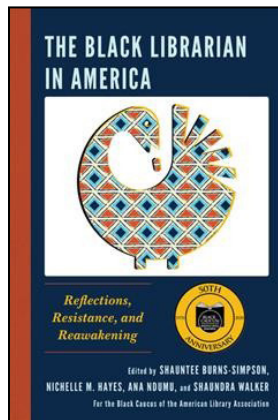


Bankers in the Ivory Tower ends with Eaton conveying a personal narrative of fighting for change while he was a student at UC Berkeley. He introduces less than useful vocabulary such as “bargaining with bankers” to describe a broad coalition of organizations including unions and student groups that lobbied legislators to pass a millionaire’s tax in California. Eaton favors this tactic (which Paulo Freire would probably call bargaining with the oppressor) over what he calls the “big bang” or debt cancellation. A legislative victory is subject to being weakened and reversed, whereas debt cancellation could provide immediate and more durable impacts. While Eaton advocates for collective action, he fails to note that the President has the power to cancel federal student debt unilaterally. The author favors a regulatory and policy approach and speaks little of changing the hierarchy of academia or ending private, for-profit banking.

Academic librarians, many of us burdened by student loans and working with students taking on such debt, will find *Bankers in the Ivory Tower* a useful book to wage counterpropaganda. While Eaton’s conclusions aren’t strong enough to match the harm he describes, there are plenty of data, evidence, and anecdotes that could be used in a collective fightback. The Debt Collective’s *Can’t Pay, Won’t Pay* may be worth picking up as well, especially considering the influence they have had on policy makers during the pandemic.—*Dave S. Ghamandi, University of Virginia*

The Black Librarian in America: Reflections, Resistance, and Reawakening. Shauntee Burns-Simpson, Nichelle M. Hayes, Ana Ndumu, and Shaundra Walker, eds. Washington, DC: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022. 288p. Hardback, \$105 (ISBN: 978-1-5381-5266-9).



It was with delight that I accepted the offer to write a review for the latest iteration of *The Black Librarian in America*. As a proud Black librarian in America and a lifetime member of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), I have read the previous versions of this collection hungrily, inspired by the stories of other librarians whose experiences overlap, differ, and connect in power to my own. This latest edition of the collection marks the 50th anniversary of both the first edition, edited by the renowned Dr. E.J. Josey, cofounder and first chair of BCALA, and of BCALA itself. This reflective and celebratory edition comes at yet another pivotal moment in Black history and life (among so many), when the last few years have seen a global pandemic that disproportionately affects Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BI-

POC) communities and demands for racial justice have reached interesting new plateaus. In many ways, the world for Black Americans in 2020–2022 is very similar to the world faced by Black Americans, and Black librarians, in the 1970s. Yet, as this edition of *The Black Librarian in America* can attest, there are important changes and new challenges, yes, but also new opportunities to move the work of the ancestors forward in service for the generations to come.

This edition is the first to be wholly edited by Black women—Shauntee Burns-Simpson, Nichelle M. Hayes, Dr. Ana Ndumu, and Dr. Shaundra Walker—and features a foreword by the first Black and woman Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden. These Black women seek to provide an intersectional view of Black librarianship that reflects the richness of the Black heritages and Black communities from which we come and which we serve. There are notable gaps in the collection’s coverage, gaps that even the editors attest to, such as the distinct lack of representation of the Black LGBTQIA+ perspective. These gaps must be contended with as

readers, per the volume's guidance, engage in "reflection, resistance, and reawakening." It was undoubtedly challenging soliciting a wide range of contributions in the midst of a pandemic. Nonetheless, the wealth of wisdom and lived experience of the stories that are represented in this volume are invaluable.

Divided into four parts, the book takes us from "A Rich Heritage: Black Librarian History"; leads us to "Celebrating Collective and Individual Identity"; exposes us to "Black Librarians across Settings"; and finally guides us to "Moving Forward: Antiracism, Activism, and Allyship." While any one of the parts—or even any one of the individual chapters—could stand on its own, the whole is woven together into a multifaceted tapestry representing many elements of what it means to be a Black library worker in America. In "Part I: A Rich Heritage: Black Librarian History," chapters by Rhonda Evans and Dr. Aisha Johnson, show us the powerful examples of forebears advocating for library education, services, and workplace promotion for Black people over the years. These chapters are joined by pieces by Dr. Ana Ndumu and Dr. Shaundra Walker, profiling two Black library heroes: Dr. Robert Wedgeworth, the first Black executive director of the American Library Association (ALA), and Adella Hunt Logan, the first librarian for the Tuskegee Institute, a historically Black college and university (HBCU).

"Part II: Celebrating Collective and Individual Identity" opens with an inspiring reflection on Black library work as a labor of love in Jina DuVernay's chapter. James Allen Davis Jr. and Roland Barksdale-Hall add chapters on librarianship in the Western United States and activist librarianship for collective empowerment, respectively. These chapters explore the lived experiences of two Black cis-male librarians, a group that is notably numerically underrepresented in librarianship. While it would have been useful for these chapters to include an analysis of power in their analysis of gender representation—a feminized profession is by no means a fem-empowered profession—the stories from these Black men librarians are nonetheless crucial to the overarching exploration of Black librarianship identity. Rounding out this section are two powerful chapters on marginalized Black librarian identities: the first, by Twanna Hodge, Kelsa Bartley, and Kenya Flash; and the second, by Kai Alexis Smith. Hodge, Bartley, and Flash's chapter gives visibility and voice to their experiences as Afro-Caribbean librarians working in the United States where all Black experience is often equated with, and therefore flattened to, African-American experience. They provide their narratives as a counter to the ways in which their Black Caribbean heritages are often rendered invisible in library work and in broader life in America. Smith's chapter speaks to the experiences of Black library and archives workers with neurodivergence and other disabilities, bringing Black disability studies, disability justice, and trauma-informed pedagogy into dialogue with library and information studies.

In "Part III: Black Librarians across Settings," Shannon Bland and LaQuanda Onyemeh walk us through what it means to build digital communities for Black library workers through their creation of @BlackLibrarians and WOC+Lib, respectively. Chapters by Teresa A. Quick, Dr. Cheryl R. Small, and Amalia Butler and by Bethany McGowan and Jahala Simuel explore the work of Black librarians with STEM. Quick, Small, and Butler describe the use of culturally reflective services to introduce youth to STEM in public and school libraries, while McGowan and Simuel reveal the experiences of Black library leaders in the health sciences. Continuing the thread on Black library leaders, Deloice Holliday and Michele Fenton's chapter discusses the challenges facing Black library leaders in general. Finally, Jamillah Scott-Branch, Vernice Riddick Faison, and Danielle Colbert-Lewis round out this section with their chapter on the challenges facing all librarians, regardless of positional leadership, at HBCUs.

The final section, “Part IV: Moving Forward: Antiracism, Activism, and Allyship,” starts with chapters on Black librarian recruitment from Satia M. Orange and Tracie D. Hall and from Vivian Bordeaux and Jahala Simuel. Orange, a prior director of ALA’s former Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, and Hall, ALA’s current and first Black woman executive director, reflect on their longstanding mentoring relationship and the power of strong mentoring connections. Relatedly, Bordeaux and Simuel explore the recruitment of Black MLIS students and issue a call to action for removing barriers into the field. In their chapter, Taliah Abdullah, Hadiyah Evans, and Regina Renee Ward describe ways to use public libraries as spaces for healing community dialogue in post-2020 America; and Angiah L. Davis and Michele E. Jones share thoughts on sustaining academic libraries in a pandemic world. The final contribution of this final section rests with Keondra Bills Freeman and her exploration of the work of digital content creators to expand Black narratives and archival collections beyond the violence of institutions.

The volume closes with an afterword by former ALA president Julius C. Jefferson Jr. that reflects on the “State of Black Librarianship” in the 50 years since the first edition of the volume and the founding of BCALA. This brief moment of looking back to look forward is a fitting end to a collection that encourages readers to do just that, as symbolized by the Sankofa bird¹ design on the cover. *The Black Librarian in America: Reflections, Resistance, and Reawakening* is a powerful reminder of all that Black librarianship has endured and is enduring, as well as a joyful celebration of survival and empowerment for the steps that are to come. Not much and so much has changed in 50 years for Black library workers; but, as always, hope for the future lies in careful reflection on the past. —April M. Hathcock, *New York University*

Note

1. Sankofa comes from the Twi language of Ghana and roughly means “go back to get it.” The concept of Sankofa is symbolized by a bird with its head twisted backward as its body faces forward. See *The Power of Sankofa: Know History*, Carter G. Woodson Center website, Berea College, accessed June 21, 2022, <https://www.berea.edu/cgwc/the-power-of-sankofa/>.

Deanna Marcum and Roger C. Schonfeld. *Along Came Google: A History of Library Digitization*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021. 232p. Hardcover, \$25.99 (ISBN: 978-0691172712).

The impact of digital technology on academic libraries has been discussed and debated a great deal over the years, but the elephant in the room often remains Google. Whether more formally or less, contributions to the professional conversation that take the long view and consider the full, ongoing range of Google’s impact seem hard to find, even as that impact is ubiquitous and undeniable. On the backends of their systems, in the interstices of their workflows, and on the front lines of their services, research libraries depend on and deploy any number of the company’s apps, tools, and projects, to say nothing of the consequences and influence of Google search itself. It is therefore a welcome and valuable contribution to the professional literature that Deanna Marcum and Roger C. Schonfeld make in their work, *Along Came Google: A History of Library Digitization*. As the subtitle suggests, the authors offer a perspective based on the passage of time—call it recent

