
A Catalyst for Social Activism: The Digital Black Bibliography Project



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DiBB's goal of diversifying the digital canon

“We need to reinvigorate the canon that we, as digital humanists, are constructing, a canon that skews toward traditional texts and excludes crucial work by women, people of color, and GLBTQ community. We need to reinvigorate the spirit of previous scholars who believed that textual recovery was crucial to their work, who saw the digital as a way to enact changes in the canon.”

-Amy E. Earhart, 2012.

Why bibliographies? [a library perspective]

“Whereas the universal scheme is **rigid, unresponsive, and impersonal**, the special bibliography is **flexible, sensitive, and intimate**. Whereas the former lacks any specific object, the latter is clearly focused on a definite need. If the reader can be handed an appropriate subject bibliography, he will not be confused; he will be enlightened. He will be glad to acquaint himself with its particularities, since those particularities will be the essence of his problem.”

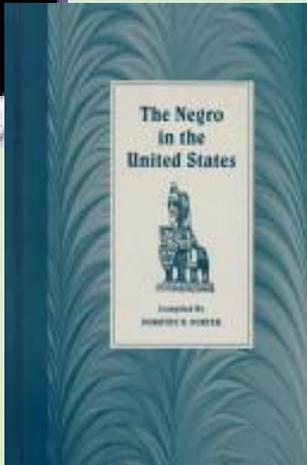
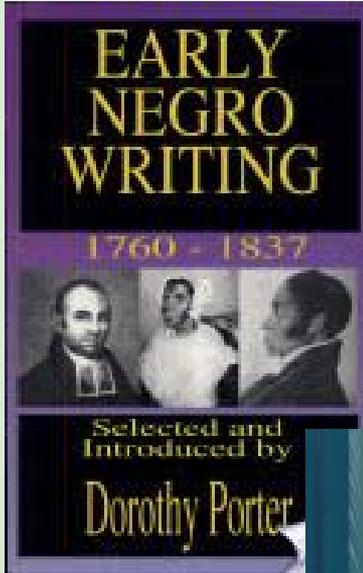
-Raynard Swank, 1944.

By transforming printed bibliographies into more granular data, we can identify, with greater precision, the **boundaries and coverage** of these works and better understand the **thematic and spatial dynamics of black cultural production**. While not primarily aimed at comparison, the tool also enables us to see where approaches overlap and diverge.

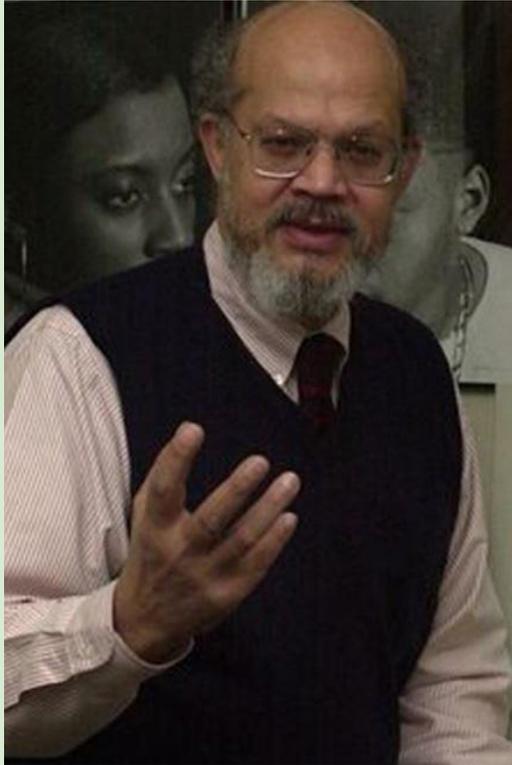
Librarian/Archivist-
-Bibliographer

Primarily responsible for the stature of Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Collection as a premiere collection on African American history (1930-1973).

Passion for sharing the legacy and history of African Americans scholarship.



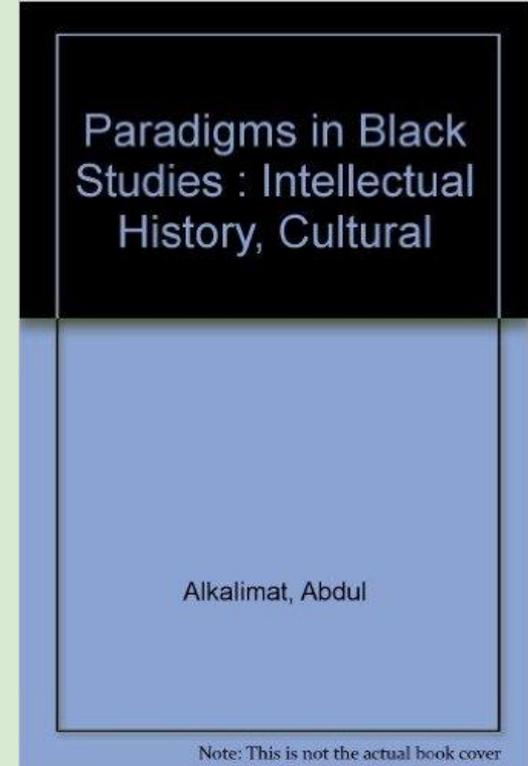
Dorothy Porter Wesley
(1905-1995)



Educator-Social
Activist-Bibliographer

3-Principles of eBlack Studies

- Cyberdemocracy
- Collective Intelligence
- Information Freedom



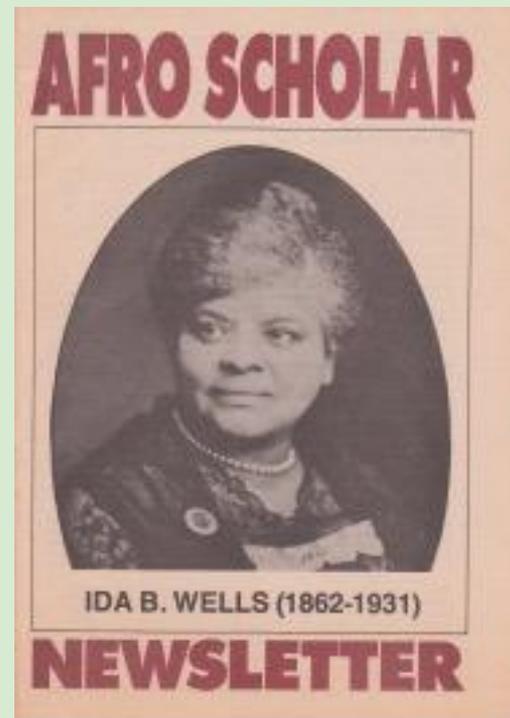
Professor Abdul Alkalimat,
Professor Emeritus of African American and Library and Information Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Traditional bibliographer
Promotes scholarship by
African/African Americans that is
comparative and seeks a space in
the Western canon.

VS

Activist bibliographer
Afro-centric perspective that
centers knowledge by and about
Black people that is expansive of
the depth and breadth of their
historical and literary production,
providing a sense of intellectual
agency on its own merit.



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Literature
Description and Travel
History

NORTHERN AFRICA

General
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Tunisia
Libya

NORTH-EASTERN AFRICA

Egypt
Sudan
Ethiopia and Eritrea
Somaliland (British Somaliland, French Somaliland and Somalia)

WESTERN AFRICA

General
Nigeria
Ghana
Sierra Leone
Gambia
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SPANISH GUINEA

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- 3208 Crespo y Gil Delgado, Carlos. *Notas para un estudio antropológico y etnológico del Bubi de Fernando Poo*. Madrid, Instituto de Estudios Africanos, 1949. 290p.
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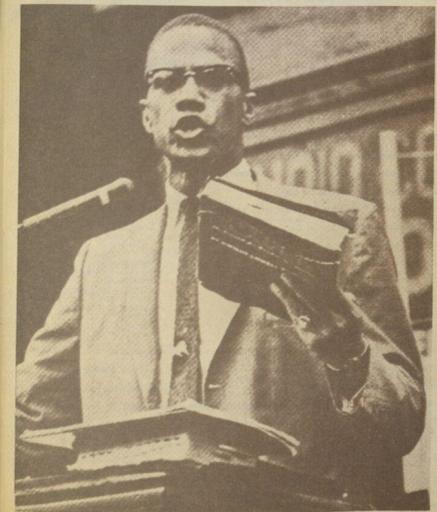
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Kentucky.
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History of
Lawrence Hi
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AFRO SCHOLAR



NEWSLETTER

Biennial Issue — 1990-1991

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"... When Black History took off, Black women were not there. And if I speak with passion and fervor, it's because I believe that until Black women, and until historians of Black people, take seriously the concept of gender our history is only partially correct."

Darlene Clark Hine



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CARLSON Publishing Inc

1991 Articles — *The Afro Scholar Newsletter*, Page 57

AFRO SCHOLAR SPRING 1984

Activities CALENDAR

APRIL 1984			
12-14	Pan African Conference	Terre Haute, IN	812/232-6311
17-20	International Association of Black Social Workers Annual Conference	Detroit, MI	212/749-0470
17-21	National Conference of Artists	Richmond, VA	212/281-6253
18-21	National Conference of Black Political Scientists	Washington, DC	504/771-3210
18-24	Midwest Sociological Society	Chicago, IL	612/376-3829
19-21	National Conference of Black Mayors	St. Louis, MO	404/892-0127
19-21	College Language Association Conference on Black Socio-Political Thought	Athens, OH	614/594-4575
26-29	West Coast Marxist Scholars Conference	Berkeley, CA	415/285-7634
26-29	Sixth Women's Writers Conference	Lexington, KY	606/257-8454
MAY 1984			
3-5	Population Association of America	Minneapolis, MN	202/393-3253
5	NYU Institute of Afro-American Affairs — "The Black Viet Nam Veterans: An Examination of Issues"	New York, NY	212/596-7095
5-6	Black Psychiatrists of America	Los Angeles, CA	202/789-7419
5-6	CARD's Third World Caucus "Fighting Racism in Our Work"	Boston, MA	202/547-4340
25-28	Coalition of Black Trade Unionists	Cincinnati, OH	202/429-1203
17-18	Illinois Comm on Black Concerns in Higher Ed "Strategies For Enhancing the Status of Blacks in Post-Secondary Education"	Springfield, IL	309/438-8827
JUNE 1984			
3-9	Operation PUSH	Washington, DC	312/373-3366
3-9	Trans Africa Annual Dinner and Meeting		202/547-2550
7-9	First International Feminist Book Fair, 1984	London, England	
10-17	Black Theater Alliance of Chicago - 10th Anniversary	Chicago, IL	312/288-7685
13-16	National Newspapers Publishers Association	Philadelphia, PA	202/638-4473
24-28	National Women's Studies Association "Steering Our Course: Feminist Education in the 80's"	New Brunswick, NJ	210/932-9220

AFRO-SCHOLAR, Volume 2, Number 3, Winter 1984. STAFF: Abdul Alkhalaf / Roland Brown / Alice Deck / Doug Gillis / Kina McFee / Aysa Mihiti / Jeaneal Walker / Audie Williams. Additional information can be obtained from the AFRO-SCHOLAR - 1204 W. Oregon, Urbana, IL 61801 U.S.A., 217/333-7781.

Unique Features

Dorothy Porter Wesley's *A Catalogue of The African Collection*

- Traditional format for books-author, title publisher, and year
- Bibliography is narrow in scope
- Covers publications by and about Africa, separated by 6 regions, then countries
- Subject breakdown
- Materials listed include books, pamphlets, periodicals, and newspapers
- Only covers titles located in Moorland's Collection at Howard University
- Each entry also includes a consecutive number
- Unique characteristic functional/usefulness- includes the cataloging numbers for locating items within the Moorland Collection

Abdul Alkalimat's *Afro-Scholar Newsletters*

- Traditional format for books-author, title publisher, and year
- Bibliography wide in scope, covering books and articles by and about Africans/African Americans
- Changing topics and formats regularly
- Art work, calendars, photos, quotes
- Dissertations in progress
- Professional Activities
- Upcoming Conferences
- Fellowships/Awards/Competitions
- Study and Travel
- Job Announcements
- Local Highlights
- On the Newsletter

Project Team + Contributors

Core Project Team ☆ Texas A&M University

☆ Amy E. Earhart ☆ Associate Professor of English ☆ *subject expertise* ☆ PI + project manager ☆ @amyeeetx

Rebecca Hankins ☆ Associate Professor, University Libraries
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Co-PI ☆ @MadBiblio

Sarah Potvin ☆ Assistant Professor, University Libraries ☆
Digital Scholarship Librarian ☆ *metadata & taxonomical expertise* ☆ Co-PI ☆ @sp_meta

Major Contributors

Nick Laiacona ☆ President, Performant Software Solutions ☆
Developed the graph database and entry forms

Umar Mohammed and Deanna Stover ☆ PhD Students,
Department of English, Texas A&M University ☆ *Inventoried
bibliographies prior to digitization, currently researching Afro-
Scholar*

Stephanie Elmquist ☆ Manager, Digitization Services Center,
Texas A&M University Libraries ☆ *Oversaw digitization of texts*

Funders

Initial development of the Digital Black Bibliography Project was made possible by \$25,000 in funding awarded through the PESCA Grant Program, The Division of Research, Texas A&M University. PESCA supports “significant research and scholarly projects that have the potential to lead to the awarding of external funding by agencies and endowments such as major federal research funding agencies, national endowments, institutes, foundations and councils.”

Want to learn more about
the collaboration? Come to
our talk on **Friday** at the
**Texas Digital Humanities
Consortium.**

Works Cited

Amy E. Earhart, 2012. "Can Information Be Unfettered? Race and the New Digital Humanities Canon," in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matthew K. Gold (University of Minnesota Press). <http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/book>

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Thank you!