



# African-American Fiction Writers

*This list includes only a few of many African-American writers. Check the San Leandro Public Library's online catalog or ask a librarian for further information on the subject. To discover more about African American writers, please visit "African-American Writers: a Celebration" at [www.mtsu.edu/~vvesper/afam.htm](http://www.mtsu.edu/~vvesper/afam.htm). \*\* Please note: some of these authors write about African American characters but are not African American.*

Ansa, Tina McElroy. The Hand I Fan with. FIC ANSA.

Lena, blessed -- and cursed -- with the ability to read minds, feels that her romantic life has been stifled. It's hard to fall in love with a man whose meanest thoughts are plain to you. The solution to Lena's dilemma is found in a relationship with a ghost...

Bambara, Toni Cade. Those Bones are not My Child. FIC BAMBARA.

Zala Spencer, mother of three, realizes that her suddenly missing teenage son Sonny is among the many cases of missing children just beginning to attract national attention. Growing increasingly disillusioned with the authorities, who respond to Sonny's disappearance with cold indifference, Zala and her estranged husband embark on a desperate search.

Briscoe, Connie. Big Girls Don't Cry. FIC BRISCOE.

An empathetic portrait of a modern woman wrestling with issues of love, work and family obligations, as well as issues of civil rights, affirmative action and intra-group prejudice. When the rift between black and white America becomes much too personal, Naomi embarks on a journey to honor her brother's legacy -- and to find herself.

Cooper, J. California. The Matter is Life. FIC COOPER.

American Book Award-winner J. California Cooper spins insight and irony into modern-day parables about simple people who love too little and too late, and about those who toil and struggle against a difficult and often hostile environment. This fourth collection of Cooper's unforgettable stories is alternately charming, disturbing, poignant, and humorous.

Gaines, Ernest J. A Lesson before Dying. FIC GAINES.

When mentally slow, barely literate Jefferson is unjustly convicted and sentenced to die, his grandmother Miss Emma begs sophisticated, educated Grant for one last favor: to teach her grandson to die like a man. In the process, Grant learns an important lesson as well: heroism is not always expressed through action--sometimes the simple act of resisting the inevitable is enough.

Goines, Donald. Dopefiend. FIC GOINES.

Trapped in the festering sore of a major American ghetto, a young man and his girlfriend - both handsome, talented, and full of promise - are inexorably pulled into the death of the hardcore junkie.

Griggs, Vanessa Davis. Promises beyond Jordan. FIC GRIGGS.

Have you ever loved someone that you never had? Days before their wedding, charismatic Pastor George Landris and fiancée Theresa Jordan begin to see a side of the other that neither realized was there, and it brings into question their commitment to each other. What is the face of true love?

Haley, Patricia. No Regrets. FIC HALEY.

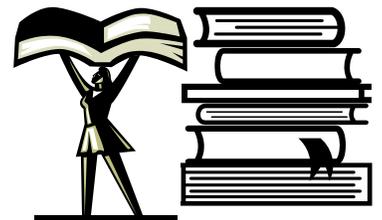
When her perfect marriage is shattered due to her sudden illness and her husband's infidelity, Karen must believe in the power of God's love to restore her confidence, while her husband, Johnny, must come to terms with his weaknesses and fears to deal with Karen's illness and become the man he was meant to be.

Johnson, Charles Richard. Middle Passage. FIC JOHNSON.

A blend of the picaresque tale, historical romance, sea yarn, slave narrative, and philosophical novel. Newly freed slave Rutherford Calhoun, desperate to escape unscrupulous bill collectors and an impending marriage, accidentally jumps aboard a slave ship to Africa. Thus begins a daring voyage of horror and self-discovery. Winner of the National Book Award for Fiction.

Jones, Gayle. The Healing. FIC JONES.

Harlan Jane Eagleton transforms herself from a minor rock star's manager to a traveling faith healer in this lyrical and often humorous exploration of the struggle to let go of pain, anger, and even love.



Lamar, Jake. The Last Integrationist. FIC LAMAR.

The most powerful African-American politician in America, Attorney General Melvin Hutchinson builds popular support through his uncompromising war against crime, until his own secret past leads to his discovery of a conspiracy within his president's administration.



Marshall, Paule. The Fisher King. FIC MARSHALL.

A moving story of jazz, love, family conflict, and the artists' struggles in society offers hope in the healing and redemptive power of one memorable boy. Written with verve, clarity and humor, this story captures the cadences of black speech while deftly portraying the complexity of family relationships and the social issues that beset African Americans.

McMillan, Terry. A Day Late and a Dollar Short. FIC MCMILLAN.

A tale about family secrets, tragedies and triumphs. The Price family experiences situations and exploits that could easily represent any family, dealing with issues of sibling rivalry, adultery, unplanned pregnancies, drug and alcohol abuse, rape, incest, and homosexuality. Written by the author of *How Stella got her Groove back* and *Waiting to Exhale*.

Meriwether, Louise. Daddy was a Number One Runner. FIC MERIWETHER.

Told from the perspective of a 12-year-old girl, this popular novel documents the disintegration of an African-American family in Harlem in the 1930s. A compelling, readable, occasionally funny work, it vividly illuminates the life of the ghetto, not just the despair and the violence, but the pride and the vitality as well.

Morrison, Toni. Song of Solomon. FIC MORRISON.

Milkman Dead is faced with resolving the differing memories of his parents and his mysterious aunt Pilate, while questioning the historically charged realities thrown at him by the death of real-life victims of racism as viewed by his lifelong friend Guitar. Written by the author of *Beloved*.

Petry, Ann L. Miss Muriel and Other Stories. FIC PETRY.

A stunning collection of stories that captures a remarkably diverse panorama of African-American experiences in the 1950s and 1960s.

Senna, Danzy. Caucasia. FIC SENNA.

This unusual first novel by a biracial writer combines a poignant coming-of-age story with a serious exploration of the racial issues that still divide this country. Separated from her sister when her activist white mother must flee the police, Birdie sets out to find her father and sister and find a common ground between her white and black heritage while remaining true to herself.

Walker, Alice. You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down: stories. FIC WALKER.

Fourteen provocative and often humorous stories show women oppressed but not defeated. These are hopeful stories about love, lust, fame, and cultural thievery, the delight of new lovers, and the rediscovery of old friends, affirmed even across self-imposed color lines. Written by the author of *The Color Purple*.

Wesley, Valerie Wilson. Always True to You in My Own Fashion. FIC WESLEY.

Three women are involved in the art world, and all are dating Randall Hollis, an art dealer in New York City. What a mess when one becomes pregnant, and each finds out Randall is dating the others.

Wideman, John Edgar. Sent for You Yesterday. FIC WIDEMAN.

Doot Lawson attempts to reintegrate himself into the myths and stories of his parents' and grandparents' generations and overcome the intellectual distance that has grown between them since his departure from Homewood. This novel was a winner of the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction.

... Proverbs for the People. FIC PROVERBS.

Nearly 60 short stories, each beginning with an African, African-American, or Biblical proverb, probe subjects ranging from ancestry to the politics of working nine to five and weave a tapestry of delicious wit and undeniable wisdom.



*Other authors to consider include the following:*

Baisden, Michael  
Butler, Octavia  
Butler, Tajuana  
Campbell, Bebe  
Cary, Lorene  
Chase-Riboud, Barbara  
Clair, Maxine  
Dove, RitGolden, Marita  
Hardy, James Earl

McMillan, Rosalyn  
Moore, Yanier  
Safaa, Chilifiya  
Sinclair, April  
Shannon, Ray  
Souljah, Sister  
Tyree, Omar  
Verdelle, A.J.  
Zane