

# AAC Newsletter

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The Society of American Archivists  
Archivists and Archives of Color  
Roundtable

## Conference blends hip hop, history

*By Jarrett Drake, MSI student,  
University of Michigan School of  
Information*

The Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center made history by organizing the Tupac Amaru Shakur Collection Conference, on September 28-29.

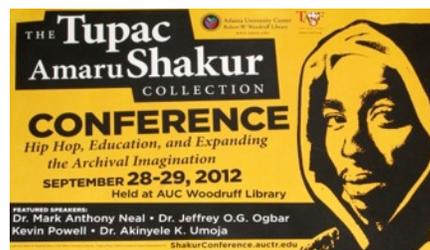
Rarely, if ever, is there a professional and academic forum to discuss the intersection of hip hop, education and the archives. I arrived at the conference unsure of what to expect. Surely, I had attended conferences before, and as I did on this trip, I had presented at conferences before. From my perspective as an archives student, I wondered, would the conference offer fresh insights and encourage diverse thinking? Would it maximize the potential of its presenters and participants? Would it leave conference attendees both energized and empowered? The answer: Yes!

Diversity is not achieved when people of the same demographic gather to agree with each other. No one wants a conference of only black people who all thinking Tupac is the greatest rapper of all time. Rather true diversity comes when people from many different backgrounds convene to present different approaches to solving problems.

Keynote speakers included activists, scholars, historians, and cultural critics. Presenters were both veteran and

emerging archivists. This wide array of expertise provided an enriching exchange of ideas and practices.

Many people attend conferences that, in hindsight, could end a few days sooner. Such was not the case in Atlanta, as the Program Committee and Woodruff library ensured no time was wasted between the first and last session.



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## Happy National Archives Month!

*By Steven Booth, NARA, AAC Co-chair*

Can you believe it? It's already the end of October! Just a few months ago we were gathered in beautiful, sunny San Diego. My, how time flies!

Since the annual business meeting, AAC has made great progress. Guidelines for the Pinkett Minority Student Award have been updated to reflect the recommendations submitted to and approved by Council in 2004. Two graduate students of color will receive funding to attend the annual SAA conference, along with free one-year membership. Several changes have

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Sessions included: *Tupac and Native American Studies: Creating Connections Through Linguistics, Historical Activism and Photography*; *Hip Hop as Black Protest Literature*; and *Preserving Beats: Hardware Samplers and Floppy Disks*.

The discussions that took place between sessions were as meaningful as the presentations; this shows the strength of the audience and presenters. The library’s wireless networks also provided ample service for participants to live-tweet sessions via Twitter and other social networking platforms, extending the intellectual community beyond those in attendance.

In the penultimate session, jazz violinist Ken Ford performed at the conference with a moving instrumental of Shakur’s

“Dear Mama” and rapper Coolio’s “Gangsta’s Paradise.” Just when the audience expected the performance to end, it continued. This feeling of delightful endurance also was exemplified in that since the conference concluded, many participants have initiated new projects, worked on old ones, and implemented ideas they learned.

The Tupac Amaru Shakur Collection Conference embodied the life of the slain rapper: broad, yet brief, and long enough to invigorate and inspire. The Woodruff Library deserves credit for expanding the archival imagination. ■



**Tupac Shakur: The Essential Playlist**  
Shakur’s artistic output was considerable; it is often the subject of pop cultural chatter that his music continues to be released despite his death 16 years ago. Below is a brief “playlist” of some of his music that can provide a more in-depth look at the artist and the issues he addressed.

**“Holler if You Hear Me”**  
One of Tupac’s songs that received both mainstream attention but also discussed various social issues was the “Brenda’s Got a Baby,” the 1991 debut on his first solo

album. The song, which chronicles the backstory of a pregnant teenager, uses an empathetic third-person narrator to also touch on social issues like poverty, child abuse, and public schools.

“Dear Mama,” a single on Shakur’s third album, *Me Against the World*, released in 1995, is a tribute to Shakur’s mother Afeni. In addition to being a heartfelt love letter, the song also provided an alternative expression of black masculinity seldom seen in hip hop at that time.

Some might cite “California Love,” from Shakur’s 1995 album *All Eyez on Me*, as a shot fired in the so-called East Coast/West Coast rap wars, however, the song was a critical turning point in his career and marked an increase in his aggressive lyrics.

**Extras**  
For more information on the TASC Conference, see the Woodruff Center’s LibGuide, which includes a list of featured speakers and a link to the collection website and finding aid. Available here:  
<http://research.auctr.edu/ShakurConference>. ■

## *New Collections Available*

### **Archives Research Center, Atlanta University Center, Woodruff Library**

In 2011, the AUC Woodruff Library acquired the papers of **Dr. Asa G. Hilliard III**, a world-renowned Pan-Africanist educator, historian, and psychologist. His papers include scholarly writings, research, and correspondence from 1993-2007.

**Dr. Brailsford Brazeal** is an alumnus, former professor of economics and department head at Morehouse College. His papers span from 1920-1980 and include manuscripts for his book, *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters*.

The **Mary Ann Smith Wilson-Ruby Doris Smith Robinson Collection on Student Activism** was donated by Dr. Smith. Robinson was a founding member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The papers span a period from 1942-2008 and detail the activities of both sisters through correspondence, news clippings, meeting minutes, reports and photographs.

Corporate executive **Carl Ware**, the first African-American executive at Coca-Cola, now has a collection open for research. The contents are from 1938-2011, and include information on his philanthropy work and the manuscript of his unpublished memoirs.

*Submitted by the Archives Research Center staff, AUC Woodruff Library*

## Editor's Note

### *Advocacy momentum in wake of Ga. archives woes*

By Stacie Williams, Reference Librarian, Transylvania University

Our current issue opens against the backdrop of National Archives Month and the ongoing saga of the Georgia State Archives. Late in the summer, the archives announced that it would have to close the facility to the public to cover a budget shortfall of \$733,000.

The decision—which would have been devastating to archivists, researchers, historians, educators, genealogists, and others all over the country—marked an especially salient example of the importance of access to the histories of

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been made to the AAC website, like By-Laws, a Who's Who directory, and updated Officers, Newsletter, and Membership Directory pages.

This year, in an effort to promote archival materials pertaining to people of color, AAC will celebrate Heritage Months, featured on our Facebook and Twitter pages. Hispanic Heritage Month was a success and we're looking forward to Native American Heritage Month in November. Please consider sharing your collections.

We must select Pinkett Award recipients; transfer AAC records from Howard University to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (official repository of SAA) and nominate candidates for SAA Fellow.

AAC team members are working together to serve you better. The roundtable is an extension of your SAA membership, and we hope you can collaborate with us. ■

people of color and other underrepresented groups.

The public would have had severely restricted access to historically significant documents related to people of color Georgia, such as papers showing the purposeful dispossession of Cherokee tribes from their land, pre-Civil War legislation concerning the rights of freed slaves, and documents related to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

At press time, \$125,000 in funds had been restored by the state, and the University System of Georgia will take control of the archives. The save, while temporary, will keep the archives open until the middle of 2013 with a skeleton crew, according to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

There is no doubt that the 11th hour reprieve was in part because of major advocacy on behalf of the archives community and its supporters. People called and emailed legislators, mainstream media gave the news significant coverage, and social media networks retweeted, reblogged, and "liked" status updates as fast as 3G networks would let them.

The near closing brings home how vulnerable our archival collections are, but despite that, we look to the future of archives. Working against budgets and time is nothing new, but our ability to mobilize for the good of our collections is evolving every day. Our response and reaction time is seconds vs. days or weeks, and we're seeing ways in which public advocacy can be used to draw positive attention to archives.

It's a good lesson, and duly noted. In addition to processing and preserving, we need to be ready to make some noise to ensure access to our collections. Silencing our voices may also mean silencing our histories. ■

## Save the Date

### **October 31, 2012** ***Proposals Extended for BCALA 2013 Conference***

The Black Caucus is seeking program and workshop proposals for its 8th National Conference of African American Librarians, held August 7-11, 2013, in Northern Kentucky. For details, contact Program Co-chair Eboni Stokes at [eboni.stokes@dc.gov](mailto:eboni.stokes@dc.gov).

### **November 9, 2012** ***ACRL 2013 Travel Grants Deadline***

Spectrum Scholars interested in attending ACRL's 2013 conference in Indianapolis, on April 10-13, can apply for travel grants to attend. Application here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BCMZMGH>.

### **December 1, 2012** ***Mellon Fellowship for Rare Book School Available***

Opportunity for doctoral students to study "critical bibliography" for researching special collections. Request application here: <http://rarebookschool.limequery.org/index.php?sid=49867>.

### **December 1, 2012** ***Participants Needed for Survey of Latino Librarians/Archivists***

Researchers from the University of Nebraska and New York City College of Technology libraries are conducting a survey about professional development for people of Latino/Hispanic descent in library and information studies. Online survey open until Dec. 1, 2012. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G5D375V>.

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**Dec. 13, 2012-Aug. 11, 2013**  
**Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.**  
***Nam June Paik: Global Visionary***

Art exhibition curated from the archives of this influential contemporary Korean artist.

**January 2, 2013**  
***Society of Mississippi Archivists' Call for Papers***

The Society of Mississippi Archivists seeks paper proposals on areas of archives and archival work for its biennial conference in Cleveland, Miss., April 17-19, 2013. Topics include archival education, social media, and fundraising. Proposals should include a title, 500 word abstract, and names/affiliations of presenters. For more information, e-mail [jdrose@sunflower.lib.ms.us](mailto:jdrose@sunflower.lib.ms.us).

## ‘Indigenous Ways’ IMLS planning grant

*Loriene Roy and Ciaran Trace, professors, School of Information, University of Texas at Austin*

Indigenous ways refer to the traditional lifeways, personal and community protocol, and beliefs of Native peoples. These beliefs and daily behaviors are often reflected in expressions of indigenous living such as text of stories, ceremonial objects, images, and media captures of cultural performances such as dance and song.

These tangible reflections of indigenous living are found not only in tribal homeland areas but also in LAM cultural heritage institutions.

Educators serve as gatekeepers between established professional ethics and the preparation of new information professionals. Given the

acknowledgement and awareness of indigenous ways and the need to extend the discussion beyond their access and use, we submitted a proposal to the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to fund a one-year collaborative planning grant to acquire benchmark data on level of awareness of indigenous ways among LAM faculty.

This report introduced the “Indigenous Ways” study and foreshadows where the results might take us on the journey to understanding and respecting where we encounter indigenous cultural heritage in our professional lives.

We have drafted survey instruments and cover letters, are conducting the literature review and are preparing to pre-test and revise the surveys. We will post updates on the activities at <https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~loriene/indigenousways/index.html>. ■

## Blazing a path to the White House

*Interview with Karen Jefferson, recent presidential appointee to the National Historical Publications & Records Commission.*

Q: How did you become an archivist?

A: In my senior year at Howard (University), I worked in the Divinity School Library. The librarian I worked for informed me about a master’s program in library science. Since I did not have any other plans this sounded like a good one. ... During the course of my studies, I learned about archives.

After completing my master’s degree I got a job working at Howard University’s Moorland-Spingarn Research Center. So I was able to combine my love of Black History with my newly acquired degree.

Q: Was there a person in your career who really made a difference?

A: (Spingarn) Director Dr. Michael Winston, and the Curator of Manuscripts, Dr. Thomas C. Battle were important to my development as an archivist. Even though I lacked experience, they saw potential in me, promoted me, and provided me the opportunity to learn and lead.

Q: How did you become involved with the AAC Roundtable?

A: I became a member of SAA in 1983 and was one of the founding members of the AAC Roundtable when it was established in 1987.

Q: When did you learn about your NHPRC appointment?

A: I received a call from the White House. It was really a surprise! The vetting process took time so it was several months between the initial contact to the actual appointment.

Q: Do you have any advice for early career archivists?

A: Participate in the professional associations—local, regional, and national. They provide a great opportunity for networking and learning. ■

# NO FILTER



The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable is seeking submissions for its quarterly newsletter. We welcome:

- articles about current news and trends
- op-ed and perspective pieces on topical issues
- excerpts from research projects and scholarly writings
  - book reviews

Manuscripts are to be sent as a Microsoft Word attachment or in plain text in the email body. Submissions in any other format, including images, must be sent as attachments.

Please submit materials via email to [smariwilliams1979@gmail.com](mailto:smariwilliams1979@gmail.com). Submissions should be a minimum of 500 words. Articles should follow and will be edited according to the Chicago Manual of Style. Editors reserve the right to make revisions for clarity and brevity. Photographs or artwork that is included with submission should be in a JPG or TIFF format of at least 300 dpi minimum, and have full copyright permission.

*Businessman Gulub Watumull, left, talking to customers in his Honolulu department store, (date unknown). The Watumull family came to Hawaii originally from Pakistan in 1913, and by the 1970s, owned 29 department stores on the Islands. The Watumulls have also made a significant impact through philanthropy, giving to the arts, education and other causes. Photo taken by the Honolulu Star-Bulletin. Courtesy of Indru Watumull and used with permission from the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA).*

*SAADA is the only independent non-profit organization working to document, preserve, and provide access to the rich history of South Asians in the United States. All the materials SAADA collects are freely accessible to the public at <http://www.saadigitalarchive.org>. ■*