

## Reflections from the National Director



### Greetings ABWH Members:

I am delighted to re-launch TRUTH. While visiting my parent's home I came across an early issue of TRUTH from 1995. Most of the content pertained to job/conference announcements, a membership application, as well as, good news reports about the membership. I read about a conference I attended in Boston to speak on behalf of African American domestic workers, on behalf of Dr. Elizabeth Clark-Lewis. Where has the time gone?

We are firmly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and ABWH is moving forward with communication media of the day. Lopez Matthews maintains our Facebook presence ever posting insightful news of interest, while Perzavia Praylow does a grand job of keeping our Google Group roster current. I have to thank our webmaster, Marshanda Smith for the excellent job in redesigning and introducing new functions to our website. I cannot begin to list the names of all persons who contribute information thank you and continue to do so. As I reflect on my first year as National Director, I am overwhelmed by the direction of society. In all aspects of civility the hands of time are slowly moving backwards in the midst of the golden era of the Information age. In motion pictures, *The Help* marketed as a polite, civil rights era story of working class African American women and one white liberal working to expose and dismantle racial segregation skyrocketed to the top of box office sales during its opening weekend.



Concurrently, at the behest of Daina Ramey Berry, Tiffany Gill, Kali Gross and Janice Sumler-Edmond, along with several other ABWH members crafted an open statement that has garnered responses from across America, as well as, several countries in Europe. For those who have not read our open statement visit [abwh.org](http://abwh.org) and find it at the bottom of the homepage. There is the need for activist scholarship. Too often academics

remain cloistered in their erudite, insular worlds that result in irrelevancy to rising generations, as well as, informed adults seeking to have informed exchanges. We the historians, particularly of the Black women's experience, have an element of

the solution and need to make our impact felt in small and great ways. It is my hope that ABWH can engage mistruths in all forms continuing in the tradition of our foremothers. With the re-launch of TRUTH this publication will document our collective voices electronically and in-print for generations to come.

*Enjoy!*  
**Ida E. Jones**

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“Highly Respected by All Who Knew Her”

*Sherry Edmunds-Flett*

Adhering to the Victorian ideal of womanhood and respectability by working within the home afforded protection from existing racist stereotypes about Black women. Respectability was largely embraced by the middle class African Canadian women who settled in early New Westminster and by those who also migrated to the city of Vancouver from central Canada and the Pacific Northwest.

Its definition stretched to include single, widowed and married women living in the same neighbourhoods as sex trade workers who were part of Vancouver's criminal subculture. An examination of boarding house operator Mrs. Mahala Jenkins' brutal murder shows that this young woman was victimized twice, once by the man who killed her and secondly through the local newspapers who sullied her reputation. Well thought of by her family and friends, Mrs. Jenkins' unnatural death lay bare how fragile and contested respectability was for African Canadian women in British Columbia.

The province's nineteenth century Black community was largely concentrated in and around the city of Victoria on Vancouver Island, the coal mines near Nanaimo and on rural, Saltspring Island. Smaller numbers settled in towns and cities dotted along the banks of the province's inland waterways and the trails and wagon routes established during the Fraser River Gold Rush (1858-1860) and Cariboo Gold Rush (1860s).

Many of the women who migrated to British Columbia during this period came with middle class families that had a father or husband with a trade that could afford them the choice to work within the home, raising their children and taking care of the household. Migration occurred within the province as women, their spouses and families moved from place to place, taking advantage of economic opportunities to better themselves.

Fanny Deas nee Harris and her husband John Sullivan Deas, a manufacturer and dealer in hardware, stoves and tinware, lived in the small town of Yale on the banks of the Fraser from 1866 to 1868. During this period Fanny gave birth to their eldest son Robert in December 1866. Approximately, a year and a half later in September 1867, *The British Colonist* reported that John fell from a house and fractured an arm. By the fall of 1868, Fanny, John and Robert Deas were residing in Victoria where John opened hardware and stove business at the corner of Fort and Broad Streets.

Shortly after moving to Vancouver Island, tragedy struck the Deas household when twenty month old Robert died on September 7, the same day Fanny gave birth to his brother James. The Deas family continued to live in Victoria for the next four years. They relocated to the Lower Mainland after John Deas changed his occupation from store owner to salmon canner. About ten miles from the mouth of the Fraser River, he leased Webster's Fishery. The business employed twenty five men and kept four boats constantly fishing.

A year later in 1873, it expanded when John Sullivan Deas pre-empted sixty acres on what became known as Deas Island at the mouth of the Fraser River. Fanny was busy taking care of a large household with seven children who lived to adulthood including their last child Adelaide who was born on February 27, 1877. Unfortunately, after canning salmon for three years, John Deas contracted tin poisoning. Fanny and the children then moved to Portland Oregon where she bought a rooming house.

After his affairs were wrapped up and the canning business was sold, Deas followed his family to Portland where he died on July 22, 1880.

Respectability also meant giving birth to children within the bonds of marriage. Lucinda Hall, widowed daughter of Nancy and Charles Alexander moved from Victoria on Vancouver Island and married William Mortimer, a native of the Bahamas in New Westminster on September 14, 1887. Travelling over from Victoria, her mother Nancy and childhood friend Mary Phelps were witnesses for the wedding. Settling in New Westminster, Lucinda gave birth to son Oscar, two months later with her mother as the accoucheur or midwife for his birth. Within the next twelve years, Lucinda and William had six more additions to their family sons Ebenezer who was named after William's father and Norman plus daughters Gertrude, Maude, Mamie and their last child Gladys born in 1901. William supported the family as a cook and hotelkeeper until his death in October of 1902. By that time, the Mortimer family had moved from New Westminster and were living in Vancouver.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, a growing Vancouver challenged Victoria's pre-eminence in the British Columbia economy. With lower freight costs, better connections to inland as well as coastal trade, railway and lumber production, it became the provincial hub. By 1901, Vancouver's population growth surpassed Victoria's by approximately six thousand people. Mirroring this economic shift, the centre of British Columbia's African Canadian community moved from Vancouver Island/Saltspring Island and New Westminster to Vancouver.

Maria Stark, daughter of Sylvia and Louis Stark of Saltspring Island, married Joseph Wallace, on May 20, 1897 in Vancouver. Living in the city afterwards for over fifty years, Maria became a housewife, raising the couple's five children while Joseph had his own janitorial business.

After moving from New Westminster to Vancouver, Phillip, Josephine, Arthur and Charles Sullivan cleared much of old Granville. Both Charles and Arthur signed the petition for Vancouver's incorporation in 1885. Phillip died the following year in Granville on February 25, 1886. Five years later, Josephine was listed as living with Arthur, owner operator of a general store in Gastown, his wife, son, brother Charles and two servants. Josephine Sullivan was a pious woman and an acknowledged pillar of respectability within the wider community. After her death, Reverend Charles Montgomery Tate, a missionary to the local Aboriginal people, said "Mrs. Sullivan was the first Methodist in Vancouver and that services were held in her kitchen before the Indian church was built."

The railroad made it much easier for couples and those with families to make the trek from central Canada to the west coast. One of those families included were Martha Scurry, her husband Hiram, a barber and their children. Nineteen year old Martha French married thirty three year old Hiram Scurry in Owen Sound, Ontario on New Year's Eve December 31, 1867. The couple resided in Owen Sound for a number of years and then Thunder Bay, Ontario, living there in 1881. A year later, the family moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba where two children were born-daughter Catherine who was

named after Martha's mother on March 15, 1882 and son Peter Edward in 1886. That same year, Hiram and Martha Scurry travelled to Vancouver with their seven children, working and buying property in the Hastings town site known today as East Vancouver.

Example shows, migration flowed both ways between British Columbia and the United States in the first decade of the twentieth century. Some women and their families moved from British Columbia to Washington State and further down the coast to Oregon and California. With its booming economy, Vancouver was wide open and had an active criminal subculture that reflected diverse ethnic backgrounds. There were a substantial number of Black women involved in the underground economy who had come from the Pacific Northwest to the city during this period. Some were sex trade workers or "sporting women" as they were called then. Others were the girlfriends of the gambling or dice men who congregated at private clubs like the Eureka and the Railway Porters Club, horse racing tracks and saloons-places where criminal activity often took place. Although it is difficult to track their movements, details about the lives of these women of African descent can be obtained by combining information from the census for the years 1891, 1901 and 1911, police charge books, oral histories, newspaper accounts, city directories and other records. Most sex trade workers of African descent who lived in Vancouver at the turn of the twentieth century had only been in the province for a few years. Some of the women lived in brothels in a red light district bordering Hastings, Gore, Alexander, Dupont and Pender Streets in East Vancouver.

## HIGHLY RESPECTED BY ALL WHO KNEW HER

Born in the United States, Ida Wesley had come to Canada in 1895. Enumerated in the 1901 census as a sporting woman, she was living as a lodger in Mary Vincent's house along with Ethel Woods and Ada Gilbert. In April 1904, Ida Wesley was charged with being an inmate of a bawdy house at 130 Hastings Street East. Convicted, she was fined fifty dollars and costs or two months in jail. (Ida did the time.) Other women like Estella Burs plied their trade on the street and were called streetwalkers, often supplementing their income with other unlawful activities such as pick pocketing and petty theft. A neighbour of Ida Wesley's in 1901, prostitute Grace Hill was charged on April 27, 1907 with the theft of sixty five dollars from J. F. Cline "with whom she had been doing business." Committed to trial, Miss Hill was released when Mr. Cline did not turn up at court.

Brothels co-existed with businesses, boarding houses and homes in the Downtown Eastside. A "sporting house" on Dupont Street managed by two Black women however raised the ire of an area resident. He wrote Vancouver City Council in 1906 stating that the "conduct of the two coloured girls [was] in the extreme reprehensible... they harbour[ed] white girls who [were] visited and debauched by coloured men and chinamen who induced them to smoke opium and indulge in many unnatural practices." The police chief had up to that point had done nothing about this situation. The description of the brothel on Dupont Street certainly fanned the flames of racism that were prevalent at the time in Vancouver. Along with economic growth in the downtown area and pressure from vice reformers, it spurred city council to pass

bylaws making it illegal to use a property with the city limits for immoral purposes. The women at the Dupont brothel hired a lawyer and fought the new regulation in court to no avail. Given ten days to vacate their premises, it appeared through newspaper reports that they complied and moved elsewhere. But internal police records suggest that this did not happen. The women moved away but came back to the area to ply their trade.

Some of the women working in houses of ill fame were listed as having other jobs such as hairdressers, milliners, musicians and seamstresses. Patrick Dunae in his excellent work on prostitution in Victoria during 1860 to 1914 notes that occupations listed often camouflaged the vocation of sex trade worker and that "the challenge for historians is to see behind the disguises." Although, this is a good assumption to consider, women went in and out of prostitution depending on their economic circumstances and not everyone who worked in a brothel was a sex trade worker. Working class women "stressed family survival and individual self respect more than public propriety." Some women were actually employed as cooks, housekeepers or musicians in these houses of ill repute, supplementing their income or that of their families. One such woman was Rosa Crawford, a housekeeper living in Vancouver, was arrested on June 20, 1910 for being a piano player in a house of prostitution at 626 Park Lane. She was charged with vagrancy but the charge was ultimately dismissed.

Most married women were listed in the census as housewives. Working within the family home was seen as a way that

Black women could be part of the Victorian ideal of womanhood. Matilda Picket, a native of Marion County Tennessee, lived with her husband Edward Boynton in Vancouver for over fifty five years. Born enslaved, Matilda worked as a child in the fields and "washed, ironed and scrubbed for people." "Having travelling on her mind," Matilda came to Vancouver by 1909 with money she earned by picking cotton. By the time she was married to her second husband Mr. Boynton, Mrs. Boynton had retired from the public sphere and was a housewife in the couple's home at 4195 Fraser Street.

Widows like charwoman Luemma Cunningham, Martha Scurry who took in the occasional boarder or Mary Earls who worked as a servant and housekeeper to support her daughter Elizabeth were the women acknowledged as employed. Another working couple, Mahala Jenkins and her husband John B. Jenkins, were part of the working poor. Interested in exploring their economic opportunities, they had only recently migrated to Vancouver from Seattle Washington in 1904. John Jenkins kept the bootblack stand at the Atlantic Saloon. 'Mahaly' as she was known, operated a boarding house at 237 Prior Street in Vancouver, helping to make ends meet by renting rooms out to other Black women. It was there on August 24, 1908, shortly after 1:30pm, Mahala Jenkins was murdered. According to the police who first reported on the murder in the incident log, she was "a nameless woman of African descent." This was unlike every white woman's case before or after her. Systemic racism saw that white women were given the due respect of their name but not Mrs. Jenkins.



## HIGHLY RESPECTED BY ALL WHO KNEW HER

She was referred only as a Negro woman murdered on Prior Street.

Initial reports of the murder found in the *World* and the *Daily News-Advertiser* stated that Mrs. Jenkins was murdered by an African American man named Jack Pertella after a quarrel over room rent. According to these reports, Pertella hailed originally from Dalles, Oregon and was about 5' 7" tall. An acquaintance of Mahala Jenkins' husband, he had lived with the Jenkins the previous winter. Unemployed, he had been provided with free board and lodging as he promised he would pay when he was able to. Although he had money several occasions afterwards, Pertella never paid them. Before he left on a six week prospecting trip through British Columbia, John Jenkins told his wife not to let the man back into the house unless he paid the room rent that he owed for the previous winter. When Jack Pertella came back to the city on the Sunday before the murder, he went directly to the house where Mrs. Jenkins would not let him in as he did not have the money. He told her he was going to get the money that evening and would pay her the next day. She believed his story. It appears that it was this ruse he used to get into the house on that fateful Monday afternoon.

The newspapers stated that another Black woman named Geneva Montgomery, who roomed at the house, told police that a struggle had taken place before Mahala Jenkins was killed. Mrs. Montgomery sworn under oath in court at the preliminary hearing held on August before A. Williams Police Magistrate, that she only knew the accused by sight as she had only moved to the Prior Street boarding house on the 8 of July, 1908.

Present in the house on Monday August 24, she described how before noon the doorbell rang and then there was a knock at the front door and then at the back door. Mrs. Jenkins got up and asked who it was. Geneva couldn't hear the reply but then heard Mrs. Jenkins come back into her room. The doorbell rang again shortly thereafter and Mrs. Jenkins went through the hall to the front door. Geneva Montgomery said she could hear her talking to somebody but couldn't understand what she was saying except the statement "You don't owe me anything."

At about 2:00pm in the afternoon, the doorbell rang again. Geneva Montgomery got out of her bed in the front room to look out the window and saw it was the accused standing on the porch. Mrs. Jenkins went through the hall to the door and told Jack Pertella to come in. She then came to Geneva Montgomery's room and asked her to write a receipt for the rent money. Receipt in hand, Mahala Jenkins went across the hall to her own room where Jack Pertella was waiting. Hearing screaming and the sound of a fight, Geneva Montgomery went to Mrs. Jenkins' room where it appeared that Jack Pertella and Mahala Jenkins were scuffling. She returned to her own room. At that time, she heard Mrs. Jenkins running down the hall. Miss Montgomery quickly went to her door and saw Mrs. Jenkins lying in a bloody pool at the foot of the steps inside the house with Jack Pertella stooping over her. Stepping out into the hall, Geneva Montgomery begged Jack Pertella not to kill Mrs. Jenkins. He replied to her "I told her, I was going to kill her and I meant it and I will kill you too."

At that point Geneva Montgomery jumped out of her bedroom window, ran across the street and asked them to telephone the police. She remained there until the police came. Geneva Montgomery gave police a detailed description and the search began for Jack Pertella. Mahala Jenkins' body was taken to Centre and Hanna's Mortuary in Vancouver where an inquest was held the next morning on

August 25. One day after the murder, Jack Pertella turned himself into the custody of Constable Edmund Pope, Municipal Constable for Maple Ridge, British Columbia. He was taken on the Canadian Pacific Railway passenger train to Vancouver where he was placed that evening in the custody of Sergeant Preston who had been the police officer who had escorted Geneva Montgomery back to the house after being questioned on the day of the murder. Warning Jack Pertella several times that anything he said could be used against him in a court of law, Sargeant Preston arrested him and charged him with the murder of Mrs. Mahala Jenkins. Pertella did not deny the charge and fact said he was guilty. But when he was arraigned at the preliminary hearing and formally committed to trial, he changed his mind and pled "not guilty."

Doctor W.A. McTavish who arrived on the scene about forty five minutes after the attack testified at the preliminary hearing on August 27 that he had examined Mahala Jenkins lying on her back in a pool of blood and pronounced her dead. A sharp instrument had been used to stab her many times in the upper chest, head, neck and arms. In his opinion, the cause of death was the wound received to the neck. The cut was very deep and severed the jugular veins. The windpipe as well as the muscle and nerves in the front of the neck were also severely damaged. Dr. B.W.D. Gillis who performed the post-mortem examination on Mrs. Jenkins stated at the preliminary that the wounds were not self inflicted as they were too extensive.

Mahala Jenkins' funeral took place the afternoon of Saturday September 5, 1908 at the Armstrong and Edwards'

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funeral parlour. The service officiated by Reverend J. H. Barbour was "largely attended by many of her friends" and had numerous beautiful floral tributes. Very little is known about Mrs. Jenkins in life. She had been a healthy 24 year old woman, married and without children. Another known fact about her was that she often wore a wig. This was not surprising as many Black women during this time either straightened their hair or wore a wig. Mahala Jenkins could not write very well and that is why she asked for Geneva Montgomery's help, Geneva testified at the trial. She had at least one surviving family member besides her husband John, an unnamed sister who travelled the long distance from Oklahoma to attend her funeral service. After the service, Mahala Jenkins was interned in Vancouver's Mountain View Cemetery without a tombstone.

Jack Pertella's trial began over a month later on October 22 before Judge J. Clement and a jury. Geneva Montgomery was the first witness called. Giving a more detailed account of the events of August 24 than she had at the preliminary hearing, she stated that Jack Pertella had come to the house at 9:00am that morning and later that day between 12:00pm and 1:00pm and then again at two in the afternoon. In cross-examination she described how she was a married woman living there at Mrs. Jenkins' house with her married sister Velma Matthews who was not present at the time of the murder. (Mrs. Matthews said in her later testimony that she knew John Pertella having met him a year or so earlier in Long Beach California.)

As a witness in his own defense, John Pertella described his alleged affair with Mahala Jenkins. His carefully crafted story depicted Mahala Jenkins as a woman of immoral character who had been married three times and propositioned him because her husband wasn't good in bed. They became lovers according to Pertella and carried on a torrid romance right under the nose of John Jenkins. With his wages as an

itinerant plasterer, Pertella supposedly gave Mrs. Jenkins money to buy anything she wanted including patent leather shoes and a pair of slippers. He stated in court that he found Mrs. Jenkins in bed with another "coloured man" on Sunday morning August 23. Disgusted with her, he said the only reason he came back the next day was to pay her the rent money not to kill her. In cross examination by the crown prosecutor, he disagreed with Geneva Montgomery's version of events. He said he could not remember anything after he first hit Mahala Jenkins or how many times he had stabbed her with his switchblade knife.

The local newspapers in Vancouver picked up and played upon Pertella's wild allegations. In its October 22 edition, *The Daily Province* published an article titled "Made an Illicit Love Compact." It stated that "An illicit compact between Jack Pertella and Mrs. J.B. Jenkins for whose murder he is now on trial for his life was revealed to the surprised auditors in court today, within an hour after his trial began." With no one there to defend her, Mrs. Mahala Jenkins was left to the mercy of the press who fed upon John Pertella's lies. The sexual overtones of the case easily fed into the stereotypes that many whites had about Black men and women even though Pertella's testimony stood in stark contrast against the facts given by every other witness on the stand. Many of the claims he had made could not be substantiated.

For instance, upon cross-examination, he could not provide through witnesses, pay stubs or any other material evidence any details confirming his employment. The focus shifted from the

brutal murder of a woman that the *Daily Advertiser* had first described as "highly respected by all who knew her" to a torturous and imaginary love triangle.

Why did Jack, alias John Pertella, weave his complicated story of love and betrayal? Why from the time when he turned himself into Constable Pope had he stated that he had an affair with the married Mrs. Jenkins? Basically, he was trying to create a reason for the tragic death of Mahala Jenkins through a pattern of what is referred to as prior consistent statements. Knowing that Geneva Montgomery was a witness who placed him at the scene of the crime, Pertella tried to concoct a story where he was not guilty of what is referred to in the Criminal Code Part V111 Section 229 as culpable homicide or murder. This section states that "Culpable homicide is murder" if the person who causes the death of a human being 1) A means to cause his death 2) A means to cause him bodily harm that he knows is likely to cause his death and is reckless whether death ensues or not." In his charge to the jury, Judge Clement explained if Jack Pertella was found guilty of this charge that there was no other choice at this time but to put him to death- the law as it stood under Canada's federal criminal code. He stressed to the jury that they needed to look at only the evidence before them and make up their minds. At 5:07pm the jury retired and at 5:48 pm they returned with a guilty verdict thereby sentencing John Pertella to death. *The Daily News Advertiser* reported "Pertella to be hanged. Terrible sentence of death pronounced on the Negro who slew his paramour." Again Pertella's assertion that Mahala Jenkins was his lover was repeated. E. Woods, Pertella's lawyer,

filed for an appeal of Pertella's death sentence. He argued that "the accused's offence was one of manslaughter in the heat of passion and the first blow was given by the deceased...."

Confined to the common gaol at New Westminster until his December 18 execution date, Jack Pertella had still not finished committing savage acts of violence. Unrepentant to the end, Pertella only eleven days before he was to be hung, smashed a bottle over the Warden's head as he was doing his morning rounds. Nevertheless on the appointed date December 18, 1908, John aka Jack Pertella was hanged. In the courtyard amongst the spectators was John B. Jenkins the husband of Mahala Jenkins who had travelled from his new home in Dalles, Oregon to witness the execution.

Middle class African Canadian women who settled in early New Westminster and Vancouver lived largely within the private sphere. They married and then worked within the household raising children. Supporting themselves and their families, single and widowed women were employed within the public sphere as servants, housekeepers, janitors/charwomen and cooks. The turn of the twentieth century saw a growing Vancouver challenge Victoria's preeminence in the provincial economy. Mirroring this shift, the centre of British Columbia's Black community moved from Victoria/Saltspring Island and New Westminster to Vancouver. Migration flowed easily between Central Canada, British Columbia and the United States due to the advent of the railroad. With its booming economy, Vancouver was also home to an active criminal subculture. A substantial number of women involved in the underground economy as sex trade workers came from the Pacific Northwest. Operating outside of the prevailing norm of respectability, they plied their trade on the streets and inside brothels in East Vancouver. However, the working class women who came on their own or with husbands during this period,

However, the working class women who came on their own or with husbands during this period, wanting to seize the opportunity to create a better life for themselves, still operated within "the norm." Mahala Jenkins was one such woman. Young and married, she was victimized twice-once by her brutal murder at the hands of Jack Pertella and secondly by the local newspapers who unquestionably accepted the lies he fed to them. If Mrs. Jenkins had been carrying on an affair with Jack Pertella, people would have been conspicuous in their absence from the events honouring her life. The mention of many floral tributes, a well attended service and the simple words "highly respected by all who knew her" gave silent witness to the truth.

**By Sherry Edmunds-Flett**

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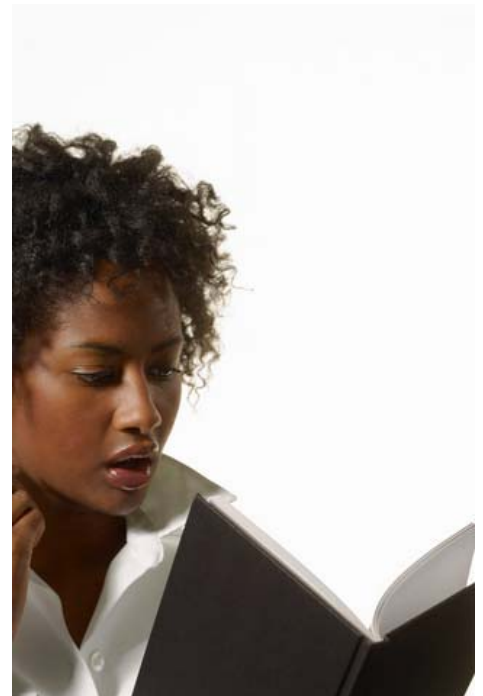
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## It is Essential that They Know: Promoting the Historical Profession in the Classroom

*Rose C. Thevenin*



The classroom is a venue for discussing past and current trends in the historical profession. It provides a platform for informing students about the many questions left unanswered and unaddressed in their chapters. When teaching courses in history, it is essential that students know and understand what historians do, how they do it and why historical research is important in scope and content.

The historian's craft is not only to disseminate information about historical events but to constantly make connections between the past and the present in the classroom.

Generally, students read the text and don't bother to skim the footnotes or complete the supplementary readings. Their main focus is to read and finish Chapter X as quickly as possible because it is required for the next exam. It is essential to present competing historical paradigms, methods and arguments in the classroom by incorporating historiography of relevant course content. It is also noteworthy to mention historian X's past work and latest work on a related topic. How can students be expected to remember authors and titles, when it is hard enough to get them to simply remember time, place, dates and link causes and effects?

It is up to scholars to demand undergraduate and graduate students identify authors of past and present works published in our field on their exams. It is not necessary to discuss the long list of historians who have published on one particular topic.

Professors can mention two or three scholars from that cluster of scholarship so that students can link names to specific works. Granted, the selection process for the inclusion or selection of historians may or may not be biased based on the instructor's interest. If the main objective is student learning, the greatest benefit to students is the professor's opportunity to peel the multiple layers of condensed chapter data in the textbooks by crediting scholarly contributions in the classroom instead of awaiting the added footnote at the end of the chapter, in the bibliography or chapter index.

When teaching survey courses in history, students must know and understand vast differences between major historical works and must be familiar with past and present debates concerning bibliographies. Comparing and contrasting various works expose students to opposing views and differing interpretations of historical events.





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It is also effective to briefly recite a paragraph from each of the works and pass the books and sources of information in class for students to touch, feel and closely examine the texts. It may take a few seconds for students to flip the pages and view the book or resource cover, but in that brief allotted time, the historical work has been removed from the shelf and the historian's craft is placed directly in student hands. Scholars and historians are no longer unseen and untouchable and the historian's craft is less abstract but more concrete.

Too often professors utilize videotapes, CDs and DVDs which include commentaries from notable historians and scholars. The tape flashes photographs and commentaries as some students doze or remain unfazed by the images on the screen. It is worthwhile to mention leadership roles including present and forthcoming works from featured individuals on the featured film. It is not enough to simply lecture about facts and figures and send the students to the library to read selected articles on a related topic. The identification of historians and scholars will not necessarily encourage students to enroll in history and other disciplines in record numbers, or change their major field of study but, it will impart and promote knowledge about the rigors of academia.

Some may dismiss components of teaching historiography at the undergraduate level. Others may argue that when they are trying to compress pertinent facts into their limited time for weekly lectures, there isn't enough time to include names and book titles into presentations and lectures. Informing students about past and current trends in scholarship does not detract or diminish course content, and does not promote vanity or self-centeredness. It reminds students that our field is constantly evolving and that old and new trends keep our profession ever more vibrant. It is essential to remind students of what's been done in the past, what is being presently written and what remains to be uncovered.

Incorporating historiography provides avenues for instructors to assign students to complete extra credit which can include book reports and reviews on the latest publications and familiarize students with vast online resources on the course content. Will students who work one or more jobs during their college years have the time to go to the library, look up and read specific other works? Some will not, but given the opportunities to earn extra points to be added to the next exam or to their present grades, some will jump at the chance to boost their grade average. The advantage is that extra credit provides yet another opportunity to expose students to other course materials in the discipline omitted from the textbooks.

Too often instructors are "bogged down" with semester deadlines for exams and academic calendars. There is no time for long discussions on selected topics or even to mention authors and works. Let us not forget that scholars such as W.E.B. Dubois and Booker T. Washington were known not only for their leadership, but also for their scholarship. In fact, what is a lecture on Booker T. Washington if there is no discussion of his speech at the Atlanta Exposition, his contributions to Tuskegee Institute, his leadership of the National Negro Business League or the works of historian Louis R. Harlan? What is a discussion of W.E.B. Dubois without any mention of his major works especially *The Souls of Black Folk* or *The Philadelphia Negro*, including his contributions to the Niagara Movement, the NAACP, *The Crisis* and the scholarship of historian David Levering Lewis? African-American history cannot be taught without any mention of the late John Hope Franklin.

Women's history cannot be taught without adequate recognition of the multiple roles of women across race, class, gender and sexuality.

It is necessary to inform students about the ongoing engagements within the historical profession. We should take the time to mention some professional organizations in our classrooms especially the Organization of American Historians (OAH), the American Historical Association (AHA), the Southern Historical Association (SHA), the Association of Black Women Historians (ABWH), and the Southern Association of Women Historians (SAWH). Historians of today are ever changing the field and if historians can promote the works of historical figures, time must also be allotted to elevate and elaborate on what it is about our field that makes it so special.

Informing students of authors, titles and organizations provides a medium for owning and shaping our craft. It is essential that they, the students know who we are and what we do. Students should understand that as I like to say, we make history everyday and that historiography is ever changing. All works are subject to discussion and revision, which are not always reflected in textbooks. The more they know, the more they can appreciate and respect the historian's craft. It is time to reclaim our past yet, still connect to the ever-changing present. ■

**By Rose C. Thevenin**

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## **“For it was Not Done in the Corner” : Princess Laura Adorkor Kofey**

***By Natanya Duncan***

On March 8, 1928 Princess Laura Adorkor Kofey was assassinated while speaking at a UNIA meeting in Miami. She received acclaim within the organization for her ability to revive struggling UNIA Divisions in the Southeast and attract new membership. Between 1926 and 1928, she held “camp-style mass meeting” at baseball fields, public parks, church sanctuaries, and Masonic Lodge Halls such that the overflow forced many listeners to stand outside the edifices and line adjacent streets.

Her message was imbued with the rhetoric of Black Nationalism of the 1920s, the tenets of the UNIA program and her experiences as an African Prophetess. What she called for was simple: African-Americans needed to make credible preparations to return to the interior of Africa.

Unlike Marcus Garvey, Kofey did not advocate repatriation to Liberia, but encouraged emigration to less developed areas of the continent. The Ghanaian Princess Kofey brought to the UNIA an African female perspective on repatriation. She presented a native woman's voice in response to the UNIA's “missionary” schemes outlined in the objectives co-authored by Amy Ashwood. As a campaigner for the UNIA's programs, she also echoed the concerns of other UNIA women for the return to stricter moral codes of conduct within the organization. She also led extended discussions on the need for African-American men to work in cooperation with women to steer the course for racial progress.

### **The Mysterious Warrior Mother of Africa**

Born in 1875 outside of Accra, Ghana she migrated to the United States. Her early life recounts the difficulties women of African descent often encountered when attempting to enter

throughout the Diaspora from her native Africa to Canada. Along the way, she went to the Panama Canal Zone in 1925 as the featured guest speaker at a UNIA meeting in Colon, Panama. Her experience in Colon brought her notoriety that followed her to Detroit UNIA circles in 1926. Between 1926 and August 1927, when she visited Marcus Garvey in the Atlanta Penitentiary, Princess Kofey established branches of the Universal African Orthodox Church in New Orleans, Alabama, and Florida, while soliciting members for the UNIA and helping to revitalize fledgling branches and divisions. In this way, her work in the UNIA was similar to that of Jacques Garvey, Davis and De Mena. Kofey was heralded as a “prophet of Garveyism” while the Miami Division 286 viewed her as the “female John the Baptist.”

Historiographical considerations of Kofey by historian Barbara Bair and biographical sketches of her work in the Black Church by historian Richard Newman focus primarily on her as a religious charismatic speaker. In these accounts her contributions to Black Nationalist ideals and her role as a prominent figure in the Black Atlantic are highlighted. Her contributions to the UNIA, however, take on a new

significance when the content of her speeches, the responses of the lay membership, UNIA officials and observers are combined with her legacy, her role in America, the Caribbean and Africa. That legacy is based in large part on her church and its ability to reinterpret the UNIA's objectives. It is also based on its success, albeit limited, in actualizing a repatriation scheme. According to UNIA objectives the organization sought, “To Assist in Civilizing the Backward tribes of Africa, to strengthen the Imperialism of Bas[u]toland, Liberia, etc.,” and “To Promote a Conscientious Christian Worship among the Native Tribes of Africa.” Kofey proposed that the organization re-evaluate the necessity of sending preachers and missionaries to Africa and asserted that Africa was not backward in its religious or governmental beliefs. She argued that Africa was a continent with an elaborate and sophisticated array of spiritual beliefs and practices, Christian and otherwise.

Evidence of a Christianized Africa was first signaled by Henrietta Peters at a

New York UNIA meeting in 1919. Mrs. Peters and her husband were missionaries of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church to the Gold Coast of Africa from 1915 to 1925. In her view, the people of the interior of Africa were governed by a refined judicial system of law, order and authority which contrasted sharply with the “time-honored tradition in America” that the Negro was an uncouth.

Princess Kofey presented herself to UNIA crowds as doing the work of “her Ol’ Man God” and her father, King Kenispi and elders of her African community who decided to support a mission to America. They supplied her with credentials and power of attorney to represent them. Members of her family, who were held political office until the mid-1980s, continued to defend the legitimacy of her immediate ancestry. They also sanctioned the authority given to her by her countrymen to speak on their behalf in the United States. The message the people of Accra sent with Laura Kofey was to simply ask when and if African-Americans intended to return to their homeland. She encouraged them to come “home” to build and proposed to start and import/export business with Accra to get them started. In this way, Kofey becomes a pioneering entrepreneur and a unique advocate of African-American women’s political, social, and economic activism.

Although the UNIA claimed it was in colonization negotiations with President C.D.B. King of Liberia and sent three delegations over a six-year period in hopes of achieving a written colonization agreement, King and others in Liberia’s government claimed that this was not true. During the time

in which a credible agreement was supposedly reached, Liberia entered into a land contract with the Firestone Rubber Company and publicly denounced the UNIA. Aside from publicly disassociating itself for the UNIA, the Liberian government instituted measures that banned UNIA members from setting foot in the country by refusing them Visa’s and revoking privileges previously extended to anyone associated with the organization.

Laura Kofey presented a very different strategy for repatriation. Her plans included avoiding any reliance on already established African countries and presented greater opportunities for individual as well as collective wealth. Mother Kofey, as she became known, advised that “...those of you who go to Africa don’t go in the towns that already built up. Go in the interior and build your own towns children. Prepare to build up the old waste places. Children go way out among your people and put up your own stores, because the other fellow is going to have and isn’t going to give it away to you.”

Her strategy for repatriation was reminiscent of the American pioneer experience, where families moved to the West in search of land ownership and business opportunities. Many African-Americans during the antebellum period also looked to the West where Slavery and Jim Crow had been unsuccessful. By establishing towns like Athens, Ohio, for example, they provided themselves and their progeny a base for the creation of new communities, businesses, churches and schools.

Not only was Laura Kofey reformulating African colonization efforts, but she was one of the few recorded African women inviting African-Americans to return to their homeland. While African-Americans and various colonization societies in America and England raised funds and devised plans for the return

of slaves and their descendants to Africa, there were few recorded formal invitations to former slaves and free people of color to return to Africa. Laura Kofey’s assertion that she was sent from Africa to ask African-American if they wanted to return home, in this capacity she served as Accra’s diplomat. In some ways, Kofey’s assumption of a liaison status between Africa and the UNIA at a time when other formal channels had failed may have brought her under scrutiny.

What is clear is that she presented her message and invitation in terms readily understood by people of the Diaspora. In part, it is her presentation and central focus on the redemption of Africa as a means for the Diaspora to reclaim itself that struck a chord with UNIA members and non-members alike. The efficient womanhood of the UNIA was further highlighted by Kofey’s ability to create both fictive and literal links with Africa and Diasporic Africans despite her disagreements with UNIA officials. Her message resonated with the membership to such a degree that she was perceived as a threat and attempts were made to discredit her in both the *Negro World* and mainstream press.

Despite the *Negro World*’s declaration that she was a “fake,” her message drew massive crowds. She continued to receive speaking engagements, contributions to her church flowed uninterrupted and people throughout the Florida and Alabama allegedly demonstrated their support by buying passage on ships she attempted to purchase from the Japanese for a voyage to the Gold Coast. While Garvey and other UNIA officials, particularly UNIA lawyer and Garvey confidant J. A. Craigen, sent “directives”



to branches throughout the state banning Kofey from meetings and expelled her supporters, people continued to gravitate toward her. Garvey's response to Kofey was guided in part by a visit from Miami Division President Claude Green to the Atlanta Penitentiary in September 1927. Along with ministers in UNIA, Green disagreed with the lay membership's assessment of Kofey as "marvelous" and as responsible for the fact that "Garveyism (was) spreading like wild fire" as she had "done untold good and [was] still doing it." The lay membership's adulation for Kofey appeared on the pages of the *Negro World* and circulated throughout UNIA circles for several months. However, the sentiment of good feeling was to be short lived.

Laura Kofey is another example of the uniqueness of UNIA women and their approach to racial uplift. Her life illustrated the ideologies and practice of racial uplift that blended nationalist trends of the 1920s and the ideals expressed in the women's movement of the same period. Black Nationalism during this period has been defined as a belief that black powerlessness could be overcome by "setting up mechanisms of self-determination." It has also been defined by Wilson Jeremiah Moses as more than a mere "a dissatisfaction with conditions in the United States." The dissatisfaction felt by many African-Americans during the 1920s translated into an impetus toward self-determination throughout the African diaspora in the Western Hemisphere. Their goals were defined as "racial goals," as race was central to the environment in which they lived. These goals were well packaged by the UNIA. It was also internalized and reinterpreted by UNIA women.

As Garvey and the UNIA staged parades "through the streets of Harlem, boldly claiming those streets as (African-American) political territory," Laura Kofey encouraged her listeners to take a trip to Africa and established themselves there. After doing so, she believed that the stench from rot of

racism, low self-concept, gender bias, and ignorance that kept people of the Diaspora disconnected from the continent and their potential would replace negative propaganda about Africa and Africans in the American mind.

While Laura Kofey established churches in the United States, she only did so in the hopes that those churches would serve as links to West Africa. In looking at her travels in each city where she established a church, there was a connection to major ports or other modes of transportation. This was not an accident. In keeping with the goals of her diplomatic mission, Kofey appeared to seek ports of call where trade and transport of goods could occur. Her Florida converts claimed that the choice of Jacksonville as her home in America was due in large part to the city's relative proximity to Africa. Kofey's intention was to ship and receive goods between the two continents, thus creating a twentieth century triangle of trade run for and by Africans and their Diasporic cousins.

As a native of Africa, Kofey believed that Diaspora blacks needed to know more about their heritage and the lives of persons living in Africa. She proposed to initiate an import/export relationship between the UNIA and her father's kingdom in Accra. At the time of her death, it was believed that King Kinespi of Accra would come to the United States to have her murder investigated. This never occurred, however. Her connection with Accra and King Kinespi has generated some debate both during her lifetime and among historians since. While the UNIA began the rumor of her forged ancestry to discredit her, it also urged government officials to deport her in December of 1927. In recent years the contention over her authenticity as an African appears to have been settled by Richard Newman, where correspondence with her family and church followers has substantiated the legitimacy of her claims.

## Laura Kofey Persona Non Grata

Aside from their discontent with the limitations they faced within the organization and those the church placed on them, Kofey and other women also expressed dissatisfaction with the role of Christian nations in the abuses of Third World countries and the failure of the church to engage in a program of progress. They referenced the monies that flowed into churches on Sunday, while the jobless and penniless saw little or none of it. The church needed to do more, and the UNIA presented itself as a means of doing so. Laura Kofey also agreed that more needed to be done, but did not live long enough to realize her ambitions. The challenge, however, was taken up by her followers who not only formally incorporated her church, but established a Swahili dictionary to teach the language to members and sent four missions to Africa to set up schools and establish ties with the government in hopes of carrying out her import/export endeavors. Unlike the UNIA, Kofey's African Universal Church implemented practical stratagems, albeit with limited success, to redeem the Diaspora.

The second reason for Princess Kofey's "persona non grata" status in the UNIA was that her popularity was believed to threaten/dilute Garvey's power as hero. Followers of Kofey were not hers alone, but members of the UNIA. Her first and foremost call to listeners was to turn to Africa to redeem themselves and their Motherland. The redemption of Africa was not solely grounded in what the Diaspora could literally do for the continent, but in what the people of the Diaspora could do for themselves. She claimed "my God, call me out of Africa to come over here and tell you what He would have you to do," and although she claimed to be reluctant to answer the call because she was a woman, she went on to explain that God only intended to use "me until He find a man." Not only did her statements imply her divine connection, but also suggested that no man alive at the time was capable of the task. This was most damaging as Garvey had very few male allies left in the United States and infighting among Division leaders and

and the headquarters played out publicly in the African-American press. Still, Kofey never publicly denounced Garvey nor specifically named any of the UNIA men or ministers who attempted to defame her.

The third reason for Kofey being ostracized stemmed from her relationship with whites in law enforcement. Laura Kofey was arrested twice in the state of Florida after prompting from ministers and UNIA officials in each community. Her first arrest was in St. Petersburg and her second was in Jacksonville. In both instances she was bailed out of jail by her followers in a matter of hours. In each instance she was charged with disturbing the peace. J.A. Craigen, Marcus Garvey's attorney, was in Jacksonville at the time of Kofey's September 22, 1927 arrest. From eyewitness accounts and articles published in the *Negro World*, Craigen's main goal was to discredit Laura Kofey. In a telegram sent to Craigen at the Richmond Hotel in Jacksonville on October 10, 1927 Marcus Garvey, then incarcerated in the Atlanta Penitentiary, Garvey instructed Craigen to: "Insert notice in local white daily that Laura Kofey has no connection with the Universal Negro Improvement Association and Association shall not hold yourself responsible for any sums of money she may collect from the public or membership of organization for any scheme in Africa. Charter of the division that is entertaining her is revoked. Notify them of the same."

Garvey's request was preceded by a telegram on September 20, 1927, just two days before Kofey was arrested in the late hours of the night while sleeping, which read "I have given Mrs. Kofey no authority to collect funds for members for any kind of African Exodus. I know nothing of her proposition for sawmills and ships. I shall not be held responsible for activities in that damage. If the people have been defrauded, they have legal recourse. I authorize no one to give

authority to collect funds for such a purpose. If the people are so dense as not to be able to protect themselves I can do no more. I know nothing of the affair."

When taken in connection with Garvey's telegrams, the presence of Craigen in Jacksonville, and the results of her trial, Kofey's arrest suggested there was some white cooperation with the UNIA. Although complete court records are not available, excerpts from the trial indicated that while in police custody the Princess was stripped naked and searched to determine if she had any "roots on her body" or any markings that would indicate she practiced black magic. According to reports, no evidence of her being anything than a human woman was found. Judge Madison addressed Ms. Kofey as the "African woman causing all the trouble" in Jacksonville, but he dismissed her case and left her "free to carry on her program." Judge Madison's description of Kofey as the "African woman" indicated that he viewed her as a part of a separate cadre from other blacks in Jacksonville. His dismissal of the case, which included allegations of fraud and misappropriation of funds, lends some degree of credibility to Kofey's efforts on behalf of African-American s in Florida and the UNIA at large.

During Kofey's trial, J.A. Craigen appeared in court everyday with an unidentified white man. Present research has not yielded any official records that identify who he was. Eyewitness accounts state that Craigen was accompanied to court by an unidentified white man, a "body guard" and a female "secretary." While researchers agree that Craigen was in Jacksonville to investigate Kofey, no official UNIA records or the *Negro World* specify who was in his entourage or why he would need one. Initially, it appeared that the white community supported the UNIA's desire to get Kofey quiet. However, the support was temporary as the case against her was dismissed and she was free to continue preaching throughout Florida. She was unable to enjoy this freedom for long.

On March 8, 1928, the UNIA African Legion of the Miami Branch visited Laura Kofey as she spoke at the Liberty Hall located at NW 15<sup>th</sup> Street in Coconut Grove, Miami. It was a part of their routine to heckle Princess Kofey at her public appearances. The night before, Kofey supporters and the UNIA's African Legion got into a tussle. In response the police padlocked the Coconut Grove Liberty Hall and prohibited its use by either group. Rather than cancel the meeting, Kofey's followers decided to move to another location, Fox Thompson's Hall. As they were not in an official UNIA building, Kofey and her audience felt the African Legion would leave them alone. What neither she nor anyone else expected, however, was that a single shot would ring out, piercing her in the head and silencing her instantly. Allegedly the shot was fired from the back of the Fox Thompson's Hall, a distance of fifty feet, indicating that a person of some skill would have been the executioner.

Many of the men in the African Legion possessed the military training necessary to fire a gun. Historian Barbra Bair notes that many of the members of the African Legion were World War I veterans. The men alleged to have killed Kofey were Maxwell Cook, a Jamaican who served as captain of the Miami Division's Legion, James Nimmo, a Bahamian and Colonel of the Legion, and Claude Green, president of the Miami UNIA branch. Present research indicates that none of these men have military records. Whether they were the actual murderers remains in dispute.

Maxwell Cook was beaten to death by Kofey's followers shortly after the Princess fell dead. Nimmo escaped a similar fate as he recalled being handcuffed to the steering wheel of a police car. Neither he, nor any other eyewitness accounts indicated how he managed to get to the police car or why he was handcuffed. Along with Nimmo, thirteen others, all men, were arrested by the Miami Dade Police with twelve being released. Only Green was held in connection with the murder.

On June 28, 1928, he was indicted on the charge of first degree murder, and James Nimmo was indicted for being an accessory before the fact for “aiding and abetting” Green.

Eyewitness accounts claimed that Nimmo received a signal from Maxwell Cook to take the shot. Disputing these accounts, Claude Green provided documentation that he was under medical care for his diabetes and was actually home that evening as per his doctor’s recommendation. Nimmo presented witnesses that testified to his being at the meeting, but was actually on his way out when the shot was fired, leaving with seventy other men on the Legion roll. The jury returned a not guilty verdict for both defendants on July 10, 1928. Judge John D. Johnson ordered both men to remain in the custody of Robert Stokes, a UNIA member on good terms with the white community.

No subsequent investigation into the death of Maxwell Cook or any follow up investigation into the death of Laura Kofey has ever been conducted. To date, both deaths remain unsolved. After a cooling off period, James Green emigrated to Canada and James Nimmo returned to his native Bahamas. The voluntary departure of both men from Florida, and subsequently the United States, creates room for further discussion on who assassinated Laura Kofey and why. Monies for the defense of the alleged assailants were raised through donations from the UNIA membership. This was not the first time funds were solicited for the defense of accused murders within the organization. Similar strategies were employed for the defense of James Eason’s killers after his fall from grace in the UNIA. Although his killers were found guilty, their sentences were drastically reduced and both assailants freed from jail.

While Laura Kofey presented a challenge to Marcus Garvey’s leadership, she did not do so to the UNIA’s program. In fact, she based much of her church’s philosophy and

practices on the UNIA program and even used, “One God. One Aim. One Destiny,” the UNIA motto as the church’s motto. Her attempts to warn Garvey of the less than honest men in his circle during her penitentiary visit were not well received. Instead she was viewed as a threat. Her popularity, ability to mobilize her audiences among the grassroots, her direct link to Africa beyond Liberia, and her unwillingness to compromise her convictions despite pressures from the UNIA and the ministerial alliances made her a perceived threat.

Like Davis, Kofey severed her relationship with Garvey but not the UNIA. She continued to promote its goals. In fact, on the night of her murder she was speaking not on behalf of the church she was attempting to establish, but on behalf of the UNIA. Her tenure in the UNIA gained her much fanfare at the time of her death; however, it was only recently that her grave marker was discovered, as it was left unattended. Not only had she been neglected by the history books, but she was ignored by the community she helped to establish. Kofey represents the perfect example of the challenges many UNIA women faced while attempting to remain members of the organization. Contemplating her life is but one answer to the appeal by Jacques biographer Ula Taylor to have historians present considerations of the organization which “...challenge our understanding of Marcus Garvey and Garveyism and unveil the complicated reality of a black radical.”

## Laura Kofey’s Life and Lessons

Laura Adorkor Kofey’s life, her mysterious entry onto the UNIA stage and her violent death presents many challenges for historians of race, gender, the long freedom struggle and the Atlantic world. Kofey established her authority whenever she spoke publicly. She would begin by introducing herself and stating that I am a representative of the Gold Coast of West Africa seeking the welfare of African peoples everywhere.

Kofey admonished her audiences not to believe false reports that Africans were backward or that blacks lacked the capability to establish and govern their own countries. While encouraging listeners to “serve God, love your Motherland Africa,” she also encouraged them to aspire to become “dedicated men and women who are skilled workers such as engineers, carpenters, bricklayers, mechanics, ice men, and men and women trained and qualified in the professions” to help those already working in those capacities to build the Motherland. Here Kofey did something interesting. She named the “blue collar” professions and as a result gave them status by noting they had counterparts in Africa. She recognized skilled trades as important and those in them but by listing these everyday jobs she signified their importance in the building of Africa and ultimately the black nation.

Kofey’s idea of “Back to Africa” was both literal and figurative. She dreamed of a connection between Africa and her listeners. In her view, the strides that African-Americans made toward their own economic self-sufficiency were inextricably linked to the solvency of their African brothers and sisters. Kofey not only sought to build an Africa for African Americans, but also to establish a base where Africans could come to America. Her work as a UNIA loyalist, a prophetess, an entrepreneur, a teacher, and an activist in the American South, suggests her centrality as a Diasporic figure.

Kofey’s life challenged historical interpretations of the Atlantic World. The Atlantic World framework heretofore has been largely limited to the seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries. Kofey came from Accra to the United States via England much like travelers of the Atlantic Slave trade. She apparently even travelled back to Africa from the United States in early 1926. She spoke of symmetry between the people she met in Florida and those she left behind in Accra. After her death, adherents of her beliefs and aspirations continued her work. In 1944



an AUC sponsored community was established in Jacksonville, FL. Its aims were to create:

- (1) A law abiding Christian community
- (2) A memorial to Laura Kofey
- (3) An opportunity to educate the group's children
- (4) A means for cooperation with the political state
- (5) A way to live an African-American existence.

Laura Kofey's life and legacy extended far beyond the UNIA. Her presence adds to Florida's Atlantic World connections and also serves as evidence of the far reaching expanses of the UNIA. Her work also speaks to the staunch adherence of many UNIA women to the melding of both gender and nationalist goals, albeit at a price no other woman in the UNIA was asked to pay.

*By Natanya Duncan*



**Grave marker Source:**  
[www.waymarking.com](http://www.waymarking.com)

## Archives

Accra, Ghana  
Ghana Balme Library  
Kofey Family Records

Miami, Florida  
Miami Dade County Black Archives  
History and Research Center  
Historic Coconut Grove Collection

Miami, Florida  
Miami Metropolitan Archive

Montgomery, Alabama  
Alabama Department of Archives and History  
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*Jacksonville Times Union* 1923-1930  
*The Negro World* 1917-1933

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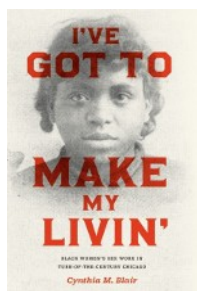
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*This article is an excerpt from a larger work on the contributions and impact women made during the formative years of the UNIA. This is glimpse into the contributions of Ghanaian born Laura Adorkor Kofey. Natanya Duncan is a Mellon HBCU Faculty Fellow at the Franklin Institute at Duke University.* ■

## African American Women's History Books: 2010-2011

### Business and Labor History



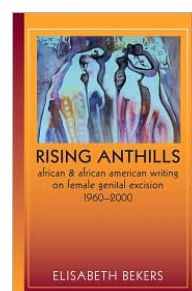
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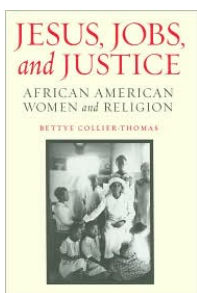


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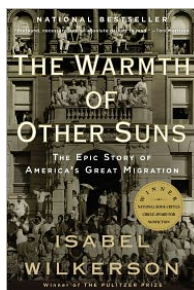


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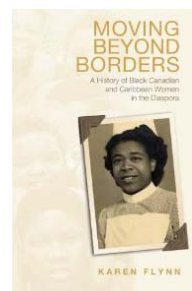


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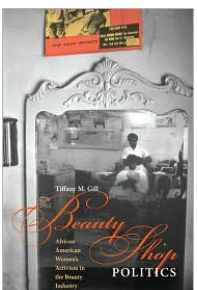
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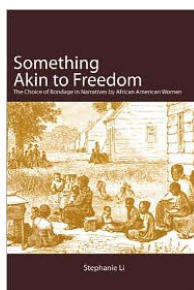


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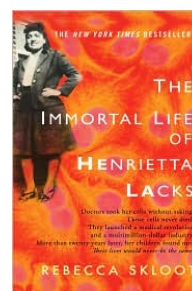


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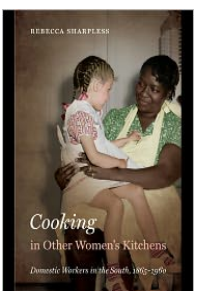
### Literary History



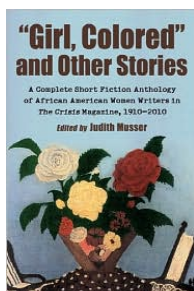
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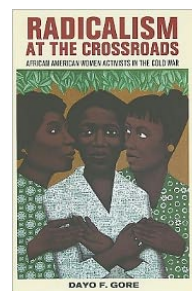


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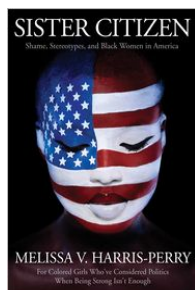
### Political History



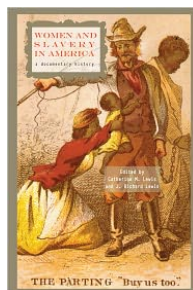
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# AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY BOOKS 2010-2011



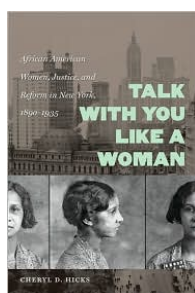
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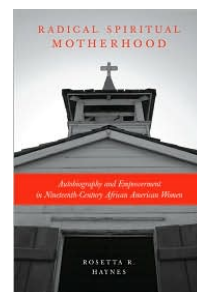
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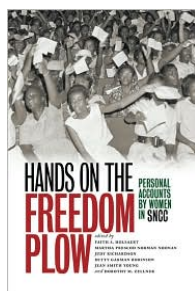
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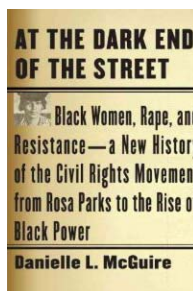
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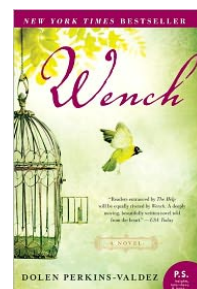


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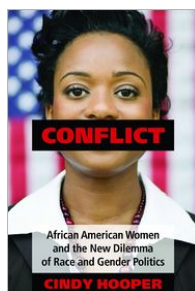


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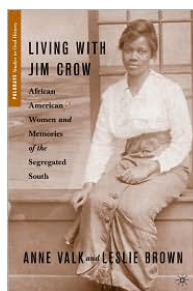
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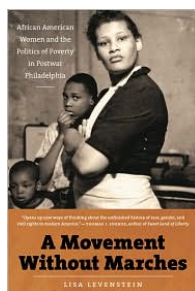


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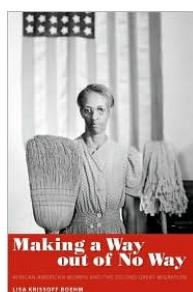
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\*Available for Kindle and Nook  
\*\*Kindle Only \*NOOK only  
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**Compiled by Glenda Alvin**  
Associate Professor and Assistant Director for Collection Management and Administration, Brown-Daniel Library, Tennessee State University





## BLACK HERITAGE



One of the most respected and influential American politicians of the 20th century, Barbara Jordan (1936-1996) captured the attention and admiration of the nation with her intelligence and integrity, eloquent oratory, ardent defense of the Constitution, and staunch advocacy of equal rights.

The **Barbara Jordan (Forever®)** stamp is the 34th in the **Black Heritage** series. Created by artist Albert Slark, the portrait of Jordan on this stamp is based on an undated black-and-white photograph from the University of Texas at Austin. The art director was Richard Sheaff.

Barbara Jordan's prodigious list of "firsts" included being the first African-American woman elected to the Texas legislature, the first African American elected to the Texas State Senate since 1883, and the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. Congress from the South. Staunchly determined to help extend social justice and federal protection of equal rights to all Americans, Jordan dedicated her life to working for the benefit of others.

In 1976, Jordan became the first woman and the first African-American to deliver a keynote address to the Democratic National Convention. Her televised speech — considered the highlight of the convention — described Americans as "a people in search of a national community ... attempting to fulfill our national purpose, to create and sustain a society in which all of us are equal."

Jordan ultimately served three terms in Congress, sponsoring and supporting legislation extending federal protection of civil rights. Her record of success ensured social justice and equal rights for more American citizens.

Issue City: Houston, TX 77210  
Issue Date: September 16, 2011  
Issue Series: Black Heritage

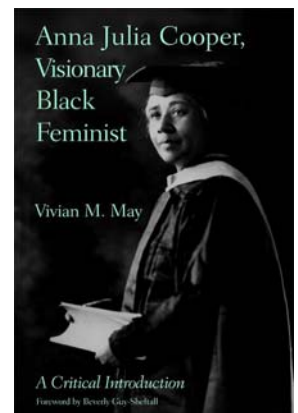
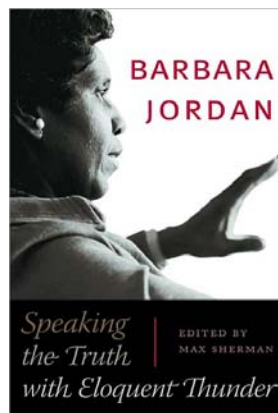


On June 11, 2009, in Washington, DC, the Postal Service™ issued a 44-cent **Anna Julia Cooper** commemorative stamp, designed by Ethel Kessler of Bethesda, Maryland.

With the 32nd stamp in its **Black Heritage** series, the U.S. Postal Service® honors Anna Julia Cooper, an educator, scholar, feminist, and activist who gave voice to the African-American community during the 19th and 20th centuries, from the end of slavery to the beginning of the Civil Rights movement. The stamp features a portrait of Cooper created by Kadir Nelson of San Diego, California, who based his painting on an undated photograph.

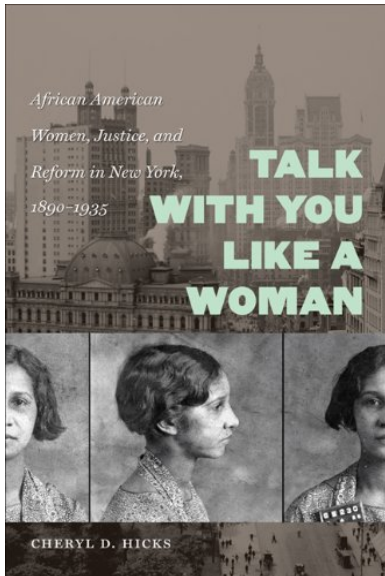
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Issue Series: Black Heritage

**Source: US Postal Service**



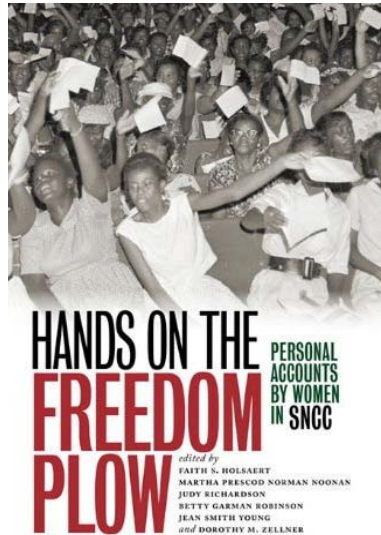
**Most recent books on Jordan and Cooper**

## *Congratulations 2011 Winners*



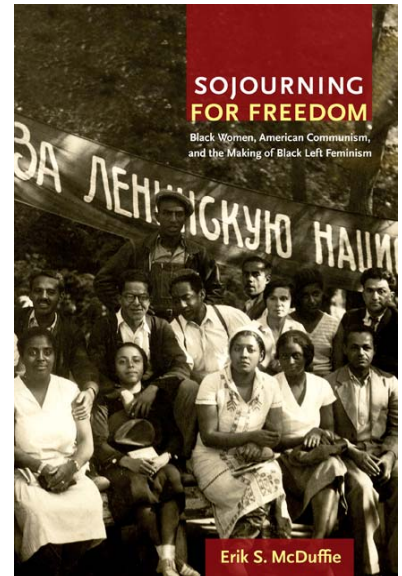
### **Best Book**

*African American Women, Justice and Reform in New York, 1890-1935* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010) by Cheryl D. Hicks



### **Best Edited Volume**

*Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC* (University of Illinois Press, 2010) edited by Faith S. Holsaert, Martha Prescod Norman Noonan, Judy Richardson, Betty Garman Robinson, Jean Smith Young, and Dorothy M. Zellner



### **Best Book**

*Sojourning For Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of the Black Left Feminism* (Duke University Press, 2011) by Erik S. McDuffie

■ **Remember:** ABWH members submit your articles, books and publications for consideration by the Letitia Woods Brown Memorial Award committee. For over 25 years the Letitia Woods Brown Award has set the standard in Black Women's historiography. ■

## Giving Honor to .....

### Darlene Clark Hine, Founding Editor of TRUTH




For your dedication, encouraging words of wisdom, service to the historical profession, and promoting the scholarship by and about black women, the members of the Association of Black Women Historians honor you.


In the words of Maya Angelou, *"You can only become truly accomplished at something you love. Don't make money your goal. Instead, pursue the things you love doing, and then do them so well that people can't take their eyes off you."*

**CONGRATULATIONS for being on the 2011 *ESSENCE* MAGAZINE POWERLIST as a TRAILBLAZER!**

We salute our ABWH Founding Editor of TRUTH and "Dean" of African American Women's History. Thank you for paving the way!

#### SPECIAL THANKS:

Marshanda Smith, Publications Director  
For the design and laying out the Special  
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For collecting, editing of articles and  
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Association of Black Women  
HISTORIANS

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