

THE GIVENS COLLECTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LITERATURE PRESENTS

Bibliophilia

COLLECTING BLACK BOOKS



Annotated Bibliophilia, by Davu Seru

An exhibit from the Archie Givens Sr.,
Collection of African American Literature

February 2–28, 2013

Presented at the
Hennepin County Government Center



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

LIBRARIES

Archives and Special Collections

1. *Golden Legacy: Illustrated History Magazine*

Dix Hills, NY: Fitzgerald Publishing, 1966-1972

According to its publisher, the sixteen volume *Golden Legacy* collection is *not* a comic book collection. It is “a new approach to the study of history,” designed for young people, with contributing writers such as the esteemed Pan-Africanist historian John Henrik Clarke. The editions include features on Harriet Tubman, Black inventors, Afro-Russian poet Alexander Pushkin, arctic explorer Matthew Henson, and ancient African kingdoms.

Sara Roberson Collection



2. *Poems on Various Subjects Religious and Moral,* by Phillis Wheatley

London: Archibald Bell, 1773

First edition

This volume by Phillis Wheatley is the first book of poems published by an African American and the first book to be published by an African American woman. Born in the West African country of Senegambia (in either modern day Senegal or Gambia), Wheatley was captured as a young child and, after making the middle passage across the Atlantic on the slave ship *Phillis*, was sold into the hands of the Boston-based Wheatleys who would teach her to read and write.

Written primarily in a highly refined neo-classical mode, the book has been the subject of much debate. In his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson would regard Wheatley’s poetic achievements as little more than pious mimicry, challenging the idea that Africans are capable of intelligence and writing that, “Religion indeed had produced a Phillis Wheatley, but it has not produced a poet.” Some African American literary and cultural critics would go on to argue that because her work lacks the direct challenge to slavery often found in slave narratives, Wheatley represents the effects of brainwashing and “internalized racism.” Others find redemption in the book’s subtle critiques of Puritan claims, such as the idea that black skin represents a “diabolic dye.”

The African American slave Scipio Moorhead etched a portrait of Wheatley for the volume’s frontispiece. The portrait remains the only extant image of Wheatley and is regarded as the first published piece of African American art. There are no other known works by Moorhead.



3. Ex-slave narratives from Coahoma County, MS,

Commissioned by the Federal Writers' Project and directed by acclaimed folklorist John Lomax, 1937 (photocopies and original transcripts)

The FWP's ex-slave interviews were conducted regionally by writers such as Zora Neal Hurston, who were employed by the federal government as part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. The original manuscripts displayed here were transcribed by Carrie Campbell. Of the transcripts held by the Givens Collection, the narrative of Prince Johnson is the only one published in the 1941 Library of Congress project *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938*.



4. Uncle Mose and Aunt Jemima salt and pepper shakers

Manufactured by F & F Mold and Die Works, Dayton, OH, n.d.

Depicted here are Uncle Mose and his wife, Aunt Jemima (characters born on the American minstrel stage), who would often appear as salt shakers, cookie jars, and on labels advertising any number of food items and household products. One finds the remnants of them today on popular cereal, pancake mix, and instant rice brand labels. These stereotype images, in wide circulation following the Civil War, were meant to advance a mythology of southern plantation life wherein slaves (and later domestic workers) were represented as docile and sexless subservient laborers content with their status in the racially segregated south. Today, collectors of African Americana such as Oprah Winfrey and Spike Lee understand these objects as a source of pride rather than shame, as they are a reminder of the brutalities and injustices that African Americans have endured.



5. *John Henry: An American Legend*, by Ezra Jack Keats

New York: Pantheon, 1965

Ezra Jack Keats (1916-1983) is a Jewish American author and illustrator best known for books such as his Caldecott Medal winning *The Snowy Day* (1963), which introduced readers to his young black central character, Peter. Besides its innovations in children's book illustration, *The Snowy Day* is striking in that it never mentions the race of its characters but instead treats their urban environment as normal and unremarkable. This point received criticism from some African American commentators who would insist that racial consciousness is a daily reality for black people and that representations of black life ought to reflect that fact.

John Henry: An American Legend, Keats's third book featuring a black protagonist, is, of course, drawn from the American folk legend in which the steel-driving hero

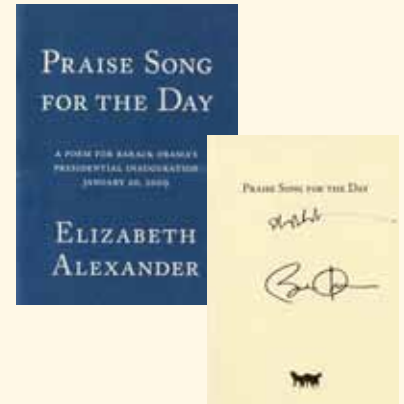


out-hammers the steam-drill but ultimately dies, casting the theme of modernization in a tragic light as it pits man against technology. The oral legend has multiple versions that have been claimed by multiple audiences, as its feats of folk heroism inspire race pride in African Americans and a sense of working class pride among white American audiences.

6. *Praise Song for the Day: A Poem for Barack Obama's Presidential Inauguration January 20, 2009*, by Elizabeth Alexander

Minneapolis, MN: Graywolf, 2009
 First Edition

Elizabeth Alexander (1962-) is the fourth of only five poets to read at the inauguration of president of the United States. *Praise Song for the Day* was delivered at President Barack Obama's first inauguration. This copy, published by Graywolf Press, is signed by the author and President Barack Obama.



7. "Cotton Pickers," by Elizabeth Blackburn Martin

Boston: Boston Music Company, 1929

"The Camptown Races," by Stephen Foster

New York: McLoughlin Bros., [1882]

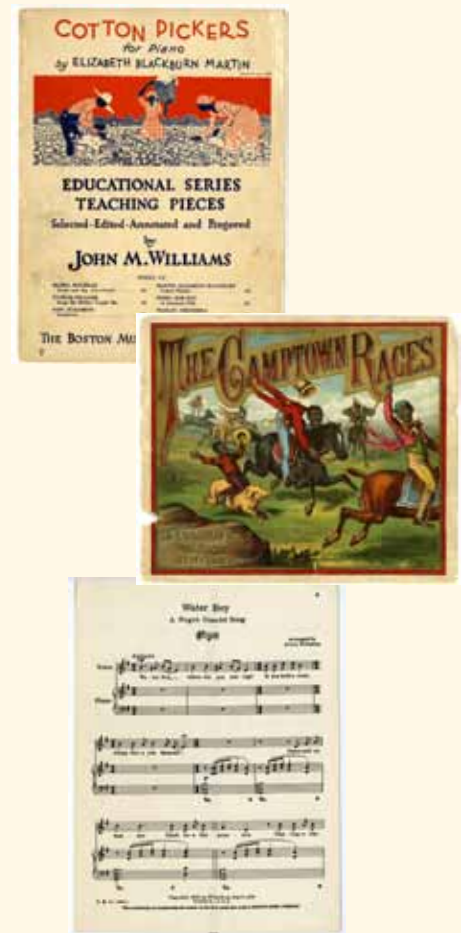
"Water Boy, A Negro Convict Song,"

arranged by Avery Robinson as sung by Roland Hayes
 Boston: Boston Music Company, 1922

American popular music was birthed on the minstrel stage, performances that often projected stereotype images of African American life. During the antebellum and Reconstruction eras, the vast majority of "African Americana" songs (often referred to as "coon songs") were written by white composers and published by white publishers. The tradition of white-authored African Americana songs would continue into the era of the Harlem Renaissance and sometimes under the sanction of prominent African American artists and intellectuals such as Langston Hughes and Roland Hayes.

The three examples featured here include a modern variation on work songs, a white-authored "piccaninny dance" and, "the father of American music," Stephen Foster's comic and nonsensical minstrel song, "Camptown Races."

Sheet music from the Givens Collection



8. *Anglo-African Magazine, Vol. 1*

New York: Thomas Hamilton Publishing, 1859

Although African Americans would begin publishing newspapers as early as the late 1820s and magazines as early as the 1840s, *Anglo-African Magazine* (which would eventually become *The Weekly Anglo-African* newspaper) is cited as a Black periodical that, in its day, was unrivaled in its scholarship and literary sophistication.

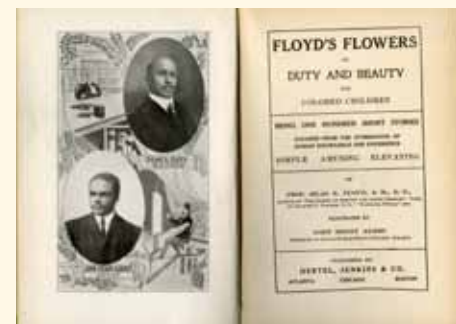
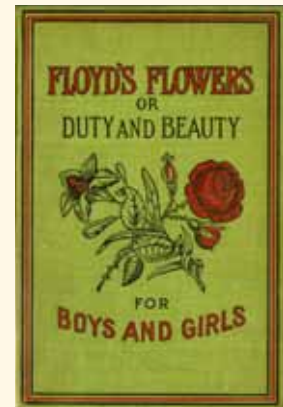
This first edition of *Anglo-African Magazine* includes an excerpt from Martin Delany's novel *Blake; or, the Huts of America*. Written as a response to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), *Blake* is thought to be one of the earliest examples of Black Nationalist rhetoric in America, as its subjects include slave rebellion and the Black repatriation of American colonies in Africa.



9. *Floyd's Flowers or Duty and Beauty for Colored Children*, by Silas X. Floyd, illustrated by John Henry Adams

Atlanta: Hertel, Jenkins, and Co., 1905

Floyd's Flowers is one of the earliest examples of a textbook written for black children by a black author. Georgian Silas X. Floyd (1869-1923) was a pastor, public school teacher, and administrator who authored numerous works including a biography of Rev. Charles T. Walker (1858-1921), pastor of Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Harlem and founder of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Augusta, GA. An interesting piece of literary evidence worth noting is that, perhaps due to the publisher's discretion, the book's cover reads "For boys and girls" while the inside title page reads "For colored children." The stories themselves indicate that audience is unequivocally African American. In his one hundred highly didactic short stories, Adams advocates proper deportment, diet, fiscal responsibility, and all around good character. He acknowledges the atrocities that afflicted black life in previous centuries, as well as the increase in lynching in the 20th, but rather than provide an examination of the "race problem," Floyd focuses on themes of self-confidence and self-reliance, offering up exceptional figures such as Frederick Douglass, Benjamin Banneker, and Toussaint L'Ouverture as guiding lights for young black children.



The book includes illustrations by John Henry Adams, an African American Professor of Art at Morris Brown College in Georgia, and a progenitor of the New Negro aesthetic that would spark the Harlem Renaissance.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



10. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, by Frederick Douglass*

Boston: The Anti-Slavery Society, 1845

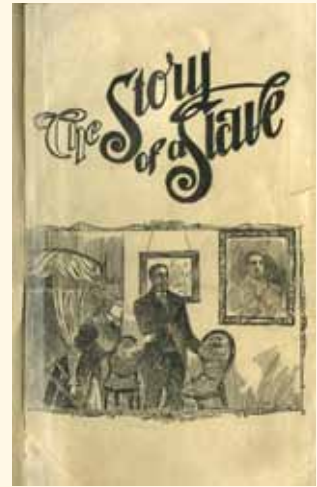
Frederick Douglass (c. 1818-1895) was an orator, writer, newspaperman, abolitionist, and statesman. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* is the first of his three autobiographies and describes his childhood enslaved on Thomas Auld's plantation, his struggles to become literate, his pivotal battle with the slave-breaker, Mr. Covey, and his eventual escape. It is perhaps the most widely read slave narrative. This first edition copy includes a preface written by the famed abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison.



11. *The Story of a Slave; a Realistic Revelation of a Social Relation of Slave Times—Hitherto Unwritten—from the Pen of One Who Has Felt Both the Lash and the Caress of His Mistress, Anonymous*

Chicago: Wesley, Elmore and Benson, 1894

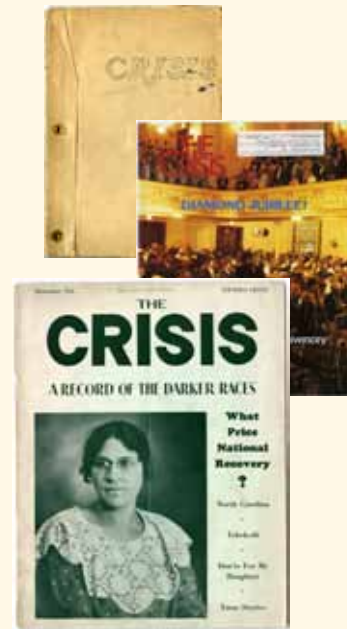
This extremely rare fictionalized account of slavery is part of a tradition of novels that treat the “old south” and the institution of slavery with nostalgia, often casting slave masters as beneficent and slaves as content. This particular novel focuses on a romance between a slave and his owner where, despite the Emancipation Proclamation, the slave chooses to remain in bondage to the family “to share the family misfortune” brought about by the Civil War. Ever the dutiful slave, the main character Paul single-handedly rebuilds his former master’s plantation.



12. *The Crisis Magazine: A Record of the Darker Races*

New York: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1911-1984

Founded in 1910, *The Crisis Magazine* was the official publication of the NAACP and was originally edited by one of its founders, W.E.B. Du Bois. Like its companion current-affairs journals *The Messenger* and *Opportunity*, and predecessors like *The Anglo-African Magazine* (also on display here), the content of *The Crisis* ranged from general interest pieces, political commentary, economics, sociology, history, biography, and literature. The title of the magazine was inspired by an anti-slavery poem by the American romantic poet James Russell Lowell but also alludes to W.E.B Du Bois’ prophetic claim in *Souls of Black Folk* that, “The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line.” Still published today, *The Crisis* has come to focus on communities of color more broadly, though it continues to examine issues that greatly affect African American life such as education disparities, homelessness, and incarceration rates, as well as popular culture.

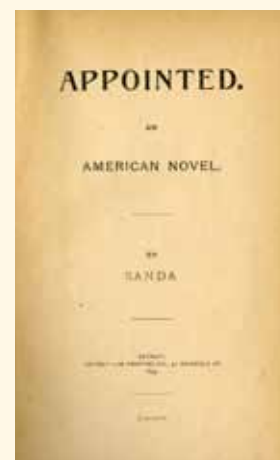


13. *Appointed; an American Novel*, by Sanda (Walter H. Stowers and William H. Anderson)

Detroit: Detroit Law Printing, 1894
 First Edition

Walter H. Stowers (1859-1932) was a Detroit-based writer, newspaperman, activist, and civil rights lawyer who fought against restrictive housing covenants. William H. Anderson was co-founder, along with Stowers and Benjamin and Robert Pelham, of Detroit's first black newspaper, *The Plaindealer*, which published from 1883 to 1894. *Appointed* is considered one of the earliest fictional accounts of a Negro lynching.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



14. *The Garies and their Friends*, by Frank J. Webb

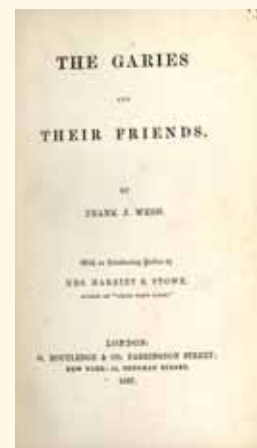
London, New York: G. Routledge & Co., 1857

Frank J. Webb, born a free black Philadelphian in the late 1820s, was connected to prominent African-American circles in the city and, as a result, was highly educated in both Classical Western and Afro-centric subjects. In the 1850s Webb and his wife, orator Mary E. Webb, traveled to Britain where they found greater recognition for their work and were involved with a wealthy tier of British abolitionists. Though Webb was not as well known as Frederick Douglass, then the most prominent voice among African Americans, he contributed to the newspaper *The New Era*, which was eventually taken over by Douglass and renamed *New National Era*.

Originally printed in 1857, this first edition of *The Garies and Their Friends* was the second novel to be published by an African American. This pre-Civil War multi-family saga centers on the life of—as the title of the first chapter notes—“a Family of peculiar Construction” composed of the wealthy, white Georgia plantation owner, Mr. Garie; his black wife, Emily, whom he purchased from a slave auction in Savannah; and their two light-skinned children, Clarence and Emily. The family moves to Philadelphia after hearing rumors of black prosperity and in hopes of providing a better future for their officially “Negro” children; they would nonetheless find what later critics would call the living conditions “up south”: racial discrimination and racist violence. Thus, *The Garies and Their Friends* turns the 19th century marriage plot on its head as it represents an early engagement with themes that would preoccupy African American writers for many years to come: miscegenation and the traumas of racial passing, migration and the myth of a black Eden in the north, and the complexities of white liberalism.

This edition contains an introductory preface by Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and is dedicated to Lady Byron, wife of the romantic poet Lord Byron.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



15. *Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted*, by Frances E.W. Harper

Philadelphia: Garrigues Brothers, 1892

This first edition of *Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted* is one of the earliest novels published by an African American woman. Until the 1980 recovery of Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig: Sketches from the Life of a Free Black* by scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr., it was thought to have been the first. Born a free black Baltimorean in 1825, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper served as a teacher, activist, and citizen-orator. She was one of two women to speak at the 1864 National Convention of Colored Men.

In following the story of its protagonist Iola Leroy, the novel explores the intersection of public and private spheres through a young woman whose mixed ancestry and ability to pass as white prompts an ongoing negotiation between race and class divisions. The story unfolds amidst the monumental changes that took place during the Reconstruction Era (1865-1877), when the recent abolition of slavery was met by racist efforts to reinstate laws that kept African-Americans subordinate. The novel echoes the sentiment of many works of African-American literature and art during the period that sought to trouble predominant ideologies that espoused black inferiority. The unifying message of many such works is one that carries a genuine sense of pride in embracing and celebrating African-American people and culture.

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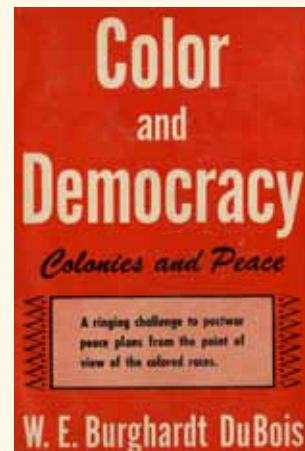
**16. *Color and Democracy: Colonies and Peace*, by W.E.B. Du Bois**

New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1945

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963) is perhaps the most celebrated 20th century African American intellectual. *Color and Democracy*, published while he was acting Director of Special Research to the NAACP (which he helped found in 1905), was published just prior to the foundational United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco. There, Du Bois was among those who helped draft the first UN charter. At the end of World War II, as the world powers considered how to achieve peace and global democracy through the military might of a unified Security Council, *Color and Democracy* warned of an imbalance of power that favored white nations in North America and Europe who, at that time, maintained unjust and racist practices in colonized countries. This, the book argues, will lead to the continued disenfranchisement of non-white countries and perpetuate their status as “the slums of the world,” thus asserting that the problem of democracy is fundamentally a problem of race and racism.

Signed by the author

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17. *Mission to Gelele, King of Dahome: with Notices of the So-called “Amazons,” the Grand Customs, the Yearly Customs, the Human Sacrifices, the Present State of the Slave Trade, and the Negro’s Place in Nature, Vol. 1 and 2, by Captain Sir R.F. Burton*

London: The Meccan Press, 1893

Owing much to a racist view of natural history, this demonstration of “pre-scientific anthropology” was originally published in 1864 by the British polymath explorer Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890). Burton is perhaps most famous for his translation of the *Kama Sutra* and *One Thousand and One Nights*.

Burton’s racist ethnography seeks to detail the “horrors and meanness” and the “mingled puerility and brutality” of the African kingdom of Dahomey (modern day Benin). Burton ascribes to the idea of a natural hierarchy of races and attempts to document what he calls the “great gulf, moral and physical, separating the black from the white races of men.” One subject that fascinates Burton is the notorious Dahomean “Amazons,” female soldiers trained to aid in domestic wars, who helped supply slaves for the transAtlantic slave trade.

Ethnographic tracts of this sort would represent something of a paradox for 19th century African American intellectuals in that these works serve as early examples of written cultural history for Africanists, but are also prime examples of racist discourse used to legitimize discrimination against Blacks.



18. *Narrative of Sojourner Truth, A Northern Slave, by Sojourner Truth*

Boston: Printed for the Author, 1850

First edition

Sojourner Truth was born a slave named Isabella Baumfree in New York between 1797 and 1800. She escaped to freedom in 1826, the year before slavery was abolished in New York, and became a tireless abolitionist and activist for women’s rights. She is perhaps best known for “Ain’t I a Woman?,” an extemporaneous address delivered at the 1851 Ohio Women’s Rights Convention.

Isabella Baumfree converted to Methodism and took the name Sojourner Truth in 1843, when, along with prominent abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and David Ruggles, she became a member of Northampton Association of Education and Industry, located in what is now Florence, Massachusetts. This short-lived experiment in communal living stressed the importance of self-improvement, racial equality, equality of the sexes, freedom of worship, individual dignity, strong family relations, and of productive labor as a duty and source of joy. William Lloyd Garrison published *Narrative of Sojourner Truth, a Northern Slave*. Despite being bilingual (she had spoken Dutch until she was nine years old), Truth remained illiterate her entire life. She dictated her *Narrative* to another former commune member, Olive Gilbert.



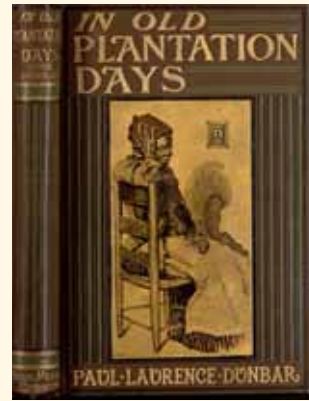
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19. Eighteen volumes by Paul Laurence Dunbar

First Editions

Born in 1872 in Dayton, Ohio, Paul Laurence Dunbar, was the first African American poet to have his works appear in anthologies of American literature. As the son of former slaves, Dunbar was also a prolific writer of novels, short stories, plays, and librettos. All of the eighteen volumes on display here are first editions. *Oak and Ivy* (1893), published by Dunbar at his own expense while he was working as an elevator operator, was sold to his passengers for a dollar a copy. Dunbar recouped his printing costs within two weeks. His second book, *Majors and Minors*, published three years later and also self-financed, captured national attention and launched his literary career.



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20. Poster for Underworld, a film by Oscar Micheaux

Micheaux Pictures Corp., 1937

Oscar Micheaux (1884-1951) was the first major African American filmmaker and proprietor of Micheaux Film Corporation (1918-1940), the most successful African American-owned film production studio. His work falls into the category of “race films” targeted toward the growing middle-class Black audiences that the Great Migration brought to northern cities. Prior to his becoming a filmmaker Micheaux published a series of novels including *The Homesteader* (1917), an autobiographical tale about a rugged Black homesteader in rural South Dakota, where he grew up. *The Homesteader* would later be adapted to film and would inaugurate his career in motion pictures.



Underworld (1937) is the film adaptation of Edna Mae Baker’s short story “Chicago After Midnight,” and tells the story of a Black college graduate from the South who must pass through the seedy Chicago underworld of gamblers, gangsters, and femme fatales before finding a better life.

21. Debow’s Review: Industrial Resources, Statistics, &c.

New Orleans, LA, 1860

First Edition

Debow’s Review was a pro-slavery agricultural almanac and political magazine featuring editorials by New Orleans statistician James D.B. Debow and other writers. One essay, titled “Unity of the Human Race Disproved by the Bible,” provides a biblical defense of modern slavery.



22. *Fire!!: A Negro Quarterly Devoted to Younger Negro Artists, Vol. 1*

New York: 1926

Edited by the writer Wallace Thurman, this Harlem Renaissance-era arts journal features the work of Countee Cullen, Aaron Douglass, and Waring Cuney, among others. Like collections *The New Negro* and *Ebony and Topaz* (both on display in this exhibit), *Fire!!* was among the first publications by African Americans devoted to modern African American art, literature, and culture. The title of the journal is thought to be an allusion to the 1919 Supreme Court case *Schenck vs. United States*, which limited freedom of speech in instances of “clear and present danger,” citing the popular saying “shouting fire in a crowded theater” as its justification.

Bellamy Rare Book Collection



23. *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*, by James Weldon Johnson, with an introduction by Carl Van Vechten

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927

The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man belongs to a genre of African American literature sometimes referred to as the “passing novel,” in which a light-skinned character (often the protagonist) “passes” for white in order to escape racial prejudice. Another major theme is the increasing modernization of African American life, symbolized by the novel’s concern with ragtime, a hybrid piano style that brings together classical European harmony with the syncopated (or “ragged”) rhythms of Africa.

Originally published anonymously by the Boston-based Sherman, French and Co. in 1912, the novel fell out of print within a few years. This second edition was selected by fellow novelist and patron of the Harlem Renaissance Carl Van Vechten for Knopf’s Blue Jade Library series, which published “rare and diverse curiosities.” This volume, which includes an introduction by Van Vechten, is inscribed to the literary editor and reviewer Hunter Staggs by both James Weldon Johnson and Carl Van Vechten.



24. *Black Feeling Black Talk* by Nikki Giovanni

New York: Self-published, 1968

Black Talk Black Feeling is Nikki Giovanni’s (1943-) first volume of poetry. Giovanni was a student at Fisk University where she studied with the African American novelist-activist John Oliver Killens and became acquainted with other great figures of African American literature such as Amiri Baraka, Dudley Randall, Melvin Tolson, Robert Hayden, and Margaret Walker. While a student at Fisk, Giovanni published her first major work, “I’m Worried about a Manchild,” an essay in which she takes up the issue of gender in the Black Power movement. Subsequent editions of *Black Talk Black Feeling* would be published by the Detroit-based Broadside Press by librarian Dudley Randall (1914-2000). Broadside Press was the grassroots publisher of many Black Arts Movement-era writers.



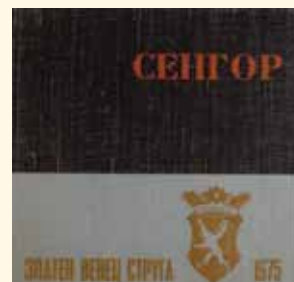
25. *Poezija [Macedonian]/Poems, by Léopold Sédar Senghor*

Skopje: Nova Makedonija, 1975

Signed by the author

Léopold Sédar Senghor (1906-2001) was a poet, politician, cultural theorist, and the first president of Senegal. Inspired by the Harlem Renaissance’s turn toward African heritage, he, along with Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, and other French-speaking Black intellectuals and activists, helped introduce the concept of Négritude in the 1930s. Négritude advanced the idea that there is a cultural and aesthetic heritage that Black people around the world share and, when held in the highest esteem, could be used to combat colonial racism. Like many Cold War-era intellectuals, Senghor professed Marxist ideals. In the 1970s, the Republic of Macedonia was a satellite of Russia and maintained a Communist government. The Macedonian publication of Senghor’s poems is indicative of the solidarity often expressed between “Third-World” and “Second-World” Marxist political movements opposed to Western imperialism.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection

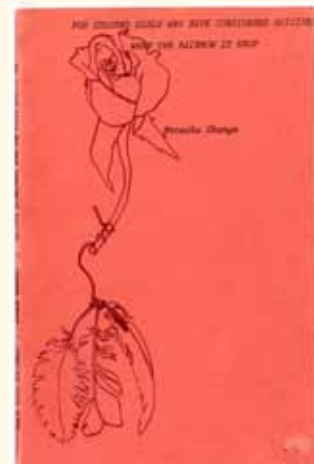


26. *For Colored Girls Who Consider Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf* by Ntosake Shange, with drawings by Wopo Holup

San Lorenzo, CA: Shameless Hussy Press, 1975

Ntosake Shange (1948-) is a poet, novelist, and playwright. The Obie-Award winning play, *For Colored Girls Who Consider Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*, is a classic feminist text of the Black Arts Movement. Written as a choreopoem, it has been staged on- and off-Broadway and has been adapted to film. The work’s seven Black women protagonists struggle with love, abandonment, domestic violence, rape, and abortion, but manage to overcome these challenges through affirmations of womanhood and sisterhood.

Founded in 1969 during the counterculture of the late 1960s in Berkeley and the early second wave of feminism, Shameless Hussy Press was the first feminist press in the United States.



27. Scrapbook from the archives of Raymond O. Hatcher, n.d.

Raymond Hatcher was a graduate of Lincoln University, class of 1934, and received a master’s degree in public administration from Wayne State University in Detroit. He was assistant director of the Phillis Wheatley Settlement House in North Minneapolis from 1938-1942.



28. *Ebony and Topaz: a Collectanea*, edited by Charles S. Johnson

New York: National Urban League, 1927

Charles Johnson was editor of *Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life*, an organ of the National Urban League. Illustrated with drawings by Charles Cullen, Richard Bruce Nugent, and Aaron Douglass, the “collectanea” includes writings by Harlem Renaissance luminaries such as Jessie Faucet, Zora Neale Hurston, Angela Grimke, and Gwendolyn Bennett, as well as numerous works by lesser known Black authors. *Ebony and Topaz* was intended to be a companion to Alain Locke’s anthology *The New Negro* (1925).



29. Correspondence between Clarence Major and Chester Himes, 1971-1972

These correspondences link two generations of African American literature and thought: on one hand, Chester Himes’s literary realism and post-World War II pessimism toward American race relations; and, on the other, Clarence Major’s renewed interest in literary experimentation, Black aesthetics, and racial self-determination. While Major’s work avoids the more narrowly-conceived racial and cultural politics that are in some ways emblematic of the 1960s and 1970s Black Arts Movement of which he was a part, it is, like Himes’s, very much concerned with black masculinity and aesthetics. Here, master and mentor Himes and Major pick up the thread of a previous correspondence in which Major apparently included a poem dedicated to Himes; they now discuss the potential for a meeting at Himes’s home in Spain. Major’s deferential letter identifies a community of African American writers for whom Himes holds some relevance. Himes’s gracious reply indicates his desire to be connected to a new generation of African American writers, whom he refers to as “others of us with talent.”



Clarence Major Papers

30. *Dictionary of Afro-American Performers: 78RPM and Cylinder Recordings of Opera, Choral Music, and Songs c. 1900-1949*, by Patricia Turner

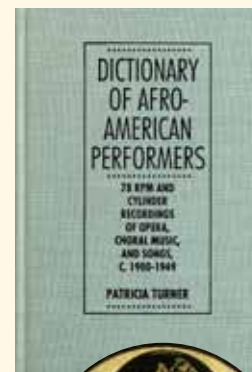
New York: Garland, 1990

First Edition

Recording of “Joshua Fit de Battle ob Jericho,” by Paul Robeson and Lawrence Brown

New Jersey: Victor Talking Machine Co., 1925

This Negro spiritual, performed by the duo of Paul Robeson and his career-long accompanist Lawrence Brown, recalls the biblical story of the divine warrior Joshua, leading the Israelites against the Canaanites, after which the walls of Jericho “came tumbling down.” The song may have provided the enslaved with hope that the peculiar and worldly institution of slavery would see an inevitable end.



This first pressing was donated to the Givens Collection by former University of Minnesota reference librarian Patricia Turner, author of *Afro-American Singers: An Index and Preliminary Discography of Long-playing Recordings of Opera, Choral Music, and Song* (Minneapolis: Challenge Productions, 1977) and *Dictionary of Afro-American Performers: 78 RPM and Cylinder Recordings of Opera, Choral Music, and Song* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1990), among other publications. *Dictionary of Afro-American Performers* is on display here.

31. *The Black Aesthetic*, by Addison Gayle

Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971

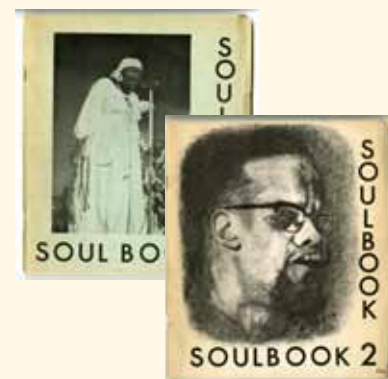
The literary scholar Addison Gayle, Jr., (1932-1991) was a prominent intellectual and champion of Black cultural nationalism. The collection of essays that compose *The Black Aesthetic* are among the seminal works of The Black Arts Movement (c. 1965-1980). The manifesto-like collection revisits previous critical approaches to African American literature, drama, and music, and calls for new theoretical frameworks that reflect the political and cultural imperatives of the Black Power Movement.



32. *Soulbook: The Quarterly Journal of Revolutionary Afroamerica*

Berkeley, CA: Afroamerican Research Institution, 1964-1967

This short-lived journal of militant political analysis and creative writing was produced and included works by prominent members of the Black Panther Party and Black Arts Movement, including Bobby Seale. It is one among nearly a dozen revolutionary “little magazines” which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, including *Black World*, *Nommo*, *Journal of Black Poetry*, *Black Dialogue*, *Black Creation*, *Liberator*, and *Umbra*. The spirit of *Soulbook* is revolutionary “third worldism,” the belief that African Americans constitute a nation-within-a-nation and, as such, are a colonized people.

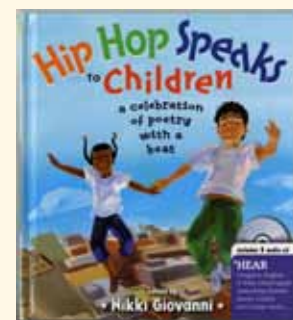


33. *Hip Hop Speaks to Children: a Celebration of Poetry with a Beat*, edited by Nikki Giovanni

Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2008.

First Edition

Nikki Giovanni's anthology *Hip Hop Speaks to Children: a Celebration of Poetry with a Beat* links hip hop versifying to the poetic traditions of Black America. The volume and CD include poems and lyrics by Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes, Tupac Shakur, Gwendolyn Brooks, Queen Latifah, Maya Angelou, and The Sugar Hill Gang.



Sara Roberson Collection



34. Publicity and production materials for the 1986 Penumbra Theatre Company production of *Selma*, by Thomas Butler

Saint Paul's Penumbra Theatre was founded in 1976 by artistic director Lou Bellamy in the spirit of the Black Arts Movement, and is the country's largest professional African American theater.

Selma was staged by Penumbra Theatre in honor of the first national observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. Comedian and actor Redd Foxx was the original Executive Producer for *Selma*. The playwright, Thomas Butler, who traveled as a young man with the Duke Ellington Orchestra, also appeared in several episodes of the situation comedy *Sanford & Son*, starring Redd Foxx, and in one episode a Penumbra *Selma* poster is seen hanging on the wall.

Penumbra Theatre Archives



35. *The Negro Caravan*, edited by Sterling Brown, Arthur Davis, and Ulysses Lee

New York: The Citadel Press, 1941

The Negro Caravan is the first comprehensive anthology of African American literature. In his introduction to the anthology, long-time Howard University professor and poet Sterling Brown (1901-1989) makes the provocative claim that despite many unifying bonds between Black writers, “the bonds of literary tradition seem to be stronger than race” and that this tradition includes forms of African folk expression. This edition is signed by contributing author Langston Hughes.



36. *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*, by Martin Luther King, Jr.

New York: Harpers and Row, 1967

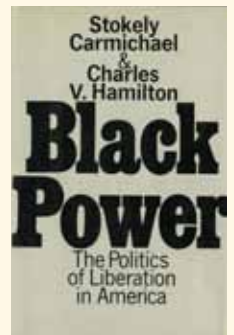
First edition

***Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton**

New York, Random House, 1967

First edition

Published in the same year, these books represent the political tensions that troubled America in the 1960s. King devoted one chapter of his book—aptly titled “Black Power”—to critiquing the ideology of black militancy, cautioning its adherents against violence, whereas Carmichael and Hamilton critique traditional black-white coalition-building in favor of more stringent self-determination.



37. *The Negro Mother, and Other Dramatic Recitations*, by Langston Hughes
with illustrations by Prentiss Taylor

New York: The Golden Stair Press, 1931
Signed by the author and inscribed by the illustrator
First edition

Dear Lovely Death, poems by Langston Hughes

New York: The Troutbeck Press, 1931
Signed by the author

Jim Crow's Last Stand, poems by Langston Hughes

New York: Negro Publication Society of America, 1943

Langston Hughes (1902-1967) was the unofficial poet-laureate of the Harlem Renaissance and one of the early innovators of blues and jazz poetry. He also wrote novels, short stories, plays, and books for young readers, all bearing the mark of his devotion to African American music, folklore, and humor.



38. *Home to Harlem*, by Claude McKay

New York: Harper and Brothers, 1928

Banana Bottom, by Claude McKay

New York: Harper and Brothers, 1933
Inscribed by the author, "A mon cher ami Pierre Vagein"

Banjo, by Claude McKay

New York: Harper and Brothers, 1929

A Long Way from Home, by Claude McKay

New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937



All first editions with cover designs by Aaron Douglass

Claude McKay was an African American poet and novelist of Jamaican descent and one of the most widely-read authors of the Harlem Renaissance. His work brings together the subjects of racial oppression, rural-to-urban migration, folk traditions of the African diaspora, and the underworld of the jazz hipster. Included here is his autobiography *A Long Way from Home*, and first editions all of his published novels in their original jackets, including his best-selling *Home to Harlem* and the especially rare jacketed copy of *Banana Bottom*. All jackets are designed by the iconic painter of the Harlem Renaissance, Aaron Douglass.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



39. *Jonah's Gourd Vine*, by Zora Neale Hurston

Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1934

***Dust Tracks on a Road: An Autobiography*, by Zora Neale Hurston**

Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott, 1942

***Mules and Men*, by Zora Neale Hurston**

Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott, 1935

First Editions

If not for novelist and poet Alice Walker, whose novel *The Color Purple* (1982) is a milestone in African American literature, the work of novelist, anthropologist, and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960) might very well have remained in obscurity. Though Hurston spent her final years destitute and without literary acclaim, she is now treated as a central figure of the African American literary canon and as a modern ancestral Eve to black women writers. The works on display here—which include first editions of a novel, an autobiography, and a study of African American folktales and culture—demonstrate her breadth as a writer and intellectual. The novel *Jonah's Gourd Vine* bears a pristine cover that depicts the book's protagonist, the low-down preacher John "John Buddy" Pearson, and his worshippers reveling on the threshing floor. The book jacket for her folk study *Mules and Men*, illustrated by Mexican artist and ethnologist Miguel Covarrubias, honors the country blues tradition, and the cover for her autobiographical *Dust Track on the Road* is a direct play on the master trope of the Harlem Renaissance: the Great Migration from the culturally rich rural south to the stark and alienating urban, industrial north.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



40. *The Black Panther Intercommunal News Service*

San Francisco: Black Panther Party, Ministry of Information, 1972

Originally called *The Black Panther Community News Service*, this weekly periodical was nationally and internationally distributed. In its heyday, the Black Panther Party sold several hundred thousand copies of the newspaper per week and it ultimately became the most influential independent Black newspaper in the United States.



41. Correspondence, Countee Cullen to William (Guillaume) Fuller Brown, Jr., 1923

“Good-bye Means Two Broken Hearts,” handwritten lyrics by Countee Cullen, 1921

The Harvard and New York University-trained poet Countee Cullen (1903-1946) was a leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance. Cullen’s childhood friend William Fuller Brown, Jr. (1904-1983) received degrees from Cornell and Columbia Universities. He was a research physicist at several firms, including Sun Oil Co. and 3M. Brown later served as an electrical engineering professor at the University of Minnesota from 1957-1973. The letters shown here are from a collection of those hand-written by Cullen to Brown—they include poetry manuscripts and are often written in both French and Latin.

Countee Cullen and William Fuller Brown Correspondence



42. Letter from Ralph Ellison to R. Frederick Allen, [1982]

Ralph Ellison (1914-1994) was the author of essays, short stories, and, most notably, the National Book Award-winning novel, *Invisible Man* (1952). In this letter, Ellison refers to a March 1st, 1982, article published in *The New York Times* titled “*Invisible Man*, as Vivid Today as in 1952,” marking Ellison’s birthday and the 30th-anniversary, Book-of-the-Month edition of his novel.

Ellison’s letter opens with an apology to the addressee for ignoring a previous letter out of concern that it was critical of his politics. In the 1960s Ellison would find himself under attack by some Black cultural nationalists for being insufficiently political regarding racial matters. These criticisms would follow him until his death and here, ever the consummate bluesman, Ellison expresses his weariness of them with a blues refrain “Trouble, trouble, I’ve had it all my days.”

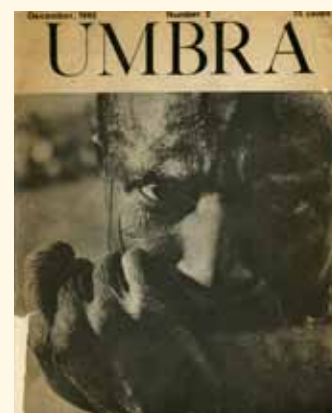
Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



43. UMBRA literary journal, Vol. 1, nos. 1 and 2

New York: Society of Umbra, 1963

This journal was published by members of the UMBRA workshop and the Society of UMBRA, which, in its two-year run on New York’s Lower East Side, included writers such as Ishmael Reed, Ann Shockley, Julian Bond, and Calvin C. Hernton. Formed in 1962, UMBRA was a precursor to the Black Arts Movement, which would emerge just a few years later when, following the Harlem race riots, writers such as Amiri Baraka (then LeRoi Jones) moved from what Calvin C. Hernton recalls as the “truly [...] rainbow neighborhood” of the Lower East Side to black Harlem where they would create organizations such as the Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School.



44. *Black Pow-Wow: Jazz Poems*, by Ted Joans

New York: Hill and Wang, 1969

First edition signed and inscribed with original jacket design, collages, and drawings by the author

Ted Joans (1928-2003) was a self-proclaimed jazz poet, musician, painter and one-time roommate of saxophone legend Charlie Parker. Similar to his contemporary, Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka), Joans's work bridges the avant-garde Beat Generation and the Black Arts Movement, ultimately privileging a Black aesthetic rooted in jazz improvisation and Afrocentric imagination. A proponent of Third-Worldism and Pan-Africanism, Joans spent a number of years living in Mali where, in Timbuktu, he hoped to establish the International Black Art Centre dedicated to teaching jazz, traditional African dance, languages, music and African and African American poetry. This especially rare copy of *Black Pow-Wow: Jazz Poems* is illustrated with drawings and collages by the author.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



45. *The Hero and the Blues*, by Albert Murray

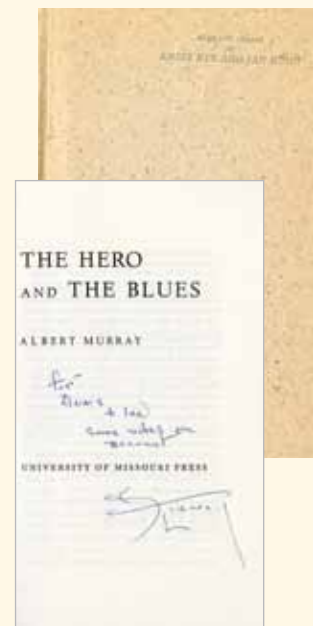
Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1973

Albert Murray (1916-) is perhaps best known for his jazz criticism and for his long friendship with Tuskegee classmate Ralph Ellison. Murray's numerous novels, collections of essays, and music biographies also mark him as a major contributor to African American literary and cultural criticism.

Murray's erudite lecture *The Hero and the Blues* interpolates the blues musician into the Western literary tradition of the hero. Dissatisfied with what he cites as a modern treatment of the hero as one who serves the interests of the prevailing establishment, thus legitimizing the status quo, Murray identifies in the blues musician qualities of the Western hero of old—namely, flexibility in the face of adversity. Published in 1973, when ideas of Afro-centrism and the cultural nationalism of the radical Black Arts Movement were becoming more commonplace in institutions of higher education, Murray's lecture might also be read as a patriotic challenge to theories of Afro-centrism that looked to the African past for ancestral guidance.

This edition of *The Hero and The Blues* is inscribed by the author, "For Anais and Ian. Some notes on account," and includes a stamp that reads, "From the library of Anais Nin and her husband Ian Hugo." The French-Cuban writer Anais Nin (1903-1977) is best known for her diaries, her love affair with writer Henry Miller, and for being one of the first and finest women writers of modern erotica. This book, so inscribed, stands as further evidence that the African American literary and cultural worlds extend far beyond racial and ethnic borders.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



46. Sketchbooks, Clarence Major

The Givens Collection is fortunate to have in its holdings the personal archive of poet, novelist, editor, painter, and scholar, Clarence Major. Major grew up in Chicago, where he took private art lessons from Gus Nall and attended drawing and lecture classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He later earned a Ph.D. in both fine arts and literature from Union Graduate Institute and University. His paintings have been featured in many solo and group shows, and are in many private and several public collections. Major lives in California.

Clarence Major Papers



47. *Empire: A Visual Novel*, by Samuel R. Delany and Howard V. Chaykin

New York: Putnam, 1978

Signed by the authors

Samuel R. Delany is the most prolific African American science fiction writer. His novels have received numerous awards including the Nebula and Hugo awards for science fiction and fantasy writing. He is also an openly gay, self-professed Marxist literary and social critic who has published non-fiction works on the science fiction genre, race, sex, and the history of New York City.

Howard V. Chaykin is the highly acclaimed illustrator of, among others, Marvel and DC comics.



48. *If Only You Knew*, by Gwyneth Bolton

New York: Kimani Romance, 2006

If You Only Knew is one among hundreds of recently published African American romance novels that capitalize on the great success of Terry McMillan's *Waiting to Exhale* (1992) and *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* (1996; also on display here). The novels range in genre from "sister-girl" fiction that depicts Black women who are hardened due to their experiences with unreliable men, to "positive," middle-class Black romances about courtship, marriage, and commitment, to steamy "ghetto lit" that extols the sexual values familiar to the hip hop generation. Though the novels are primarily about heterosexual relationships, they generally place Black women's desires at the center.



How Stella Got Her Groove Back, by Terry McMillan

New York: Viking, 1996

First Edition

How Stella Got Her Groove Back is the follow-up to Terry McMillan's breakthrough novel *Waiting to Exhale* (1992), and is the second of her books to be adapted to film. The novel chronicles the life and loves of forty-two year-old investment analyst and single Black mother, Stella Payne.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



Endesha Ida Mae Holland (1944-2006) joined SNCC after struggling through poverty and prostitution in her hometown of Greenwood, MS. In 1965 her mother was killed in a fire that Holland attributed to the Ku Klux Klan as a response to her civil rights activities. Before becoming a playwright, she would receive a bachelor's degree and PhD in American Studies from University of Minnesota, after which she joined the faculty of University of Buffalo and University of Southern California. She is perhaps best known for her 1991 autobiographical play, *From the Mississippi Delta*, which was partly financed by Oprah Winfrey.

Endesha Ida Mae Holland Collection

52. *The Lost Zoo (A Rhyme for the Young, But Not Too Young)*, by Christopher Cat and Countee Cullen

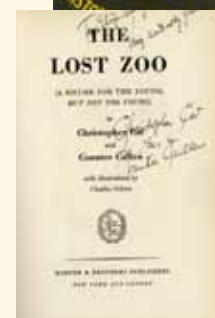
New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940

Countee Cullen (1903-1946) began his life as an outstanding young scholar of French, Greek, Latin, and mathematics and is one of the best known poets of the Harlem Renaissance. Harvard trained, Cullen produced poems in the tradition of English verse, but almost always wrote about the African American experience. His place in African American literary and intellectual history might also be highlighted by his celebrated but brief marriage to Nina Yolanda Du Bois, daughter of W.E.B. Du Bois, and his time as a French instructor to a young James Baldwin.

One of his later and more playful works, *The Lost Zoo*, is a book which catalogs in verse the animals the author has seen on his trips to the zoo. The book is “co-authored” by Cullen’s cat, Christopher, who describes to his human companion a bestiary of extinct animals who had been on Noah’s Ark. Cullen dutifully takes down the names of those animals and adds them to the record. The book includes illustrations by Charles Sebree (1914-1985), a Chicago-based African American painter who, among other things, designed sets and costumes for acclaimed dancer Katherine Dunham.

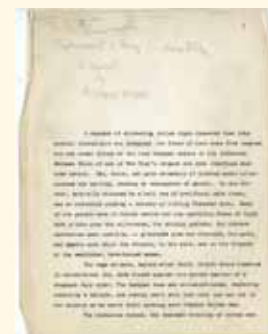
This copy of *The Lost Zoo* is inscribed by Christopher Cat on behalf of Countee Cullen.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection



53. Manuscript for *Monument to Memory* (n.d.), by Richard Wright

The manuscript would ultimately be published as the novel *Savage Holiday* (1954), Wright’s only novel in which he chose to not focus on Black life. In *Savage Holiday* Wright explores the roots of white male aggression toward non-whites through the psychoanalytic probing of his protagonist Erskine Fowler. Wright’s novel suggests that this aggression stems from a moral dilemma related to the “responsibility of freedom” that precedes interracial contact.



54. Famous Songs of Bert Williams, by Bert Williams

New York: Columbia Records, 1940

Bert Williams (1874-1922) was an African American vaudeville comedian who often performed in the comic duo Williams and Walker with George Walker. In keeping with American's first popular performance tradition, minstrelsy, Williams often performed for his white audiences in black face as a slow, shuffling, dim-witted, and pathetic character. Like a lot of black minstrelsy, "Nobody," Williams' trademark performance, bears a tragic-comic edge that somewhat confounds the image of the performer as the mere victim of racial stereotype. In it Williams presents a black man who has fallen on hard luck, but who has the means of reflecting on his seemingly fatalistic situation and conjuring laughter from it. In addition to his traditional repertoire, the collection on display here includes prohibition songs such as "Moon Shines on the Moonshine," and "Everybody Wants a Key to My Cellar."

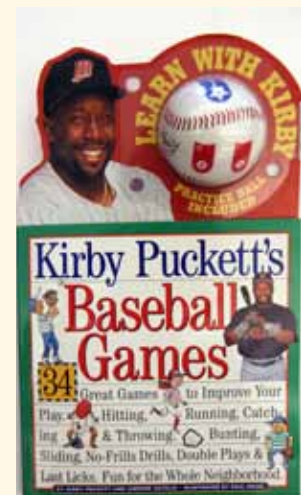


55. Kirby Puckett's Baseball Games, by Kirby Puckett, Andrew Gutelle, and Paul Meisel

New York: Workman Publishing, 1996

Professional baseball hall of famer Kirby Puckett (1960-2006) spent his entire twelve-year career player center field for the Minnesota Twins, with whom he would win two World Series. Originally from the south side of Chicago's infamous Robert Taylor housing project, Puckett achieved wide-spread popularity in Minnesota, where he continues to hold franchise records in hits, runs, doubles, and total bases. Puckett would retire from baseball in 1995 due to a retinal occlusion which blinded him in one eye. His reputation during the last years of his relatively short life would be marred by a stint of sexual misconduct and assault charges. Nevertheless, in 2010 a statue of Puckett was unveiled at the plaza of Target Field in Minneapolis.

Kirby Puckett's Baseball Games includes a collection of games, drills, and advice that mean to encourage the development of baseball techniques in young children. The book is illustrated by Theodor Seuss Geisel Honoree Paul Meisel.



56. All Shot Up, by Chester Himes

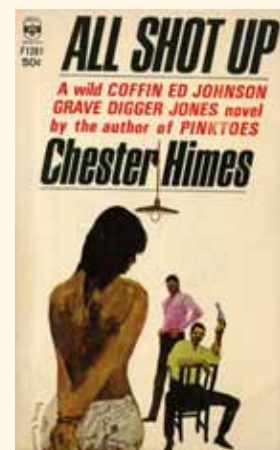
New York: Berkley Publishing Co., 1960

The Crazy Kill, by Chester Himes

New York: Avon, 1959

The Big Gold Dream, by Chester Himes

New York: Avon, 1960



A contemporary and friend of Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright, Chester Himes (1909-1984) is the author of numerous novels and short stories. He is perhaps best known for crime novels such as *Cotton Comes to Harlem*, which featured his detective duo Coffin Ed Johnson and Grave Digger Jones. Himes, along with Wright, was a master of what would become known as protest fiction, narratives that are largely concerned with protesting racism in America. But Himes's crime novels provided him the opportunity to present the problems of racism to a more popular audience than his "serious" fiction did. Enraged by American race relations, Himes lived in France and Spain for much of his career.

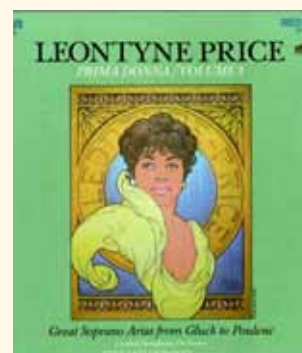


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57. Prima Donna/Volume 3: Great Soprano Arias from Gluck to Poulenc

Leontyne Price and the London Symphony Orchestra
 New York: RCA Records, 1970

Mary Violet Leontyne Price (1927-) is a retired opera singer; perhaps the most acclaimed African American concert singer after Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson. Black women opera singers go back as far as the 19th century, when artists such as Elizabeth Taylor-Greenfield—dubbed “The Black Swan”—performed in segregated concert halls in America and London; once with the patronage of Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Leontyne Price would emerge in the 1950s and 1960s among a generation of distinguished black female opera singers that included Betty Allen, Shirley Verrett, Reri Grist, Barbara Hendricks, Mattiwildda Dobbs, and Grace Bumbry. She is perhaps best known to African American audiences for her 1955 performance of George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*. Though many critics hail Price’s virtuosity as a soprano, some have criticized her for her gospel-inflected timbre and mannerisms. This album is the third in a collection of five recordings mostly comprising works that Price never staged.



58. Selected Short Stories of William Faulkner

New York: Modern Library, 1961

This volume of short stories by William Faulkner is from the personal library of, and annotated by, novelist William Melvin Kelley (1937-). Citing his self-styled southern gothic mythology and modernistic experiments with language and narrative point-of-view, African American writers such as Kelley, Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, and Edward P. Jones have claimed Faulkner as a literary ancestor despite his sometimes problematic treatment of race relations.



59. *The Madam C.J. Walker Year Book [or Almanac]*

Indianapolis: Madam C.J. Walker Manufacturing Co., 1926

The cover of the yearbook features a picture of A'Lelia Walker, heiress to Madam C.J. Walker's beauty products and hair care fortune. Upon her death in 1919, Madame C.J. Walker was considered the wealthiest Black woman in America.



60. *Oreo*, by Fran Ross

New York: Greyfalcon House, 1974

First edition

Fran Ross's (1935-1985) *Oreo* is one of few satirical novels written by an African American woman—a distinction that is drawn further into relief given that women are more typically targeted as the object of satire. Others satirical novels by African American women include Jessie Fauset's *Comedy, American Style* (1933). *Oreo* is a satire of urban African American and Jewish life in Philadelphia and New York City, significant for its dual use of Yiddish and Black vernacular English. Ross was also one of the few black women comedy writers in Hollywood, where she wrote for the short-lived *Richard Pryor Show* before returning to a career in publishing and media. *Oreo* was her only novel.

Lou Bellamy Rare Book Collection





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