

African-American Mystery 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.

*** Please note: some of these authors write about African American characters but are not African American.*

Bates, Karen Grigsby. Plain Brown Wrapper: an Alex Powell novel. MYS BATES.

When a prominent but unpopular magazine publisher is killed at the annual National Association of Black Journalists conference, there are plenty of directions for fingers to point--mostly at the spurned women and competing publishers that the victim has infuriated over the years. Alex Powell, a reporter familiar with many of the relevant players, is recruited along with a male acquaintance to help police with the case.

Bland, Eleanor Taylor. Windy City Dying. MYS BLAND.

A vengeance-seeking criminal's release from prison and 16-year-old Graciela's murder dash detective Marti MacAlister's hope to escape big-city crime. The tension mounts as Marti and her partner Vik realize that several troubled children Marti once counseled, now in their teens, could provide clues to Graciela's murder.

Carter, Charlotte. Drumsticks. MYS CARTER.

When mysterious Harlem folk artist Ida Williams is suddenly shot to death in the middle of Nanette's new uptown gig, the sharp-witted sax-playing detective Nanette Hayes plunges into Ida's rather checkered past... and, to her surprise, the unsolved murder of a rising young rap star.

Carter, Stephen. Emperor of Ocean Park. FIC CARTER.

When Talcott's father, Judge Oliver Garland, a disgraced former Supreme Court nominee, is found dead under suspicious circumstances, Talcott wonders if he may have been murdered and must risk his marriage and career in his quest for justice.

Chambers, Christopher. A Prayer for Deliverance. FIC CHAMBERS.

Tough-minded FBI special agent Angela Bivens's investigation uncovers disturbing evidence that the murders of influential African American men are bound to a world of spells and ancient prophecies rooted in South African witchcraft and related to age-old vendettas being played out in a very modern D.C.

Cuthbert, Margaret. The Silent Cradle. FIC CUTHBERT.

A series of life-threatening incidents and deaths during seemingly routine deliveries cause others to believe that Dr. Rae Duprey's judgment is impaired. As the hair-raising emergencies continue unabated, she begins to suspect the unthinkable: a sinister plan of medical sabotage, masterminded by a killer who is hardly a stranger to Berkeley Hills Hospital...

Darden, Christopher A. L.A. Justice. FIC DARDEN.

In the headline-grabbing case of a rich man charged with killing his fiancée, L.A. prosecutor Nikki's response will be one crucial link in a chain reaction of powerful forces on both sides of the law. Suddenly, Nikki finds herself in a fast, explosive drama of big-time crooks, reckless cops, and at least one murderous psychopath who won't stop killing.

Edwards, Louis. N: a romantic mystery. MYS EDWARDS.

Challenges racial, class, and gender stereotypes with strong characters and palpable mood. Learning of the murder of a teenaged boy on the steps of Booker T. Washington High School, Aimee Dubois, owner of an alternative newspaper, begins an investigative partnership – and affair – with crack dealer Strip who introduces her to a lively array of dangerous potential murder suspects.

Garland, Ardella. Details at Ten. MYS GARLAND.

When a simple missing-persons case turns into a citywide effort to nab a notorious gang connected to a double murder and retaliatory drive-by shooting, Chicago television news reporter Georgia Barnett, detective Doug, and the Channel Eight News crew find themselves struggling to do what's right in a city overcome by racism, fear, and hostility.

Greer, Robert O. The Devil's Hatband. MYS GREER.

When the daughter of a federal judge gets carried away with her militant environmentalism, Denver bail bondsman and sometime bounty hunter C. J. Floyd is hired to retrieve her and the important documents she possesses. But when C. J. finds her, she's been strangled with the devil's hatband -- a length of barbed wire -- the symbol of the cattle industry she wants to destroy.



Hardwick, Gary. Cold Medina. MYS HARDWICK.

Inspector Tony Hill, head of the Special Crimes unit, is called in to investigate the mutilation murder of a crack cocaine dealer whose hands have been severed by a psychopath.



Haywood, Gar Anthony. Bad News Travels Fast. MYS HAYWOOD.

Dottie, an ex-professor, and Joe, an ex-cop, are salt-of-the-earth, politically conservative African Americans utterly baffled by their son Eddie's lefty politics. When, after picking a fight with Eddie, his former roommate turns up dead, Joe and Dottie have a case to crack.

Holton, Hugh. Chicago Blues. MYS HOLTON.

While investigating the murders of two mob hit men, Police Commander Larry Cole finds connections to a 15-year-old murder allegedly committed by a cop.

Mickelbury, Penny. The Step Between. MYS MICKELBURY.

When a routine surveillance job turns up three corpses and her partner's beloved wife Grace is kidnapped, Carole Anne, widely known as "the best damn trial lawyer in D.C.," is -- once again -- in over her head in the kind of trouble that launches an all-out attack on her survival skills.

Mosley, Walter. Devil in a Blue Dress. MYS MOSLEY.

When war veteran "Easy" Rawlings is given the simple task to find the woman wearing a blue dress in a particular photograph, he discovers he is not the only one interested in the mysterious lady. Soon murder litters the trail, and the Los Angeles police become curious about Easy's whereabouts.

Neely, Barbara. Blanche Passes Go. FIC NEELY.

When a young girl is murdered and it looks as if the man who raped Blanche eight years ago may be involved, maid-cum-sleuth Blanche pursues every possible lead to help put an end to his legacy once and for all.

Ridley, John. Everybody Smokes in Hell. FIC RIDLEY.

When the last master tape of a freshly suicided rock star and a small fortune in stolen drugs falls into loser Paris Scott's lap, it's as if he's stumbled onto the key to his dreams. The resulting chase and chain-reaction madness stretches from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, leaving a trail of blood, bodies, and broken hearts in its wake.

Thomas-Graham, Pamela. A Darker Shade of Crimson. MYS THOMAS-GRAHAM.

Drawn into the investigation of the murder of Assistant Dean Ella Fisher at Harvard, young Assistant Professor of Economics Nikki Chase finds lots of suspects and puts herself in great danger.

Walker, Blair S. Don't Believe Your Lying Eyes. MYS WALKER.

Someone will do almost anything, including commit a new murder, to keep the secret of how a well-known entrepreneur's glitzy wife disappeared. As smart, savvy, and inquisitive investigative journalist Darryl Billups digs deeper, he uncovers secrets concerning some of the most powerful people in Baltimore.

Walker, Persia. Harlem Redux. FIC WALKER.

Four years after dropping out of Harlem society, David McKay, a handsome young lawyer from a prominent Strivers' Row family, returns home, devastated by the news of his sister Lilian's suicide. But the deeper he probes into her suspicious death, the closer he comes to unleashing forces that threaten to reveal his own crippling secret -- a secret that could destroy him or redeem him.

Wesley, Valerie Wilson. The Devil Riding. MYS WESLEY.

PI Tamara Hayle is working undercover in Atlantic City, looking for a missing teenager when more pretty young girls begin to turn up dead. Somewhere in the twilight zone that separates the poor and the wealthy of color -- in the terrifying shadow of a deadly criminal kingpin -- are shocking secrets that Tamara needs to uncover.

Woods, Paula L. Stormy Weather. MYS WOODS.

When a legendary black filmmaker and social activist Maynard Duncan, is found dead, Charlotte plunges badge-deep into the murky relationships between the director, his family, caregivers, business associates, and an elusive young man who seems to hold the key to unlocking the crime. Trouble brews in a possible lead implicating a killer nurse known as the "Angel of Mercy."



... Spooks, Spies, and Private Eyes. 813.087 SPOOKS.

An outstanding anthology of twentieth-century African-American mystery and suspense fiction ranging from Pauline E. Hopkins's locked-room tale "Talma Gordon," first published in 1900, to a new short story by best-selling author Walter Mosley.

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