is also the Director of Walter Library at the University of Minnesota.

DARLENE CLARK HINE is an Associate Professor of History at Purdue University. She is Publicity Director for the Association of Black Women Historians and her recently published work is Black History: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas.

LOU EMMA HOLLOWAY is currently Associate Professor of American and Afro-American History at Tougaloo College. Professor Holloway is presently involved in research on the politics of soul music during the 1960s.

JAMES HORTON is Assistant Professor of American Studies and History at The George Washington University and an historical consultant for the District of Columbia Curriculum Project. His book, Black Bostonian, is currently at press.

THAVOLIA JOHNSON is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History, Purdue University. Currently she is involved in research in the area of black women's history with special emphasis on the images of black females in slave narratives.

DAVID KATZMAN is Professor of History at the University of Kansas. He is author of Before the Ghetto: Black Detroit in the 19th Century, Seven Days a Week and co-author of Three Generations in 20th Century America.

FRANCES RICHARDSON KELLER teaches history at San Jose State University. She is the author of An American Crusade: The Life of Charles Waddell Chestnutt and editor of The Struggling Eve: New Studies in Women's History.
GERDA LERNER is Professor of History and co-director of the M.A. program in Women's Studies at Sarah Lawrence College. She is the author of several articles and books, one of which, Black Women in White America: A Documentary History, is the most well-known work in the field of black women's history.

DAVID LEWIS is Professor of History at the University of the District of Columbia. He has written numerous articles and books including King: A Critical Biography and Washington, D.C.: A Bicentennial History.

VIVIAN CARTER MASON served as the third National President of the NNCW from 1953 to 1957. A professional social worker, she has worked with many social welfare, community and professional organizations.

GRACE JORDAN MCFADDEN is a Professor of History at the University of South Carolina. She has worked on a number of local oral history projects, including the documentation of the role of Septima Poinsetta Clark, a pioneer black woman educator in South Carolina. She is the author of Reflections of a Black Woman.

RUBY MCZIER is a prominent attorney in Washington, D.C. She is President of Resources, Inc. and is in charge of the District of Columbia Zoning Commission.

M. SAMMYE MILLER is currently Humanist Administrator in the Division of Public Programs, National Endowment for the Humanities. He has also been Associate Professor and Chairman of the History Department at Bowie State College, and is the author of several articles on Mary Church Terrell which have appeared in The Journal of Negro History, The Negro History Bulletin and The Crisis.

JEANNE MONGOLD is Manager of University Publications at the University of Missouri at St. Louis. She lectures and writes on St. Louis black women's history and is a contributor to Urban Experiences of Afro-American Women and to the Notable American Women: A Social History (forthcoming).

CYNTHIA NEWERDON MORTON has a Ph.D. from Howard University and is an Associate Professor of History at Coppin State College. Her most recent publications are articles in The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images and The Impact of Christianity Upon Traditional Family Values.

THE REV. DR. PAULI MURRAY holds law, divinity, and honorary degrees, was a professor at Brandeis and Boston Universities, and is an ordained priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church. She has been a member of and consultant to government commissions. Her most recent publications include, Dark Testament and Other Poems, and The Constitution and Government of Ghana.

CLARENCE G. NEWSOME has served as Dean of Students at Duke University where he is currently Professor of Religious History. He is presently completing his dissertation on Mary McLeod Bethune.

ETHEL PAYNE is a free lance writer, lecturer, and commentator on "Matters of Opinion," WBBM TV, Chicago. She has traveled extensively in Africa as a reporter covering international affairs. She is currently a consultant for the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

DOROTHY PORTER is Curator Emeritus of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University. She has done extensive research on the black experience in Latin America and has also published numerous articles on black history.
ELEANOR MASON RAMSAY holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology and has a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California - Berkeley. She has extensive oral history experience including work with the Kinte Foundation Library Oral History Project of San Jose, California.

CAROL RANDOLPH holds a J.D. degree in law from Catholic University. She is the hostess of "Morning Break" and "Harambee," on WDVM TV, Washington, D.C.

BERNICE REAGON is Cultural Historian for the Smithsonian Institution, Division of Performing Arts. In this capacity, Dr. Reagon planned and coordinated several of the Folk Life Festivals presented by the Smithsonian.

CAROLYN REED is Executive Director of the National Committee on Household Employment. She is also a member of the New York City Commission on the Status of Women and a former member of the President's Advisory Committee on Women.

SYLVIA RENDER is a manuscript librarian at the Library of Congress specializing in Afro-American History and Culture. She has written several articles for The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress and has completed a biographical study of Charles W. Chestnutt.

JO ANN ROBINSON is Associate Professor of History at Morgan State University. She produced the slide tape, "Household Workers U.S.A." and teaches and writes in the field of women's history.

ANDREA BENTON RUSHING is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Afro-American Studies at Amherst College. She is the author of "Images of Black Women in African Poetry," in Sturdy Black Bridges, an annotated bibliography of images of black women in black literature.

GEORGIA RYDER is Professor and head of the Music Department of Norfolk State College. She has done extensive research on black women and music and has published articles in the Black Perspective in Music, and in the Negro History Bulletin.

SAMUEL SHAPIRO is Associate Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame. His many publications include Invisible Latin America and articles in the Journal of Negro History and the New England Quarterly.

LOWERY SIMS is Assistant Curator of Twentieth Century Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. She lectures and publishes in the fields of Afro-American art and women in art.

RUTH SYKES is the Special Assistant to the Executive Offices of the NCNW and has been with the Council since 1953. Her numerous awards include the Mary McLeod Bethune Centennial Award and the 25 Year Outstanding Award.

LEE TALBERT is a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California and is currently involved in research on Carribean women writers. She has published articles in Multi-Ethnic Literature in the U.S. and in Feminist Studies.

ROSALYN TERBORG-PENN is Associate Professor of History and Director of the Oral History Project at Morgan State University. She is co-editor of The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images and the author of several articles on black women's history and black history.

BETTYE C. THOMAS, Director of the Bethune Historical Development Project, administers the National Archives for Black Women's History and the Mary McLeod Bethune Museum and is a Special Consultant to the National Endowment for the Humanities. She has taught in colleges and universities, presented papers at scholarly conferences and published articles in women's history and Afro-American history. She is the author of "The History of Black Women in Maryland, 1700-1920" in The History of Women in Maryland (forthcoming).
SUE BAILEY THURMAN served on the first NCNW Archives Committee and was founder and first editor of the Aframerican Woman's Journal.

ELEANOR TRAYLOR is visiting professor in Afro-American Literature at Cornell University. She has published articles on black theatre and literature and is co-author of *The Dream Awake: A Multi-Media Production*. A book on Richard Wright is forthcoming.

DARWIN TURNER is Professor of English and Chairman of Afro-American Studies at the University of Iowa. A noted scholar in the field of black literature, he has written and edited seventeen books, numerous articles, poems and reviews, and has directed the Institute for Afro-American Culture for the past several years.

CAROL TYSON holds a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from Harvard University and is a consultant with the International Division of the National Council of Negro Women. She has published several articles on education, women and cultural anthropology.

HANES WALTON is Professor of Political Science at Savannah State College and is the author of numerous books and articles on blacks and politics.

LILLIAN ANTHONY WELCH has an Ed.D. from the University of Massachusetts - Amherst and is currently Director of the Office of Minority Affairs and Associate Professor at George Mason University. She has published ten articles, one short story and six visual publications with a focus on African and Afro-American women.

LILLIAN WILLIAMS is Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Howard University and is associate editor of *Afro-Americans in New York Life and History*. She is also the author of "To Elevate the Race: The Michigan Avenue Y.M.C.A., 1923-1940" in *New Perspectives on Black Educational History*.

LORRAINE WILLIAMS is Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of History at Howard University. She has published widely in the field of Afro-American History and is the former editor of *The Journal of Negro History*. 
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH
**FEBRUARY**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

A special listing for Black History Month.

- **5th**: Black Cowboys: Lessons and Determination
- **6th**: The Daily Defender: Chicago's First Black Daily Newspaper, panel discussion
- **7th**: NAACP Installed 1969
- **8th**: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **9th**: Black History Month Art Show, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Children's Museum, 1930 West Adams St., Chicago, Illinois
- **11th**: Black History Month Art Show, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Children's Museum, 1930 West Adams St., Chicago, Illinois
- **26th**: Open House: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Children's Museum, 1930 West Adams St., Chicago, Illinois

**THEORICAL EVENTS**

- **6th**: WBAI NEWS
- **9th**: FIRST WEDNESDAY
  - **10th**: EVENING MUSIC: Scapin from the Appleman Jazz Band
  - **11th**: NEWSROOM BROADCAST: 12:15 CARRIAGE WAVE: Sidney Smith, regular guy, talks about life, liberty and the pursuit of dinner.
- **3rd**: MESSAGES: Science, Fantasy, Art, and Technology: With Isaac Jackson
- **5th**: MUSIC AT DAWN: No side to Fall In. With Sharon Martin
- **6th**: MORNINGS: Gary Gold
- **7th**: MORNINGS: Gary Gold
- **11th**: HARDWORK: Live radio with Mike Fedor
- **9th**: MORNINGS: With the Laughing Cavalier
- **11th**: COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD
- **11th**: BREAD AND ROSES: Survival Notes with Alex Paul
- **12th**: MORNING LIVING: Health and nutrition issues with Gary Gold
- **19th**: RE-EDUCATION CAMP: Comedy with Nearly Normal and Doug Farrell
- **20th**: PASSING THROUGH: Live radio with Richard Bart
- **23rd**: TOP JOB: Radio news with Richard Bart

**THE WEEKLY NEWS**

- **6th**: WBAI NEWS: A report of the day's news
- **7th**: HELL NO! A draft update
- **7th**: ADDENDA: Book reviews from the Drama and Literature Department
- **7th**: THE WEEKLY REPORT FROM INTERGY: An internationally syndicated newsletter produced by the Intercom Board of Directors
- **8th**: LESBIAN IMAGES: With Diane Reid and Gladys Horon
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Astraea National Lesbian Action Foundation
in cooperation with
Griot Circle (Gay Reunion in our Time),
Pride Senior Network,
SAGE (Senior Action in a Gay Environment),
and SAGE/Queens presents

The New York City Premiere of
Living With Pride:
Ruth Ellis @100
This twenty-six card postcard set is coordinated by Sona Chambers and edited by Gail Cohee and Leslie Lewis. Twenty writers and scholars in African American and Women studies prepared the captions. Many unpublished photographs, like this one of A'leila Walker, enhance this beautiful portfolio book which retails for $9.95 (packaged like our Women in Social Protest series).

Other featured women include Josephine Baker, Nella Larsen, Augusta Sage and Valaida Snow. The cards and book cover are designed by Sharon Sklar, who has won many awards for her book and cover designs.
Dear Friends and Customers,

We could not resist writing to you with important news updates.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE SERIES

True to our goal we published the postcard series *Sisters of the Harlem Renaissance: The Found Generation 1920-1932* (see reverse for details). The series was funded in part by individual donations as well as loans from the members of the Network of Career Women in Bloomington, IN. Your enthusiasm for us to complete this project has been tremendous.

Thank you again for your warm and generous support over the years. We wish you all a season of growth, and the dawning of peace.

**Bread & Roses,**
- HV Press staff
- Sona Chambers, Jocelyn Cohen, Donna Fay Reeves, Toba Cohen, Vicky Young and Jenny Robertson
- Board of Directors
- Celeste West, Kim Marshall, Claudia Gortman, Abby Zimberg, Julie Dobkin and Jocelyn Cohen

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**Sisters of the Harlem Renaissance:**
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Write for ordering information or stop in the stores!
by Elizabeth Ferris

Rent parties, speakeasies, drag balls, buffet flats—been to one lately? Well, in Harlem in the 20s, these events were vital elements in the social lives of the gay subculture.

On April 21st at S.A.G.E. (Senior Action in a Gay Environment) in the new Lesbian and Gay Community Center at 208 West 13th St., Eric Garber treated an audience of over 100 to his 90-minute slide show and commentary—T'aint Nobody's Business—on this fascinating, colorful period in our history. The program was the first of a series of three forums to be held at S.A.G.E. funded by the New York Council for the Humanities.

Eric Garber, a full-time librarian, is one of the founding members of the Lesbian and Gay History Project in San Francisco. He first began looking into gay life in Harlem as part of the history project and was amazed at how much material was available. "The more I looked, the more avenues of research became available to me," he said. The result of his research was T'aint Nobody's Business, a program he has been doing for 2 or 3 years.

Harlem in the 20s supported a flourishing gay community with its own social institutions, language ("The Life" and "The People" were terms used by gay people to describe themselves), and literature. It was an exciting time—a Mecca for blacks from all over the country, rich and poor alike.

Mabel Hampton, for example—one of the founding mothers of the Lesbian Herstory Archives—now in her 80s and still going strong, ran away from home when she was a teenager. She eventually moved to Harlem and got a dancing job at a local theatre. "We used to go to parties every other night," she told Garber.

This was Prohibition, and one of the more popular social institutions in Harlem was the speakeasy—places like the "Little Savoy" and "Sugarcanes" where bootleg liquor, entertainment and dancing abounded. Garber tells of one speakeasy on Seventh Avenue and 127th Street where one could meet "rough trade"—men who fucking better than truckdrivers and swished better than Moe West!

Today's bars and disco have even more in comparison to another popular event of the 20s—the drag ball. Part of the homosexual underground for centuries, in Harlem these lavish formal affairs were attended by thousands. A large percentage of those attending were not gay, but heterosexuals, coming out of curiosity to watch the fun, the highlight of which was the beauty contest—the election of the "Queen of the Ball.

Looking at the photographs and listening to Garber's commentary, it's easy to long for such exciting times—the gaiety, the romance, the clandestine parties and meetings, yet as we glamorize the 20s, we may forget that homosexuality was still very much illegal then. If the gay subculture was just that—a subculture invisible to those unconnected to it—it was hidden because it had to be. Gay Liberation was 50 years away. Outside the setting of private parties and balls, there were few places to meet. A whole underground network existed in the subway rest rooms, which became known as rendezvous places for gay men. Lesbians had even less space to call their own.

Police payoffs—which created "Free zones" for gays—were necessary and taken for granted. Organizers of the drag balls, for example, would obtain a police permit making the building and its inhabitants legal for the evening. Rent parties were common money raising affairs for those risking eviction. Invitations were distributed to strangers in the street and, after a night of dancing, drinking, partying, by making the landlord could be paid.

The press loved to play up the occasional incident or tragedy, such as the time in 1926 when a woman at a party cut another woman's throat in a jealous rage over another woman. The papers loved it!

The most opportune of the Buffet Flats—another type of social gathering—were given by Miss Ella Walker, the daughter of a wealthy black family who spent most of her inheritance throwing lavish parties.

Many artistic circles came together at Miss Walker's home, writers, artists and creative minds from both the homosexual and heterosexual worlds. Mabel Hampton recalls walking into one such party only to be quite taken aback at the sight of 14 or 15 people lounging around the room stark naked and demonstrating considerable affection.

All of Harlem was flourishing in the 20s as migration from the Midwest and other parts of the country were helping it become the largest black community in America. Black participation in the war effort had given blacks a sense of involvement, and a "New Negro" was emerging. White people, too, began to find a refuge in Harlem, especially valuing the anonymity it offered to lesbians and gay men, and their participation in the community helped create a collective consciousness.

Less easy to explain was the white heterosexual migration that began to take place, as people went up in search of excitement. And in Harlem they could find it—illegal liquor was easy to come by, and the dancing clubs were the best.

It was the heyday of the Cotton Club and other hot spots such as Connie's Inn and the Cotton Club.

In 1924, while photographer and writer Bert Van Vechten became entranced with Harlem—"Almost an addiction," as he was to describe it, and his parties were regularly reported in the press. In 1926 Van Vechten, an early supporter of the NAACP, wrote his notoriously entitled novel, Nigger Heaven, which outraged most of Harlem. It became a best-seller, but demonstrated once more to the black population the insensitivity of white people, even those supposedly lacking such racial prejudices.

Along with the emergence of Freud and his awareness of homosexuality, gay people, too, became more aware of others. Popular novels such as The Well of Loneliness and Until the Day Breaks dealt with homosexuality, and women discovered they were not alone.

Many famous black women singers of the day reigned over Harlem nightclubs—Edna Thomas, Bessie Smith, Josephine Baker. Some were lesbians, like Gladys Bentley who started her career playing the piano at rent parties and eventually became the featured entertainer at the Cotton Club, an after-hours club. Famous for wearing male attire, Gladys married her girlfriend in the 1900s.

The crash of 1929 was the beginning of the end of the optimistic spirit of the thriving gay subculture in Harlem. Survivors like Mabel Hampton, poet and artist Bruce Nugent, still painting in Hoboken, are happily still with us. And thanks to Eric Garber and his research, T'aint Nobody's Business helped bring this fascinating era to life.

Watch for the next two forums in this series, Gay Past, Gay Present, on May 20 at S.A.G.E.: Radical Feminists of Heterodoxy, Greenwich Village, 1912-1940 is a presentation chronicking the Heterodoxy Club and its many famous members, "unorthodox women" who did things and did them openly.

And on June 10: She Even Chewed Tobacco, a 40-minute slide presentation documenting lesbian lifestyles at the turn of the century, and focusing on cross dressing as a means by which women—both heterosexual and homosexual—could gain privileges such as work and travel usually reserved for men.

For more information call 741-2247.
PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIARY:

Gloria T. Hull is a Black feminist academic, critic and writer. Her work has been published widely, including The Diary of Alice Dunbar-Nelson, which was featured in this issue. Her book, "Give Us Each Day," is a collection of essays and reflections on her life and work. Hull is known for her insightful and erudite analyses of African American literature and culture.

June: First of all, could you tell me the story of how you came upon the true story of material about Alice Dunbar-Nelson?

Gloria: All right. My discovery of the Alice Dunbar-Nelson materials is one of those stories which illustrates the vagaries, the coincidences, the luck that is involved in recovering and writing about women's, Black women's, history. I was teaching a course in Afro-American literature. The class and I were studying Paul Laurence Dunbar's dialect poems. One of the students in the class, a young Black woman, walked up to me at the end of a session and said, "Very off-handedly, I know where there's a lot of stuff about Dunbar-Nelson. It turned out that not only was there a lot of stuff about Dunbar-Nelson, there was an incredible amount of material about Alice, his wife, that has not been published or even brought out.

I did not immediately pick up on this cue. Then I happened to be on a local television program talking about Alice when Ms. Pauline Young, who is Alice's surviving niece, saw the program, called the producer, said, "Who is this woman talking about my aunt?" and found that the producer got the two of us together.

It was after that I began to realize that something incredibly rich cultural treasure did indeed exist at the small crowded cottage of Mallory Creek. Ms. Young and I gradually felt each other out. She became comfortable enough to tell me simply to explore what was there.

She had the consciousness to save all that material, and a general sense of its worth, but did not really know how much was there, or its particular relevance. I came upon memoirs, diaries, unpublished manuscripts, poems, scrapbooks - all related to Dunbar-Nelson. The diary interested me immediately, but I was not tempted to focus on it as a project until the Modern Language Association. I had to go to a share information which I had picked up rather randomly from the diary.

There was a woman there who was initiating an American women's diary series, who immediately picked up on this as a possibility for her series and encouraged me to edit the papers. I did not initially decide to do this because it was a formidable task. This diary is about 7,000 pages, of various size sheets and scraps of paper, written in hand, hard - but essentially I said yes.

Part of my engagement in this enterprise was the desire to figure out how I could see with Dunbar-Nelson, to give to her, in my lifetime, some of the recognition that she had not yet been able to garner in hers. One real tricky thing for me was when the manuscript was being sent around to various publishing houses, learning some of the same woman with that title as a joke, accepting it, and knowing in my heart that somebody should accept this work which had to much merit.

accessibility

It is very, very important that this book be widely accessible. I hope it will come out in paperback. One of my concerns is that any number of people have told me they wish they could buy a copy of the book, but it must not have been easy trying to get the publisher to price it lower, but they have a very real business to balance. In terms of distribution, I've gotten the publisher to do things they don't do routinely, such as doing flyers for conferences and sending mailings to women's community bookstores.

shading in the blanks

Because there is a kind of charism about Dunbar-Nelson and the book that begins with the cover, this picture of a stylish, imposing, confident, rather striking-looking woman with hat tilted at an jaunty angle and her fur-fake fur-coat. Then once you get into knowing who she is, she is very important to us.

First of all, she helps us to complete our sense of history and what it meant to be a woman of her race at the time she lived. The work that many of us are engaged in is actually a kind of reconstructing of the history and myth of the past, filling in the history which it blanking in blank areas. She is somebody we need to plug into, somebody we can not know or what we thought we knew. The areas in which we plug her in are various. She was a poet, she was a journalist and a diarist. She was a social and racial activist. She was a fantastic artist. She was a teacher. She was a platform speaker. She worked in a girl's Juvenile correction center. She was an executive secretary for a national organization devoted to international peace and racial justice. She was very active in the Women's Club movement. If we are looking at any of those areas, here is another woman we need to account for when we theorize and when we talk.

That is the basic informational read for knowing her. Part of all that is her public aspect. Her other real appeal comes from the intimate, very personal level of what we learn. It is on that level that she resonates for contemporary women.

all her selves

Dunbar-Nelson was trying very hard to be all of the selves that she was in context which did not encourage that, which was in fact inequitable and hostile to it. Because of her drive, her determination to be her own complete person, we today can relate intimately to her. Her multifarious activities include struggling with the age-old problem of making a life in the world and a life at home. Many passages in the diary show us Dunbar-Nelson jumping on and off trains, commuting to jobs, having to be concerned with her ailing mother, having to fix dinner for herself and the rest of her family. Juggling that kind of work inside and outside the home, does it change? That's the thing - you can start to get disheartened by how much things stay the same. But the issues, and how we address them are progressing.

The inner revelations include introspective questioning and analysis of herself as a woman and as a person - the kind of things you ask yourself in the deep recesses of your mind in the deep of night, what are you doing in the world. It is interesting to see that slice of a woman whose public facade was so confident. And yet beyond that we can see she was plagued by all the self-doubts we are heir to. We see her struggles as well as the triumphs. There is what I call the voyeuristic aspect of this. I say it as a joke sometimes that I think I'm attracted to doing archival work because of the original source, looking at people's letters, diaries, and earthings out of scraps of papers that they did not put in the trash can, but threw in a folder. Maybe they are turning in their graves, wishing they had thrown them in the trash, although I doubt it because one of my strong senses is that these women who kept the scraps did so in the hope that somebody like myself would pick them up and reconstuct them.

I get the sense that Dunbar-Nelson was writing both for herself and for some audience. You can see she was doing this diary for very personal purposes, as a place to sort out her thinking, as a place to vent, feelings and emotions she could not in any other way, as an individual record of her daily comings and goings and public activities. And there are occasions when she goes back to re-read it. But as she was doing this, she was leaving a record of her life for posterity. She was a woman who had a great sense of personal destiny. Even though she did not always see it reflected in her contemporary life, I think she always knew that what she was doing was significant.
Finding Black Women's History

and she was setting that down.

romantic friendships

June: You mentioned that she had a 'complete' life, and that now you were concerned to express some aspects of her life that some other people would have preferred to conceal. And now you are thinking particularly of your discoveries. This had romantic friendships with other women—and that Ms. Young was somewhat reluctant to have that come out.

Gloria: Ms. Young was ambivalent and reluctant from first to last about that issue. Discovering that Dunbar-Nelson had romantic friendships with women was not the only skeleton, so to speak, in the closet. I discussed this particular story with her. And revelation [sic] tricks. In a hurry I said, to my surprise, that she had had a second husband that nobody had ever heard about. As I worked with her, her diary, revelations popped up. I would say to Ms. Young: 'Did you know this?' Or 'Did you know that?' When I got to the year in the diary which made it explicit to me that Dunbar-Nelson did indeed have a romantic attraction to women, and that she acted on these feelings, I asked Ms. Young did she know that in the same way. She said 'No, I didn't.'

and almost instantly her next response was 'Oh, but we don't have to leave that in.' Her feeling was that she was protecting her aunt. And that, that was what her aunt did, but by the time it gets published in the 1980s we can't just cut that part out. We're cutting out some of the rest of it.

That began a long process between us in which Ms. Young expressed her feelings that it just was not necessary to put that in. Of course, what she was doing was coming from her perspective. She was born in 1900, which means that she's an 80-year-old Black woman of a completely different generation—generation which privately and even publicly conceals that life behind scenes where women can be much different from the public persona, but which feels it's better to keep that kind of private stuff private and maintain a more acceptable facade. Of course, for somebody like her knowing her aunt had lesbian relationships is one of the noisiest and messiest of skeletons that could rattle around in her family closet.

So she would express her feelings from that perspective. At the same time I want to express my feelings. I'm telling her that this does not in any way diminish her aunt's character or detract from her work. It will not cause people to dismiss her. And that it is indeed just one aspect of her aunt's whole life and achievement—and that it should be there for the complete picture.

'I'm coming from the position of being the scholar and the writer and researcher who knows that we cannot continue to dismiss our own past and our past by presenting expurgated versions of our lives.'

June: I want to talk about that relationship because I talked about how the two of us had become quite close.

Gloria: I think that the fact that Pauline and I were both Black women working to give her aunt, another Black woman, her due was a factor in the process. There's a part of it about the closeness of my identification with Dunbar-Nelson— and the closeness of my identification with Pauline, who I know as an older aunt and another mother. All of these knowing aspects of our identity were of course there—which is not to say that somebody, a woman, somebody who was not Black could not eventually do that work, but perhaps they would have had to prove more to Ms. Young. Perhaps Black women have had more barriers in their own understandings and perceptions before they could really get close to some of the things Dunbar-Nelson was doing.

To simply answer your question I do think there was a kind of bonding that occurred—which made our estrangement all the more painful to me.

Alice Dunbar-Nelson, late 1920s or early 1930s, a few years before her death in 1932.

mirror?

June: In your article in But Some Of Us Are Brave you talked about almost getting a mirror between yourself and Alice—sometimes being almost shocked or frightened at how close you felt. Gloria: I'm not really sure how I feel about this lady. There are times when I feel very mirrored, very positively reflected in her, and just like her a lot. And then there are times when I say to myself if this woman was living today and I probably wouldn't give each other the time of day unless we happened to be sitting on the same platform.

It's not really an uncommon love-hate relationship. Women who do research on other women talk about it all the time. The real ambivalences— the real identification you feel with your subject.

There are of course many ways in which I see myself reflected in her. And many ways in which she is a completely different woman from myself. But she's still someone whom I understand because of who we both are.

finding each other

June: We'd like to know more about your work and experiences as a Black woman academic. Could you talk about the project that developed from working on Brave?

Gloria: I started to teach and be an academic in 1971, floundered around for 3 or 4 years, then after getting involved in Afro-American literature I went in the direction of looking at Black women writers, especially Black women poets of the Harlem Renaissance. As I got more into these areas I began to have a renewed joy in being an academic and to really feel that my work should consist of. There was almost a link between who I was and what I did through the bridge of doing research on Black women writers. I also write poetry so that was another link.

I began doing research on Black women poets and writers— not really realizing that I was at the beginning stage of a movement. At the same time, Black women academics and non-academics in all sorts of places all over the country were also starting to do similar kinds of things in their fields, based on their needs, their situations.

"Researching Alice Dunbar-Nelson: A Personal and Literary Perspective" in All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some Of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies ed. Gloria I. Holt, Patricia Bell Scott and Barbara Smith.
Black Women's History from page 21

predominantly Black colleges in the South, which were not loca-
ted. That project was aimed to expand Black Women's Studies to the people, female students, to the women benefit from it. It wasn't always easy to do that because we came from different frameworks and held certain assumptions and because we were involved with the women's movement and with the women's Studies movement in a Northern context, so at some point we had to go back and see where all were and start from there.

June: You were involved in another project at Wellesley last year?

Gloria: Yes. I was an Individual grant where I did some reading and thinking about ways to talk about literature by U.S. women of color. One of the things that we have been concerned about from even the inception of English at the Motion of Third World Women's Studies—

a way of conceptualizing what we were doing so that it included women of color as well as Black women. If it was a year to do so. So I tried to do this just with the discipline of literature.

I spent the time in Wellesley reading, having to educate myself. I've learned so much and I know that I was just a tiny pin-point on what can be done.

The anthologies product was a mono-

Jamaica

Role: How are you in Jamaica?

Gloria: Yes, officially I'm a Fulbright Senior Lecturer to the Department of English at the University of the West Indies in King-
sport, Jamaica. I went there to help teach the course in Afro-
American literature and a Master's Seminar called 'The Image of the

Problem of the Negro in Studio Art.'

Jamaica

June: You are in Jamaica?

Gloria: Yes, officially I'm a Fulbright Senior Lecturer to the Department of English at the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica. I went there to help teach the course in Afro-American literature and a Master's Seminar called 'The Image of the

Women Organizing

June: Could you tell us something about the ways that women are organizing in Jamaica?

Gloria: There are some really great things happening in particular Jamaican women while I'm there, in fact, on the lectures on West Indian literature and in Jamaica, I made sure to meet as many of the Jamaican women poets and writers as possible.

June: How do you feel about Black American women in Jamaica?

Gloria: There's a common bond between the women and the difference that I think the bonds and the differences are in an uneasy balance. There's a great deal of respect for me and how I represent having made it in this way--and for women--and for me--

but there are cultural differences and they do emerge in very subtle and very sometimes subtle. One of the good things about my position there is that I am visiting--and I am what they call 'alien.' I'm able to be effective in a way as they expect me to come there and to teach these 'radical American Foreign' things. But there's also a way in which I am like them. I'm careful to say things in ways in which they will hear them--so it's us feeling our way with each other, but it's a very pleasurable and profitable process.

I think the Jamaican society is a very complicated and complex one and when we find our way, making a community for myself there is some self-analysis.}

Interviewer: Gloria F. Reilly

Female in Literature. The experience has forced me to really focus on teaching in a way that I had not in a number of years—and that has been to both hard work and very rewarding.

The Image of the Woman's class has been particularly challenging because while the students are very sharp, very well-informed about literature in general and even from a solid background in English literature and criticism, they aren't necessarily immediately responsive to a feminist perspective.

I've worked a lot to help them develop a perspective toward literature that will help them to understand the process of trying to get published at the university, as an all-inclusive course, a class on Caribbean Women. That would be from an interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary perspective—which in terms of our chronology here would put them at about where we were when we were at the stage of women in various disciplines at a university girls' school. Then, if it is right, we'll teach this course on literature, you talk about the novel, 'The House of the Spirits.' There are also some pretty amazing grassroots things going on.

Dutiful Daughters—telling their stories


I like to read about "average" women's lives. I want to hear from them what caused their problems and gave them joy. And this is what Dutiful Daughters is. Women telling the story of their lives and how they are determined to defend or sanctify, people, places, and events from the British Isles, from all walks of life except that none are famous. Several were active in politics and one went to the Socialist Sunday School while growing up in Scotland. Yes, I'm interested in their fellow workers. Having to defend this way, how if we could create something like this for the next generation.

I read interviews with older women but frequently feel that between the interviewers, the editor and the respondent, a warm glow is brushed on the good moments and a harsh light and maybe the sounds of dogs, growing accompany the bad times. Yet in Dutiful Daughters, there is no romanticizing or drama-

tizing. It's everyday problems that these women remember—washing the dishes by hand, living in-line, fighting against parents, leaving school at 14 to help support their families.

The editors being good political scientists have asked questions about political situations which affected their lives. They also asked about parents, their sexuality and working situations. In reading about women's lives one can react with frustration when those whose experiences had the benefit of feminism or one can react more positively for those excepted or even taken care of each other. This is why I'm studying women by calling us about their lives have provided an accurate view of the relationship of Black women to the American society, and the experience of Black women in the world. I thoroughly enjoyed this book and am hoping feminists in every country will want to do their own version.
From An Autobiography:

FIRST LOVE AND OTHER SORROWS

by Anita Cornwell

Anita Cornwell, a Philadelphia-based free lance writer, has had work published in NEGRO DIGEST, LIBERATOR, WOMEN: A JOURNAL OF LIBERATION, THE LAUGHS and the Los Angeles FREE PRESS. She is currently working on her sixth novel.

She came from Alabama. A good place to be away from. Her name was Norma Saddleworth, and we met at a small gay party in West Philadelphia where most of the women were strangers to me. Norma came into the room, an outlaw in a gathering of outcasts. Her eyes were the eyes of a poet; her face was cast in sullen bronze. I observed her from a corner of my right eye as I sat on the couch holding my highball.

We were introduced, finally, by our hostess, Julia Cranshaw, a tall plump woman who had been gay for twenty years but looked as though joy had seldom crossed her path.

"Who'd you come with?" Norma asked me as soon as Julia had moved away from us. Her question surprised me. And also, for some reason, it made me angry. So I sat back down on the couch without answering her.

She plopped down beside me. "So who'd you come with?" she asked again.

Her manner and tone of voice seemed to push me into a corner the way so many men had once tried to do. And since I didn't like being pushed into corners by anyone, but was too reluctant to say so, I remained silent.

"So all right. Don't tell me then," Norma finally said, then hopped up from the couch. "I can't stand stuck-up women!" she declared in a low but furious voice as she stomped out toward the dining room where the chow was being got together.

Then Julia came back over to me and sat down where Norma had just vacated. "Did Norma say something smart to you, Neet?" she asked, laying her soft plump hand on my shoulder.

"Don't pay her much attention. She acts had a lot of times, but she's okay..." "Everything's all right, Julia," I said, giving my very best party smile.

Then a loud voice called from the dining room, "Julia!"

Julia bounced up from the couch as though she were equipped with automatic coils. The loud voice was Norma's and that pissed me off again, but I kept the stiff smile on my face.

"I'll be back in a minute, Neet," Julia said then hurried back toward the dining room.

After Julia departed, I just sat there, a stranger fish in stranger waters. Then, on the other side of the room, I noticed two young women in slacks and denim shirts joshing with two other young women in frilly dresses. Finally, one of the women in slacks said to the other two, "Oh, go on out and fix our plates..."

Then she turned and said to the room at large, "You know, if they ain't hungry," she began, nodding toward The two in dresses, "then we don't eat because they won't cook nothing!"

I turned away from them, afraid they might see the anger in my heart. How dare they try to turn women into servants? What point in being gay if you were still chained to the kitchen?

Then someone touched my shoulder. I looked 'round to see Trudy Barnes, one of the few women I already knew, standing nearby. "Say, Neet, you ready to eat?" she asked. "I'll give you a lift home. I gotta work tomorrow and I'm leaving early..."

I looked at my watch. Twelve-fifteen. The night hadn't even begun. But the party was a drag. Yet—what would I do at home at twelve-thirty on a Friday night?

Then, just as I was about to tell Trudy, no thanks, I would take a cab later, I saw Norma Saddleworth standing in the doorway. Was she smirking at me, smiling? Someone tapped her shoulder and she turned away, laughing, very much a part of things.

"Well, Neet?" Trudy asked quietly.
"Yeah, sure, Trudy, I'm ready to leave when you are," I said, and I smiled my party smile and pretty soon even I believed I was ready to go home and stare at those silent walls.

Several months later.

Another party. Down in South Philly where I used to live when I was pursuing my higher learning and living on anxiety and ice cubes. Norma walked in with two other women. Her poet's eyes were fixed on Paradise, but she sniffed the air like a discontented wolf.

Strange, those poetic eyes. And that stevedore's voice.

The couple, two women who had lived together since the first ice age, greeted me enthusiastically. Norma stared at me as I huddled in my corner. In two quick strides she was beside me, plopping down on the sofa.

"Who'd you come with?" she asked me in her best stevedore's tone.

I was furious. Amused too. Finally I burst out laughing.

She laughed too. Thus we became friends.

We danced together. She nimbly and expertly, demonstrating all of the latest steps. I hadn't even heard of the latest steps, let alone seen them. But I danced the way the music said to. And suddenly I was feeling good. I forgot home and those silent rooms that muffled my solitary footsteps.

Around midnight, slightly high, we sat on the sofa again.

"You used to live with Alda James, didn't you?" Norma asked suddenly. "She says you were something else to live with..."

"Oh, really?" I replied. How did Norma know Alda? Why did people live in circles, talking over one another like jackleg preachers mumbling over soda crackers and grape juice? "Did Alda tell you what a joy she was to live with?" I asked finally.

A reluctant grin spread across Norma's face. Then she declared, "Alda said you were a smarty-pants...",

I realized then that Norma was trying to get under my skin, so I didn't bother to reply.

"Why do you look so mad all the time?" Norma then asked, nudging me with her elbow.

"You sound mad all the time," I said. "So what's the difference?"

"Well, that's just the way I sound," Norma replied, but not in her usual belligerent tone. And I was rather pleased to see she had a different side. But I didn't let her see that I was pleased.

"So who do you live with now?" Norma asked and nudged me again as if to assist my ear drums.

"You ask more questions than the Gallup Poll," I declared.

She laughed, but she didn't lose the drift.

"Now come on, tell me who you live with now."

"The same person I came with--"

"Who's that?" she exclaimed in a loud voice, and several women turned to stare at us.

"You're too newy," I said in a low tone.

"I'm not going to tell you anything else about me until I learn something about you. Now, whom do you live with?"

"Whom?" she repeated. Then she laughed and declared, "I stay with me."

I knew she was fabricating by the tone of her voice. "That's not what Julia says," I replied, improvising on the spur of the moment.

Norma's head shot up. "What did Julia tell you? Nothing!" she exclaimed, greatly agitated. "There's nothing Julia can tell you about me. Nobody knows my business but me!"

I didn't say anything, but I knew then she had a skeleton or two in the trunk somewhere. So I kept looking at her, waiting for her to level with me.

"So what you keep looking at me for?" she asked in that half-artificial tone. "You're the one who's got bats in the head. Alda said you nearly drove her crazy!"

I laughed, but suddenly stopped as I remembered that someone had once told me Alda, my ex-lover, had spent six months in a hospital for nervous disorders. How odd that I hadn't remembered that when Alda and I were living together.

"So what's so funny?" Norma asked in a voice that was still too high.

I shook my head, then stood up. "Nothing is funny. I think I'm going home. I didn't get much sleep last night. I have insomnia sometimes--"

"That's cause you think too much," Norma declared. Then up she hopped. "I'm going too. This party stinks!"

We went home to my apartment.

"How come you have such a big place if you live alone?" Norma asked as she stood in the middle of my living room, her large, owlish eyes sweeping all corners of the universe at once. "It's only a one-bedroom apartment. The place looks large because it's so nice and roomy," I said.

She grunted, then let her eyes come to rest on me where I stood near the phonograph. "You getting ready to play that thing?" she inquired in her best stevedore's tone.

"Yes, of course. Don't you want to hear some records?"

She shrugged. "I want some beer! You got any beer?" she asked, her voice booming in quick jerks. And she hooked her head to one side as she spoke, staring at me as though I were on the witness stand.

I shook my head. "I seldom buy beer. I don't like it," I confessed, confirming her worst suspicions.

"What? You're crazy. Everybody likes beer!" she declared.

I laughed, the asked, "Did you ever hear of rats in the beer vats...?"

"What rats in what beer vats?" she demanded, looking around the room to see if they were advancing toward her.

I only smiled then started looking through the records.

"What're you going to play?" Norma asked, suddenly at my side, breathing against my shoulder.

"You're newy as hell," I complained warily to hide my amusement.

"Play this," she requested, latching on to one of my favorites, a new rendition of an old number.

I took the LP from her and placed it on the machine along with several others. Then I started out toward the kitchen.

"Where's you going now?" she demanded, right on my heel.

"I'm going to Paris," I replied, looking back over my shoulder at her.

As we sat on the couch, sipping our drinks, Norma told me she had been married three times and had five children, all by the last husband.

"Where are the children now?" I asked believing she had had that many children or husbands.
"The girls stay with me most of the time," she replied quickly. "They wish my Mother down in Mobile right now though...."

"And who has the boys?"

"Oh, I let him keep them," she said airily.


"So what Julia tell you? And why you believe her and not me? I'm not going to tell you anything else about me if you keep acting like that."

"Okay. Don't," I said, then started to get up from the couch.

Norma grabbed me by the arm. "Where you going now? You're always going somewhere. We ain't finished talking yet."

I leaned forward and kissed her. She was obviously caught off-guard. So was I for that matter. But she quickly got into the swing of things.

"Let's go into the bedroom," she suggested when we finally stopped kissing.

"All right," I agreed. "But I have to do something about the phonograph first. And don't you want another drink to take in there.....?"

"Yeah, but let me mix 'em. Yours are too damn weak."

After our first round of love-making, Norma grew inquisitive again. "Don't you have any special girl friend now?"

I shook my head. "What about you? How many do you have?"

She bristled. "I don't have any! Why you ask such a question?"

I remained silent.

"Say why?" Norma repeated, shaking me slightly.

"Say why?" I asked, pretending I had forgotten the subject at hand.

"Oh, I don't know what I'm going to do with you," she said in mock disgust.

Then we started making love again, and afterwards, we both dozed off. It was daylight when we stirred again.

"Jesus, I gotta go!" said Norma, hopping out of bed as though it were on fire.

"You don't have to work today, do you?" I asked.

"Who me? Heck no! I got laid off week before last. But I gotta beat it...."  

Several months later we visited Julia Cranshaw and her friend Myrtle who were on the outs, but they put on a good front.

"You two getting along all right?" Julia asked, tapping my knee.

I nodded. I wanted to ask how she and Myrt were doing, but didn't dare. Norma had told me Myrt was seeing a woman down the street who was supposed to be straight.

"So how you and Myrt doing?" Norma asked, beaming. I caught my breath. How could she?  

Julia's smile wavered for a second. Or did I imagine it? "We doing fine, aren't we, honey?" Julia said to Myrt, and Myrt grinned and nodded energetically.

"Life couldn't be sweeter!" Myrt said, then she and Norma laughed heartily.

Julia patted my knee again. "Come on out to the kitchen a moment. Neet. I want you to help me fix a little snack...."

I heard Norma snickering behind my back as I got up to follow Julia out to the kitchen.

Norma knew how I hated fixing food and stuff like that. But I didn't give her the satisfaction of knowing how put-out I was with Julia.

"I'm glad you and Norma are hitting it off. Neet," Julia said once we reached the kitchen. "Norma is a swell person, but she needs somebody like you to show her a different side of life...."

"Me? Different side of life? What on earth was she talking about? "Well, yes," I began, but didn't quite know which foot to stand on.

Then, suddenly grateful for the boxes of crackers and jars of spread that had to be put together, I asked, "What can I do to help, Julie?"

"Oh, I don't need any help, Neet. I just said that to get you out here. Myrt and I have been together for nearly twenty years now, and I don't know what I'd do without her...."

"Twenty years!" I exclaimed, staring at her. She laughed gaily, thinking I had paid them a compliment with my astonished reaction. In a way, I guess I was.

"What you two doing out here whispering together?" Norma suddenly asked.

"Oh, go on, Norm," Julia said, smiling coyly at Norma.

"You telling my baby tales about me, Julia?" Norma asked, putting her arm around my waist, and then kissing me on the mouth.

"Your baby wouldn't listen to nothing I say about you, Norm. She's too much in love."

Then Myrt appeared in the doorway. "Come outta there, y'all! Gloria Lynne is on and she's singing my song, 'Love I Found You!'"

We dropped everything and rushed into the living room. When the record ended, we sealed the mood with a kiss. The four of us.
One day, about a year after we became lovers, Norma said to me, "Alda and Frances fought all the time. They finally had to break up. Alda's in New York now, I hear. She's living with some other woman and they having it bad too...."

"Why do you sound so happy about Alda's problems?" I asked, suddenly very irked.

"I'm not happy about it!" Norma exclaimed, puffing up.

Norma was happy about Alda's difficulties, but I was still too hung up on her to go into the situation very deeply.

"Let's go over to Camden to the swimming pool," Norma suddenly suggested. "Julia and the gang will be there...."

"I have to work," I began, "and besides...."

"Besides what?" she demanded as my voice trailed off. "I don't see why you have to sit home all the time writing those old stories that nobody wants to buy anyway. We never do things like other people. Julia and Myrt swing all the time!"

"Well, I can't swim in the first place, and I'm not going out there with those rowdy people until I can. They'll never drown me."

"Oh, you're always coming on with something from out of left field. Just because they're not stuck-up like you is no reason for you to call them rowdy."

"I am not stuck-up!"

"Then what's wrong with us joining the Gay Dodgers?"

"Because I don't have that kind of money, that's why. They drink whiskey like it's only five cents a barrel."

"Oh, I don't know why I keep on bothering with you! You always complain about not having any money, but every time you go downtown you come back with a shopping bag full of books and crap like that!" she declared.

Then I slammed up.

"So, all right, don't talk no more. I'm going downtown. You can sit here for the rest of the century banging on that typewriter all you want. I'm going to live while I can."

But she didn't leave. She plopped down in the lounge chair and lit a cigarette and began to smoke furiously. I got up from my desk and went out into the kitchen. Then while I was still out in the kitchen, leaning against the sink, trying to get my head together, Norma came storming in.

"What's wrong with you? Why can't you come out and entertain your company like other people do?"

"I thought you were leaving. You said you were--"

"Oh. So you want to get rid of me now, huh?"

"You said you were leaving!"

"Come go with me--"

"Oh, Norma, for crying out loud, let's not go through that routine again!"

"Then let's go to bed--?"

"Go to bed! Now--?"

"Yeah, why not? We use a bed any time we felt like it."

"We used to not fight so much either," I rejoined.

"Fight! We don't fight. I ain't never hit you, did I?"

"Argue then. Why do you like to keep things stirred up all the time?"

"Well, come on, let's go in the bedroom and discuss it," she suggested, coming up to me and kissing me quickly. "Aw, come on, Nita, let's go lie down. We haven't been together like that for a long time. Don't you love me no more?"

One part of me wanted to go with her, and another part wanted to get back to my desk and struggle with the story. So there I stood, immobilized.

"Come on, Nita, let's go into the bedroom," Norma said, taking my hand.

"All right. But let's have a drink first. I have to get my nerves together." She laughed, and so did I, but it wasn't as it had been. I knew we were growing apart, but didn't know what to do about it.

"Let me fix the drinks," Norma suggested.

"You go get ready. It never takes me as long as you to get ready, you know."

"There you go again, always making comparisons," I complained. Then I rushed out into the living room, grabbed a cushion and threw it at her head and ran into the bedroom and locked the door.

She stood out there banging on the door.

"Let me in or I'll break the damn door down!"

"Break it down then," I yelled then suddenly yanked the door open and she fell into the room.

"Oh, you make me sick!" she exclaimed, but we started laughing as she hopped up from the floor. She grabbed me; we tussled and fell onto the bed. It was almost like old times.

But we never got back the way we had been in the beginning. People never do, it seems. Eventually, she went back to an old girl friend. Several old girl friends, probably.

I missed her, but I did not collapse. The two and a half years we spent together added greatly to my experience. But, really, I was not aware of any need for experience.

Love and companionship, by all means. Experience! A word for the experts. They sleep with concepts.

I do not!
THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS ARE WOMAN-IDENTIFIED WOMAN SYMBOLS BASED FIRMLY IN THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

HANDS IN CONTACT WITH THE BREASTS

Represents female self acknowledgment of the nurturing power of women. Not only do women have the singular ability to create life, but are enstilled with the power to sustain life. It is one of the most familiar symbols found in Africa.

COWRIE SHELLS

Traditionally used as a medium of exchange (currency), decoration for masks, instruments, costumes and jewelry. Its female symbolism is attributed to its pronounced shape; the underside resembling the soft fullness and curves of the lips of the labia majora with the opening's narrow slit slightly parted at one end to symbolize the housing of the clitoris. Lines along the edges resemble pubic hairs.

CORN OR MAIZE

Female symbol of fruitfullness and proliferation.
THE CALABASH

A fruit gourd which grows from the calabash tree or vine. Symbol of the moon and the earth goddess. According to Yoruba female folk tradition, Orisaa-nla (Obatala) and Odudua (mother of the divinities) are represented by the two halves of a calabash. The calabash is also a woman identified musical instrument played traditionally by women. Iya Agbe in Yoruba means mother of the gourd or calabash.

FAT RINGS AROUND THE NECK

Symbol of wealth and beauty. Body weight has traditionally been interpreted in art form as an outward sign of health, stamina, beauty and prosperity. Fat rings also symbolize the high status of women.

MENSTRUAL BLOOD

A very powerful symbol. It has traditionally been dreaded by men for having the power to destroy or cause the bones of a man to weaken and become soft. It was to protect men against the power of women during their menstrual cycle that many African societies have set up laws (taboos) to shun, exile or isolate women during this time.
THE MOON

Symbol of the lunar mother or the goddess. The mother in traditional African folklore is equal to the male sun deity. The moon was a common symbol of the sky goddess who worked hand in hand with the earth goddess.

COLORS: BLACK WHITE RED

Certain colors have strong female symbolism in African oral tradition:

BLACK: symbol of life and beauty
WHITE: the symbol of spirits and representatives of the moon, which according to African oral tradition is always female. Also associated with coolness and patience
RED: symbol of beauty and riches

THE SNAKE CIRCLE

A powerful woman symbol of creation and continuity. The snake most commonly featured is the python. According to traditional African folklore, the python was the creative force that first came to earth to form the dry land (with its wiggling motion to form the hills and valleys) on which life could live.

NAMES REPRESENTING DAYS OF THE WEEK

Ojo Aje in Yoruba means Tuesday; the day of the goddess of riches.

Day names are basically gender names given to children at birth. The following example is a list of female day names in the Akan/Twi language of Ghana:

Sunday       Akosua
Monday       Adowa
Tuesday       Abena
Wednesday    Akue
Thursday     Yaa
Friday       Afue
Saturday   Amma
fierce fighters

Q. "Who were the soldiers that were so fierce that they were required to wear bells to warn civilians of their presence?"

A. Believe you refer to the 5,000 female fighters in the army of Behanzin, the black king of Dahomey, West Africa. In the 1880's, that was. These women beat up everybody who got in their way, so the King belled them all.
Rick Faber said last week that "I'm not sure if there is any way to prevent this from happening again." She said that she and her husband had been "rocked" by the news of the shooting and that she was "shocked" by the "outrageous" behavior of the police.

Meanwhile, the community is coming together to support each other. "This is a real tragedy," said one community member. "We need to come together and show our support for those affected."
Attn: Joan Nestle

Dear Joan,

I am a Black/lesbian/feminist/librarian/archivist (how's that for intense self-identification?) residing in Oakland although originally a native New Yorker. I am producing an audio slide presentation on the lives of four-five Black lesbian women.

I plan it to be multi-generational in scope and plan to focus exclusively (if possible) on New York women. I am hoping to find lesbians of several age groups willing to participate and/or act as resource persons. It is my plan to contact Mable Hampton and request her help in locating someone in her own age group for interviewing and participation.

I am writing to inquire if and when it would be possible to meet with you and to utilize the archives for project research. I will be in New York from Sept. 2-11, 1983 and would be happy to meet with you at any time or place convenient to you during that period. I can be reached for confirmation of our meeting at (212) 522-1809 or (201) 451-6683. Both are message machines.

I understand that there is a Black lesbian study group affiliated with the Archives. I hope it is possible to connect with them as well. Perhaps one of them would act as resource person and share her expertise in East Coast lesbian heritage.

I look forward to meeting with you and experiencing the Archives.

Sincerely,

Geraldine Sydney Ewart

cc: Mable Hampton
    Black Lesbian Study Group
Regrettably, slices of these women's lives also have been blotted out. Not by the oppression of illiteracy as their slave mothers, but through ignorance, neglect, and racist attitudes. Many papers left by these women, in the forms of letters, diaries, journals, photographs, family records, and memorabilia have been lost. Families, unaware of their importance, either threw them away, believing them to be worthless, or, for sentimental reasons, stored them in attics, garages, and basements where they deteriorated.

Two years ago, a white female reporter in Nashville discovered a diary by a young, black schoolgirl of the mid-twentieth century among the items in a garage sale. A rare and invaluable find, for diaries reflect not only activities, but the minds of women.

Through the years, white controlled academic libraries, historical societies, and state archives showed little interest in collecting papers of black women or black anything. Fortunately, some black institutions long had the tradition of seeking and acquiring papers relating to black history and culture.

It was at one of these, the Moorland Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, where Professor Gloria Hull lifted the veil of secrecy covering the private life of Angelina Weld Grimké, teacher, poet, and playwright. By researching her manuscripts, poems, letters, and diary, a hidden side of Grimké's life was revealed, that of her love for a woman, Mania Burrill.
Another antebellum black woman, Edmonia Lewis, was born free in Greenhills, Ohio, in 1845, of a Chippewa Indian and free black father. She was a free-spirited and independent woman, who led her own life. Edmonia became the first of her race and sex to be known as a sculptor. Her masculine attire and individualistic ways caused author/ librarian Anna Bontemps to write that she belonged to another world. She did go to a different world, in a way, when she went to study in Rome. There, she became popular with a group of white women artists, some of whom were lesbians. She lived in Rome for twenty years and died there in 1890.

Actor Gary Cooper in an Ebony article (October, 1977), relates the story of a slave woman, Mary Fields, who was born "somewhere in Tennessee" in 1832. While working at the Ursuline Convent in Toledo, Ohio, Mary met Mother Amadeus, whom she "revered and loved." When Mother Amadeus moved to Montana to help open a mission school for Indian girls, she became deathly ill with pneumonia. Mary rushed to her bedside and nursed her back to health. She stayed to work faithfully for Mother Amadeus and the Jesuit mission for ten years. "Black Mary," as she was called, dressed in men's clothes, except for an apron and skirt, weighed 200 pounds, and gained a reputation as a hard drinking, gunslinging, cigar-smoking woman who had no "fear of man or beast." Because of complaints about her terrible temper, the Bishop finally ordered that she cease working for the nuns. Mother Amadeus stuck by Mary, and got her a job driving a stagecoach. Mary was the second woman to drive the U.S. Mail route. Never marrying, she died at the age of 81. Her picture hangs in the Cascade Bank in Montana.

After the Civil War, the lives of black women underwent a sweeping change as they were freed from bondage. The latter part of the nineteenth century saw black women emerging as writers, artists, educators, leaders and builders. They participated and contributed in hark and unherald ways to the progress of their race.
Again, by reading the diary of a black woman writer and teacher, whose works also span the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Professor Hull lifted the veil of Alice Ruth Dunbar-Nelson. The diary and additional documents are housed at the home of a niece, Pauline Alice Young, named for her aunt, in a small cottage in Delaware. A retired librarian and historian, foresighted Pauline Young retained the papers of her aunt, realizing their value for research and documentation. The collection is slated for the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

There are most certainly additional women—identified—women behind the veil. In my research, I have found one by interpreting her letters and unpublished poems. But, upon making this discovery, there is always the question of a family’s willingness to have this segment disclosed. Lifting the veil might take away the glow.

Fortunately, Pauline Young agreed to having her aunt’s love for women brought to public light, after Professor Hull explained:

...these relationships did not besmirch Dunbar-Nelson’s character or reputation or harm anyone else, that there is nothing wrong with love between women, that her affection to women was only one part of her total identity, and did not wipe out the other aspects of her other selves....

END OF PART ONE

NOTES


4. Ibid.

5. Ibid, p. 8


Black Gay Leadership Group Vanishes

Americans mark the 1963 March on Washington as the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum dies.

By Keith Boykin

AUGUST 21, 2003. While thousands of Americans journey to the nation's capital this weekend to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, the country's only national black gay and lesbian organization will be quietly turning out the lights. After 15 years in business, the National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum is finally closing down.

When organizers of the 40th Anniversary March on Washington sought a gay or lesbian speaker for this weekend's rally, they contacted Matt Foreman, the executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Foreman, a white gay man, agreed to speak.

March organizers also reportedly contacted a prominent black gay activist but, as of Tuesday, no black gay or lesbian speakers have been announced. That's not a criticism of the march. It's actually a sad testament to the state of the black gay community.

Fight For Inclusion

Although the 1963 march was organized by Bayard Rustin, an openly gay man who was one of Martin Luther King Jr.'s close advisers, and activists have fought for the inclusion of black gay speakers in each of the anniversary marches, there may not be a black gay man or lesbian speaking at this march.

At the 20th anniversary march in 1983, black gay activists had to lobby march organizers to allow black lesbian author Audre Lorde to address the crowd. At the 30th anniversary march in 1993, Phil Wilson of the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, spoke. Now, ten years later, the Leadership Forum will take its last breath on the same weekend of the 40th anniversary march.


9/2/2003
But don't look for a representative from the Forum at the March on Washington. The Forum's final conference will take place this weekend in New Orleans, Louisiana, far away from the march activities in Washington, DC.

"It is with much sadness, as well as a sense of great accomplishment, that the Board of Directors has decided that this year's conference will be the last one for the Leadership Forum," said Alvan Quamina, who will resign at the conference as executive director of the Forum. In a press release, Quamina said limited resources forced the Leadership Forum to "drop its conference."

Closing the Doors
I'm not sure exactly what that means, but dropping the conference is the same as closing the doors. Since the Forum started in 1988, the annual conference has been the organization's most visible activity. Even with the annual conference, the Forum has been virtually invisible in the past few years.

Founded in Los Angeles by Phill Wilson and Ruth Waters, the Forum started out as a conference for black gays and lesbians and in its heyday grew to a full-fledged national organization with programs and staff. I served as executive director of the Forum from September 1995 to February 1998, and two other executive directors followed me in that position.

Cornel West, Alice Walker, June Jordan, Iyanla Vanzant, Michael Eric Dyson, Meshell Ndegeocello and Dr. Joycelyn Elders were among the many speakers and performers to appear before the group over the years. In October 1995, the Forum organized an historic black gay contingent in the Million Man March, and the following year it led the media effort against anti-gay gospel recording artists Angie and Debbie Winans.

Despite its accomplishments, the Forum was always plagued by financial and political challenges that left a legacy of baggage for each new administration to unravel. The biggest challenge was fundraising. The Forum was consistently dependent on government contract dollars and unable to raise significant money from the black LGBT community to offset the restricted government funds. Some of the biggest contributions actually came from a few sympathetic white gay foundations, organizations and donors, while those in the black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community rarely gave major dollars.

Without adequate resources, the Forum could not pay its staff or executive directors. The last executive director, Alvan Quamina, worked in a volunteer capacity. In the end, the group's financial challenges doomed the Forum.

Now What?
Unfortunately, the closing of the Forum couldn't come at a more challenging time for black gays and lesbians. Black support for gay civil rights has tumbled in the past few months. AIDS continues to plague the community. Hate crimes from Morehouse College to Newark, New Jersey have been profiled in the news. Gay issues are front and center in the national dialogue, and there's no one black to represent the diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

A few weeks ago, an ad hoc group of black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender activists got together in New York to talk about creating a national voice for the black LGBT community, but it's not clear if this new project will work.

As some leaders in the gay community continue to exclude us and some leaders in the black community continue to avoid us, we still need leaders in

the black gay and lesbian community to stand up and represent us.

- Anniversary March on Washington
- Anniversary March on Washington Gay Events
- The Guardian: Black Lesbian's Killing Ignored
- Village Voice: Morehouse College's anti-gay disgrace
- Support for gay rights dropped dramatically in U.S., especially among blacks

Lorraine Hansberry was one of the first Black artists to link feminism, lesbian/gay rights, and revolution. The vision of this young, gifted, and brave playwright accords with the shape of the struggle in the '80s.
Hatshepsut, the female king of Egypt, who proclaimed herself Pharaoh/King, wore a beard and dressed in male attire, defended her country, was the first to predict the coming of the Europeans into Egypt, and symbolizes the past and future efforts of those who have sustained the Black Lesbian and Gay Male community.
Recognizing the obligation as Blacks to define ourselves and determine our own s/heros, THE FIRST ANNUAL HATSHEPSUT AWARD will be given to these individuals and organizations who have made vital contributions to the enhancement of the lives of BLACK LESBIANS and GAY MEN:

RELIGION
Magora Kennedy

ADVOCACY/POLITICAL
National Coalition of Black Gays - Billy Jones

MEDIA
Boston Gay Community News

INDIVIDUALS
Mary Archer
Blue - Doris Lunden
Eleanor Cooper
Zonnetta Billie Feinberg
Mable Hampton
Geneve Hudson
Rai Matthews
Rachel & Ronnie Williams
Alice Whitehead

SOCIAL GROUPS
Les Amis
Manhattan Cherokees
The Monterey
Salsa Soul Sisters
Satin Dolls

SPORTS
The Defenders

LITERATURE
Ann Shockley
Djuna Books

PARENTS
Bettie Richards

ENTERTAINMENT
Hemlock - Clinton Colter
Gloria McCray

ADVOCACY
Committee of Black Gay Men
Lesbian Herstory Archives
Lesbians Rising

SEPTEMBER 19, 1981
It was only through the efforts of many women and men, some of whose names we will never know, that many of us were able to define and openly accept our affectional/sexual preferences, when times demanded a different view.

Those acknowledged by our community will and do serve as an inspiration to those that will and must follow.