

**AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
COLLECTIONS IN LIBRARIES AND REPOSITORIES**

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**Amistad Research Center  
400 Esplanade Ave.  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70116  
504-522-0432**

The Amistad Research Center, founded in 1966, by the American Missionary Association, is privately funded library/archives that collects and makes available to the public primary-source materials on American minorities, primarily Afro-Americans. Most of the material is concerned with race relations and religious activities and dates from the eighteenth century to the present. The Center holds over 2,000 linear feet of manuscript materials and photographs, approximately 15,000 volumes and bound periodicals, as well as microfilm, tapes, phonodiscs, maps, paintings, posters, and prints.

**Atlantic University  
Robert Woodruff Library  
111 Chestnut Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314  
404-223-5378**

Atlanta University, Trevor Arnett Library was established in 1946, when the university purchased the famous Henry P. Slaughter Collections. While it maintains a general overall interest in Afro-American materials, special emphasis is on slavery in Georgia, the United States, Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and events pertaining but not limited, to the Atlanta area. Included among the principal papers in the collection are those of John Brown, Countee Cullen, C. Eric Lincoln, and Henry Ossawa Tanner. Other outstanding collections include the Thomas Clarkson Collection; Henry P. Slaughter; Maude Cuney Hare; Chautauqua Circle; Neighborhood Union; Project to Study Business and Business Education Among Negroes, 1944-1945; Commission on Interracial Cooperation; Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching; Southern Conference for Human Welfare; the Atlanta University Archives; and the Thayer Lincoln Collection.

**Center for Afro-American Studies  
University of California at Los Angeles  
405 Hilgard Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90024  
213-825-6060**

Several collections are available at UCLA for those interested in the study of Afro-American history and culture. Foremost is the Center for Afro-American Studies Library (CAAS), established in 1969. A wide variety of resources are available here in the form of books and multimedia materials. The collection numbers approximately 4,000 volumes, 65 current serials, 200 photographs, 55 audio tapes and cassettes, 50 phonograph records, 12 videotapes, and 2,500 vertical-file items. The collection-development policy concentrates primarily on materials by and about Afro-americans in the social sciences and humanities.

**E. Azalia Hackley Collection  
Detroit Public Library  
5201 Woodward Avenue  
Detroit, Michigan 48202  
313-833-1460  
313-833-5039 (Fax)  
Email: [bemartin@detroit.lib.mi.us](mailto:bemartin@detroit.lib.mi.us)**

Within the Detroit Public Library is a unique collection of materials about blacks, which documents their achievements in the performing arts-the E. Azalia Hackley Memorial Collection, established in 1943. E. Azalia Hackley (1867-1922) was a pioneer in the field of black music. Ms. Hackley was a music teacher, concert organizer, and fund-raiser of scholarships for gifted music students. The world-famous contralto Marian Anderson and composer R. Nathaniel Dett were two of the many black musicians she encouraged and assisted. Great for spirituals and gospel music.

**Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
Columbia University Libraries  
801 Butler Library  
New York, New York 10027  
212-280-2231**

The Columbia University Libraries Rare Book and Manuscript Library includes all fields in the humanities, social sciences, and other subject areas. Established in 1930, the collection contains circa 400,000 volumes and receives 10 current periodicals. Photographs number approximately 10,000, and microfilm, 200. Shelflists, catalogs, and indexes are also available.

**Fisk University Library and Media Center**  
**Special Collections**  
**17th Ave. N.**  
**Nashville, Tennessee 37203**  
**615-329-8730**

Fisk has a long tradition of collecting black materials, and it is one of the most extensive repositories in the field. There are over 36,000 volumes in its Special Negro Collection, covering all aspects of the Black, African, and Caribbean experience, dating from the eighteenth century to the present. Journals, phonodiscs, microfilm, vertical files, sheet music, photographs, and a large oral-history collection of tapes and transcripts are to be found at Fisk. Many sermons and gospel music tapes.

**Hampton Institute**  
**Collis P. Huntington Memorial Library**  
**George Foster Peabody Collection**  
**Hampton, Virginia 23668**  
**804-727-5376**

One of the oldest and richest collections of Afro-American resources, especially concerning the Civil War and Reconstruction, is the George Foster Peabody Collection, contained within the Collis P. Huntington Memorial Library at Hampton. The aim of this library is to provide as complete a collection as possible of Afro-Americana, to serve as a center for the preservation of African American history and culture.

**Hatch-Billops Collection, Inc.**  
**Archives of Black American Cultural History**  
**491 Broadway**  
**New York, New York 10012**  
**212-966-3231**

Organized in 1975, the collection consists of taped interviews with black artists in film, dance, theatre, visual arts, music, literature, and related subjects. The tapes are reproduced only for educational purposes. Commercial rights are retained by the individuals interviewed. The tapes are housed at the Cohen Library of the City College, the Schomburg Research Center in Black Culture, and Hatch/Billops Studio. Several gospel musicians are included.

**Howard University**  
**Moorland-Spingarn Research Center**  
**2401 Sixth St., N.W.**  
**Washington, D.C. 20001**  
**202-636-7239**

The core of Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center is the combination of two private collections-the extensive antislavery collection of Lewis Tappan, presented to Howard in 1873; and the large collection of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts acquired in 1914 from Jesse E. Moorland, a former trustee and an alumnus of Howard. In the ensuing years many other collections have been acquired by Howard. Has material on many church denominations.

**Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center**  
**102-09 Northern Blvd.**  
**Corona, New York 11368**  
**212-651-1100**

The Langston Hughes Library and Cultural Center is considered unique among public libraries, for it enjoys community control. The Library Action Committee is the governing body of Langston Hughes, and it was established by black residents of Corona, in East Elmhurst, who worked for many years to develop a community-based library. The Library is an affirmation of the concern of black residents of a deteriorating community who saw the critical need for implementing library services that would serve the needs of neglected minorities. The Library opened in 1969, and this committee has been responsible for ensuring that it provides the community that it serves with needed books, programs, and services. The Library is also considered unique in its staffing, for everyone on the library staff lives in the community and is deeply involved in religious and community affairs. The extent of community involvement is reflected in the program of the Library: every resident of Corona-East Elmhurst has a voice in the development of its programs and policies. Furthermore, community organizations hold regular meetings in the Library.

**Library of Congress**  
**10 First St., S. E.**  
**Washington, D. C. 20540**  
**202-287-5000**

The Library of Congress, the world's largest library, is a library of special collections. It is basically a repository for all books copyrighted in the U.S. since July 1898. "...scattered throughout its shelves and vaults are more books and documents regarding the Negro than are to be found in any other library."<sup>28</sup> The U.S. Library of Congress serves as the reference library and research center of the U.S. Congress and other government agencies, libraries, and the adult public. The Library of Congress, in its general and special collections, houses books, newspapers, monographs, unbound serials, photographs, films, music, and sound recordings related to Afro-Americans. The Slave Narrative Collection of the Federal Writer's Project is a distinctive part of the collection.

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**  
**Center for Social Change Library-Archives**  
**671 Beckwith St., S.W.**  
**Atlanta, Georgia 30314**  
**404-524-1956**

The core of this collection, which opened in 1969, is the papers of Dr. King. Along with his personal papers are those of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, and the Congress of Racial Equality. Many papers concerning Baptist churches and other churches that participated in the Civil Rights movement.

**North Carolina Central University**  
**School of Library Science**  
**William Tucker Collection**  
**Durham, North Carolina 27707**  
**919-683-6400**

A rather recent addition at North Carolina Central University School of Library Science is the William Tucker Collection of children's literatures. William Tucker is said to be the first Afro-American child born in the United States. The purpose of the Tucker Collection is to preserve the works of Afro-American writers and illustrators of children's books and to bring them to the attention of the public. The collection is in its embryonic stages, and the staff is actively soliciting manuscripts, drawings, and other materials to add to its present holdings. There are now approximately 110 volumes, many of which are autographed. Galleys, manuscripts, and original drawings number around 115. Many children's Bible stories.

**The Schomburg Center for Research in black Culture**  
**515 Malcolm-X Blvd.**  
**New York, New York 10037**  
**212-862-4000**

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is one of the most extensive collections in the world for the study of the Afro-American experience. In September 1980 the collection was moved from its 135th Street location into its long-awaited new quarters—a modern, four-story, temperature-controlled building with shelf space to accommodate twice as many volumes as the center now owns. Located in the Harlem community, Schomburg is one of the four privately funded research libraries of the New York Public Library system. It is named after Arthur A. Schomburg, a Puerto Rican of African descent, a twentieth-century collector of books by and about peoples of African descent. In 1926 Schomburg's private collection, consisting of over 5,000 books, 3,000 manuscripts, and 2,000 etchings, along with numerous pamphlets, was sold to The New York Public Library and added to the already existing reference collection of books by and about Afro-Americans housed at the 135th Street branch library. Mr. Schomburg served as curator of the collection from 1932 until his death, in 1938. An excellent collection of black churches' materials.

**Tuskegee Institute  
Hollis Burke Frissell Library  
Tuskegee, Alabama 36088  
205-727-8477**

The Hollis Burke Frissell Library is the main library in the Tuskegee library system. Founded in 1895, it is one of the oldest Afro-American Collections and is a combination of the Booker T. Washington Collection and the Tuskegee Institute Archives. Contained here are seventeenth-century as well as contemporary materials, numbering approximately 25,000 volumes, 35 current periodicals, black newspapers, sheet music, photographs, microfilms, and audiovisual materials. Ephemeral material is housed in vertical files. Has early and current religious materials.

**United States General Services Administration  
National Archives and Records Service  
Washington National Records Center  
Pennsylvania Avenue and 8th Street, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20409  
202-523-3218**

"The history of the Negro in the United States remains untold...it will remain untold until the mountain of records in the National Archives are effectively utilized as an historical source."<sup>29</sup> This statement was made in 1949, and to a large extent it remains true today. As a federal repository, the National Archives is rich in primary-source material and official government records pertaining to Afro-Americans in American history. It is filled with information about black participation in American wars, including pension papers of black veterans in the Revolutionary War. There is also diplomatic correspondence relating to the slave trade, religious activities, records of the Freedman's Savings and Trust Co., 1865-1924, and information on Ku Klux Klan activities and other anti-black organizations. The government-appointment files contain valuable biographical information on Afro-Americans who sought various government positions. Besides records, there are audiovisual materials such as photographs, motion pictures, and maps. Practically every aspect of federal relationships with Afro-Americans is housed here.

**Vivian G. Harsh Collection of Afro-American History and Literature**  
**Chicago Public Library, Woodson Regional**  
**9525 South Halstead Street**  
**Chicago, Illinois 60628**  
**312-881-6910**

In 1932, chief librarian Vivian G. Harsh, of the George Cleveland Hall Branch, Chicago Public Library, began what is now known as the Vivian G. Harsh Collection. This reference collection is housed in Chicago's Carter G. Woodson Regional Library. It contains over 30,000 volumes, concentrating mainly on religion, sociology, and politics, with special emphasis on the history of blacks in Chicago. Afro-Americana from 1500 to the present, including materials on Africana, especially West Africana, is covered. In addition to the bound volumes, there are over 2,000 phonodiscs, 350 tapes, numerous manuscripts, posters and artifacts; microfilms, films, filmstrips, photographs, newspapers, and periodicals are other items in the collection.

**Western States Black Research Center**  
**3617 Montclair St.**  
**Los Angeles, California 90018**  
**213-737-3292**

In 1972 Mayme Agnew Clayton founded the Western States Black Research Center. This is a nonprofit organization, open to researchers involved in studying the history and culture of Afro-Americans. Diverse in resources, the Center houses books, films, phonodiscs, artifacts, posters, photographs, and other material related to research in black culture. The literary collection consists of over 12,000 volumes dating from 1790 to the present, and is especially rich in children's literature, the arts, pre-Civil War material, and blacks in the early American West. Primary-source documents number approximately 200. A unique feature of the Center is a black film collection dating back to 1903, tracing blacks in all aspects of the motion-picture industry. Blues, jazz, pop, rock, and religious materials dating back to 1907. Literature searches and copying are permitted. Usage of materials is restricted.

**Wisconsin State Historical Society**  
**820 State St.**  
**Madison, Wisconsin 53706**  
**608-262-3421**

One of the most extensive collections of materials from individuals and organizations in the South who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, but located outside of the South, is at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The Social Action Collection is approximately one-third of the society's 1,200 cubic feet of processed materials. This is a dynamic collection.

Many references to Black religion.

**University of Florida  
The Institute of Black Culture  
The James Weldon Johnson Research Library  
1510 West University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32601  
904-392-0895**

This library houses the largest collection of Black periodical literature in Florida. The Black Floridian Hall of Fame is apart of the collection. Featuring James Weldon Johnson, Zora Neale Hurston, Charles Spencer Pompey, Mary M. Bethune, A. Phillip Randolph and many others. There is an exquisite collection of traditional African art. Religious materials include the Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal churches.

**Yale University  
The James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection  
of Negro Arts and Letters  
The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
120 High Street  
New Haven, Connecticut 06520  
203-436-8335**

Located at the Yale university, this is one of the largest collections of twentieth-century Afro-American arts and letters. The nucleus of this collection was provided by the late author Carl Van Vechten, who donated books, letters, records, and photographs from his private collection in 1941. Van Vechten, a white author, had a wide circle of Afro-American associates. He spent much of his time with noted Afro-American personalities of the Harlem Renaissance period and became interested and involved in Afro-American life. His novel Nigger Heaven caused quite a stir among black critics, who felt he only showed the bawdy side of black life.