

AVERY

MESSENGER

FALL 2018



**VOTEless People Are Hopeless People:
Understanding the Importance and Power of Voting**

**The Importance of Developing a
Social Justice Lens in Archives**

Centropa Institute: Seven Days in Berlin

Archives News

Avery Research Center News & More



A Publication of the

AVERY RESEARCH CENTER

FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

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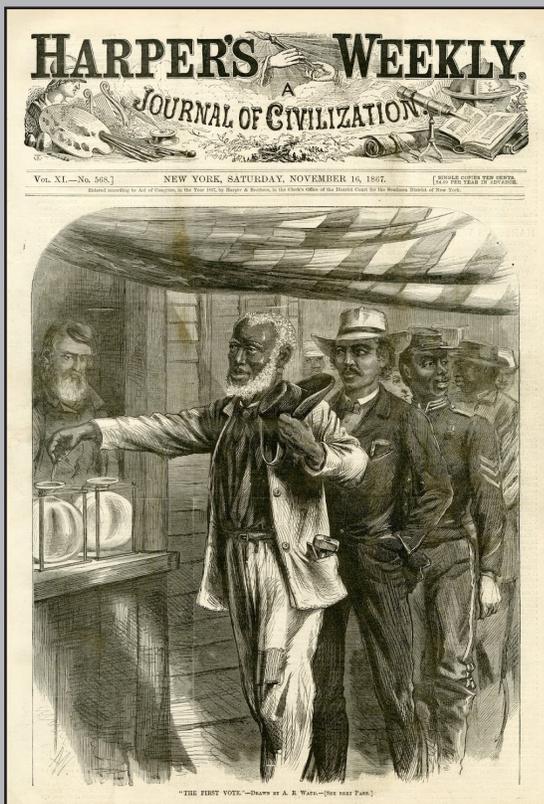
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ON THE COVER



The Avery Messenger cover image, "The First Vote," is a depiction of the "first vote" of African Americans in Virginia. This image by artist Alfred Rudolph Waud was featured on the cover of the *Harper's Weekly, A Journal of Civilization* (November 16, 1867).

In 1866, Congress proposed the creation of a Fourteenth Amendment that would redefine freed people as citizens and prohibit states from denying them citizenship rights. During this period, Congress also passed the first of several civil rights acts to guarantee those rights. One required former Confederate states to hold conventions to write new constitutions. To comply, the army's commanding general in Virginia ordered African

American men be given the right to vote for and to be elected delegates to the convention. In 1867, 105,832 freedmen registered to vote in Virginia.

The *Harper's Weekly, A Journal of Civilization* was an American political newspaper based in New York City. It was published from 1857-1916. The Avery Research Center has a collection of nineteenth-century illustrated newspapers that include *Harper's Weekly*, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*, and others.



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AVERY RESEARCH CENTER
DR. PATRICIA WILLIAMS LESSANE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It is very hard to believe it has been a year since I returned to my post as executive director of the Avery Research Center! So much has happened in such a short period of time. As I mentioned in the last issue of the *Avery Messenger*, stalwarts Curtis J. Franks and Deborah A. Wright retired, and their tireless commitment to the Avery Research Center cannot be overstated. This past Spring, we launched a fundraising effort to develop the Curtis J. Franks and Deborah Wright Internship in their honor. Our goal is to begin awarding \$1000 stipends to two students in the spring semester of the 2018-2019 academic school year. Each of the interns will be trained in museum curation and public programs development at the Avery Research Center.

In April, we moved into Addlestone Library as renovation began on the Avery building after a two-year delay. The staff and I have gotten settled into our temporary accommodations at the library and are enjoying working alongside our library colleagues.

Over the summer, Daron Calhoun and I participated in the Centropa Summer Academy in Berlin, Germany, which brought together educators from nineteen countries to study Holocaust history for infusion into K-12 and college curricula. While there, we studied how the Centropa Institute uses its collection of oral histories with Holocaust survivors to promote peace, social justice, and accurate history. In this issue of the *Avery Messenger*, we will recount what we learned, the amazing experiences we had, and the amazing people we met.

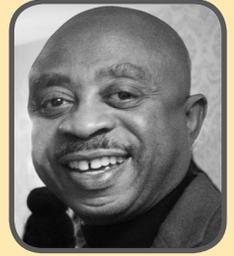
At the Avery Institute annual meeting in June, College of Charleston's Interim President Steve Osborne addressed the membership and pledged his continued support of the Avery Research Center's work. He also prioritized the Avery's former teacher's lodge renovation at 123 Bull Street in the College's future capital campaign efforts. The staff and I are currently strategizing the best way to use the building, but we are eternally grateful to Interim President Osborne for advocating for the Avery Research Center's best interests, the College of Charleston's student body, and the wider community.

Lastly, although the Avery Research Center will not officially re-open later this year as planned, we have a full slate of programs planned. Stay tuned to future updates via our website and social media pages.

Thank you for your continued support!

pwl

AVERY INSTITUTE
JOHN BUNCUM
PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

To you our valued members, sustainers, and contributors, I bring you greetings on behalf of my fellow board members and myself at the Avery Institute of Afro-American History and Culture. We hope each of you has had a restful, safe, and enjoyable summer.

Since my last report, I had the opportunity to see many of you at our first Derby Fundraising Event at the City Gallery in beautiful downtown Charleston. All who attended had a great time. Thank you to the Fundraising Committee—Catherine Boags (chair), Walter Brown Jr., and Charles McKenzie—for such a well-organized affair. We were able to raffle off two 55" flat-screen televisions to two individuals at the Derby event. We'd like to thank the folks at Costco Wholesale for the special pricing on the flat screens to make this raffle possible.

Attendee feedback on this unique affair was very positive. Board members were encouraged to repeat this event next year. So, if you missed the 2018 Derby Fundraiser, you may have another opportunity to attend in 2019.

It was also great to see many of you at our annual meeting on June 9, 2018. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Georgette Mayo and Mary Miller for their insightful presentations on gathering and putting together a collection. Kudos to the Programming Committee—Minerva King (chair), Priscilla Robinson, Kathy Smalls, Yvette Metz, and Gia McKenzie—for the exceptional job it did planning and executing this meeting and program.

On a final note, board member Julia-Ellen Davis has decided to resign. We would like to thank her for her work and years of service on this Board. Replacing Ms. Davis will be Ms. Vicki Williams, who was elected to the Board during June's annual meeting. Please join me in welcoming her.

In conclusion, the 2017-2018 fiscal year has been another successful year for the Avery Institute of Afro-American History and Culture. We were able to donate a substantial amount of money to the Avery Research Center and to other charitable organizations in our community. Thank you again for your continued support of our mission at the Avery Institute of Afro-American History and Culture.

Continued thanks,

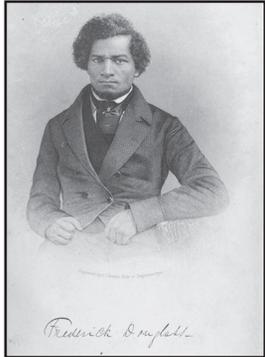
John Buncum

AVERY ARCHIVES NEWS

by Aaisha Haykal, Manager of Archival Services

BOOK ACQUISITION

During summer 2018, we were gifted a first-edition copy of Frederick Douglass's *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), his second autobiography, from Major General and Mrs. Leo and Vicki Williams III.



My Bondage and My Freedom
frontispiece image of Frederick Douglass.

This work expands upon his first narrative, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), and chronicles his time as a lecturer in the United States and abroad. The University of Rochester's Department of Rare Books and Special Collections and the Frederick Douglass Institute are currently working on a project titled University of Rochester Frederick Douglass Project.

The University of Rochester holds a large number of records

documenting Douglass's life and is currently digitizing items including images, letters, and writings. More about the project can be found at <https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/2494>.

NEW ARCHIVAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Avery Research Center's archival staff has been busy this summer getting training in and

migrating finding aids to ArchivesSpace, an archival information management software that allows archives and archivists to manage, describe, and provide access to their archival holdings. In the Fall/Winter 2018, we will be releasing the new interface to the public. This system will make searching and finding our collections easier for the public. Additionally,



(l-r) Georgette Mayo, Processing Archivist (Avery Research Center); Aaisha Haykal, Manager of Archival Services (Avery Research Center); Joshua Minor, Manager of Archival Processing (Adelestone Library)

holdings within College of Charleston's Special Collections and the South Carolina Historical Society will eventually be searchable. More about the program can be found at <https://archivesspace.org/>.

NEWLY PROCESSED COLLECTIONS

"Somebody Had to Do It"

(4.9 Linear feet; 11 archival boxes; 1 DVD box)



Dr. Millicent Brown

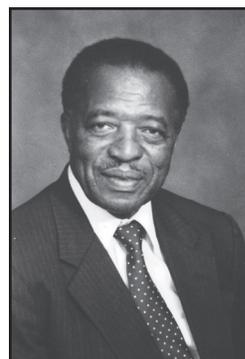
Dr. Millicent Brown joined Claflin University as an associate professor in 2008. She established the "Somebody Had to Do It" Project as part of a Senior Research Fellowship with the J. J. Wright Institute. The project documents the experiences of African-American children who integrated formerly all-White schools via video oral histories. The collection contains correspondence,

interview transcripts, grant proposals, financial reports, and conference/symposia presentations. Some of the topics in the collection include desegregation pioneers, school desegregation, civil rights, and *Brown v. Board*.

Additionally, there are audiovisual materials relating to the project. Some of the oral history interviews can be seen on the Lowcountry Digital Library at <http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu/content/somebody-had-do-it>.

Benjamin James Whipper Jr.

(30 linear feet; 58 boxes)



Benjamin James Whipper Jr.

Benjamin Whipper (1912-1998), a Charleston native, was a minister, religious leader, educator, and civic activist. He pastored two churches, Charity Baptist and Saint Matthew Baptist. Additionally, he co-founded the Baptist Education Center Foundation and established Charleston's first Head Start Program. His collection documents his religious work, including handwritten sermons and his engagement with religious associations (i.e., Charleston County Baptist Association and National Baptist Convention).

The collection also includes audiovisual materials of convention proceedings, sermons, and board meetings.

NEW LIBRARY BOOK TITLES

During 2017-2018 academic year, we added seventeen new titles to our non-circulating collection including:

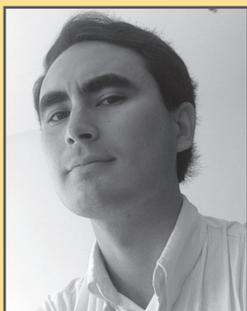
- *The Denmark Vesey Affair: A Documentary History* by Douglas R. Egerton and Robert L. Paquette (2017)
- *Slavery at Sea: Terror, Sex, and Sickness in the Middle Passage* by Sowande' M. Mustakeem (2016)
- *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology* by Deirdre Cooper Owens (2017)
- *The Cooking Gene: A Journey through African-American Culinary History in the Old South* by Michael Twitty (2017)
- *Making Gullah: A History of Sapelo Islanders, Race, and the American Imagination* by Melissa L. Cooper (2017)
- *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* by Ibram X. Kendi (2017)

Interested in donating records? Please contact us at averyresearchcenter@cofc.edu.

Donations of particular interest include items relating to foodways, the Black Lives Matter movement, women's movement, and Black-owned businesses.

NEW GRADUATE ASSISTANTS • ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-2019

THOMAS RYAN COUGHLIN



A native of Gloucester, VA, Thomas has lived in Charleston since October 2015. He studies and writes poetry as a second-year candidate in the Master of Fine Arts Creative Writing program at the College of Charleston. For his thesis, he will present a full-length poetry collection. His academic and professional interests span different approaches, including the study of history and archival work.

His paternal great-grandparents are buried at Old St. Andrew's Parish Church in West Ashley. This position at the Avery Research Center allows Thomas to deepen his understanding of Charleston and, more broadly, African-American history and culture.

He joins Avery Research Center to assist its historical and educational missions, which are both integral to this community he now calls home.

KATHERINE JONES



Jones has lived in Charleston for the past year and a half. After receiving her bachelor's degree in Literacy and Language Education from the University of Georgia in 2017, Jones relocated to the Lowcountry to pursue her Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, with an emphasis in Arts Management, from the College of Charleston. As a former resident of North Georgia, she misses the mountains of Appalachia, but she is learning to love the sandy beaches of the Carolina coast. Currently on hiatus from teaching while she works towards her degree, Jones intends to continue working with children upon graduation—only this time outside the classroom. Ideally, she would like to work for an art-based education non-profit or coordinate children's art programs in local museums. Jones is excited to begin her work with the Avery Research Center because she believes it will further her ability to adequately teach children from all walks of life and gain a better understanding of the diverse history and culture in this new place she calls home.

RUCHA KAMATH



Rucha Kamath was born and raised in Mumbai, India. Her parents and ancestral history sparked her interest in her country's diverse cultural and architectural heritage. She studied architecture in undergraduate school because of her keen interest in the art of building design and interpreting its relationship to the building's environment. Rucha has also worked as a heritage walk leader in Mumbai. Following her passion, Kamath is pursuing a master's degree in Historic Preservation at Clemson University and College of Charleston's joint graduate program based in Charleston's beautiful and historic city. Currently a second-year student, Rucha is focusing her thesis on the importance and application of building archaeology for informed museum interpretation. Upon graduation, Rucha plans to pursue a career in material conservation, cultural heritage, and archival research.

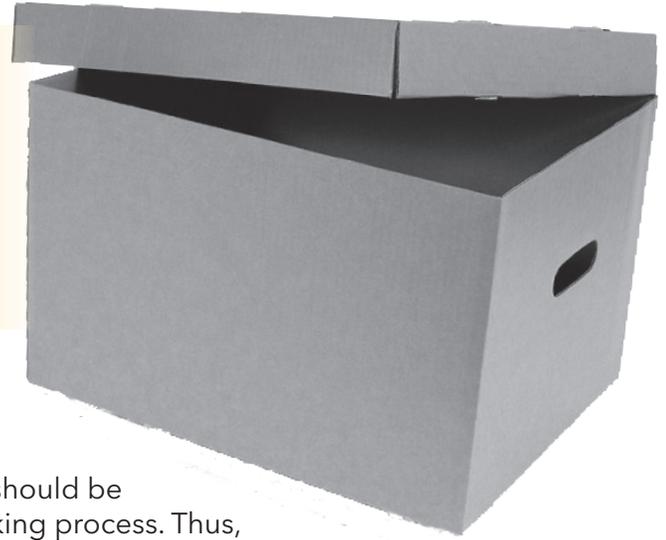
THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING A **SOCIAL JUSTICE LENS** IN ARCHIVES

by Aaisha Haykal

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ARCHIVES CAN BE VIEWED FROM AT LEAST TWO WAYS:

- **The mission and vision of archival institutions**
- **The work that is completed by those within the profession**

THESE TWO WAYS CAN INFLUENCE EACH OTHER AND REFLECT POWER IMBALANCES.



Over the past fifty years, there has been scholarship and dialogue within the archival profession around the issues of power and neutrality in archival institutions. Some scholars, such as Luciana Duranti and Theo Thomassen, believe archiving should be a neutral and passive activity free of bias during the decision-making process. Thus, archives would be more trusted, authoritative, and apolitical. However, more and more scholars and practitioners are suggesting that the public, the historical record, and the profession are better when we acknowledge how and why certain events and records are not preserved or documented. These scholars, such as Anne Gilliland, Jarrett Drake, Stacie Williams, and Bergis Jules, have challenged the profession to adopt a social justice lens, noting injustices can incur with a passive approach.

Due to these previously “unbiased” professionals, we are now dealing with an unbalanced historical record. Collections have mostly contained the histories of the wealthy, white, and male population thus far. However, for the past fifty years, there has been a surge of collections, museums, research centers, and private and public archives and institutions working to overcome these previous acquisition lapses by collecting the records of marginalized, oppressed, and underrepresented communities. This shift in focus can be attributed to many things, including the rise of several social justice movements such as civil rights, labor, and women’s liberation. Changing demographics in higher education has also contributed to this shift.

Archives, research centers, and related institutions such as museums and libraries can play a vital role in correcting societal wrongs. They have an opportunity to provide communities with spaces to document, to gather, to heal, to sustain, and to empower. The creation of ideas for these institutions around Black experiences occurred simultaneously with the Black Studies movements. Archives and museums across the country such as the College of Charleston’s Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture (1985); the Amistad Research Center (1966); the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (1925); California African American Museum’s Archive (1977); the Vivian G. Harsh Collection at the Chicago Public Library (1932); and Black Archives of Mid-America (1974) have done a good job documenting and preserving histories, as well as serving as a community gathering space. Now, they are grappling with how to sustain and empower communities. Some solutions have been to hold town halls, organize oral history series, offer digitization days, create community archiving projects, provide economic and legal assistance, participate in local rallies and activism, write disparities reports, and source business opportunities.

INCLUSION • ACCOUNTABILITY • EQUITY • AGENCY

From its beginning, the Avery Research Center's mission has been to preserve, document, and promote African-American history with a specific focus on the Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry. We have done well in this aspect, but there are gaps (i.e., the historical and current experiences of the Gullah Geechee communities, Black owned-business, records of non-Christian religious institutions, twenty-first century, etc.) and we hope the community will help us fill those gaps and more. Some of the models we are reviewing include work that was done to document the Black Lives Matter movement in various cities, the Women's March, and student activism on various college campuses and cities (i.e., Project STAND).

At the 2018 Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, several sessions were devoted to challenging archival institutions to rethink practices and examine ways they have excluded people within their spaces, whether in collections and/or physically from their buildings. Furthermore, there were sessions that commented on normative archival practices, on the need to give back to the communities they serve, on encouraging archivists to have radical empathy, and to reject the view Western practices are the only way to archive and record histories.

The Library and Information Science (LIS) profession has been tackling the issue of diversity, inclusion, and equity for at least sixty years. Scholarships, residencies, internships, and fellowships have been employed to change the profession's demographics. Success has occurred in the recruiting and hiring process, but more needs to be done to understand the profession's retention challenges. This will come with time and more research data. Mark Puente, Director of Diversity and Leadership Programs at the Association of Research Libraries, brought up this issue at the 2018 Hampton University Forum on Minority Recruitment and Retention in the Library and Information Science Field, which was funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. He noted that with data, we could better understand how people enter the profession and their experiences within it. A recent example of how this can be done is Kaetrena Davis Kendrick's study "The Low Morale Experience of Academic Librarians: A Phenomenological Study," published in the *Journal of Library Administration* in September 2017, that examined conditions and provided firsthand accounts of low morale and workplace abuse within librarianship.

Kendrick's work underlines using a social justice lens is an ongoing process that cannot be used just for collecting areas. It also has to be used when describing collections, engaging with our researchers and the public, and implementing fair and equitable labor practices. Acknowledging this can be hard work and raise tough questions about the future and sustainability of institutions themselves. Developing a social justice lens means recognizing where there are flaws in the organizational and institutional structure and taking actions to remedy them. Some recent scholarship, such as Michelle Caswell's article "Teaching to Dismantle White Supremacy in Archives," denotes ways LIS institutions reinforce white supremacy and respectability politics through their policies, leadership, and funding sources, and provides examples of how these practices can be changed.

Developing a social justice lens means recognizing where there are flaws in the organizational and institutional structure and taking actions to remedy them.

Libraries and archives across the country are working on improving issues around sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, etc., by developing task forces and committees to conduct climate surveys, review salaries and family leave policies, host truth-telling discussions, and more to facilitate better environments. Examples of these institutions and policy revisions include the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Committee for the Promotion of Diversity & Inclusion and the University of California at San Diego's new policy requiring faculty positions to submit a diversity statement during the hiring process.

Other issues that need to be considered as the profession develops a social justice lens are digital storage, environmental impact, and climate change and its impact on archival repositories across the globe (i.e., damage to museums, libraries, and archives in the aftermath of hurricanes/tsunamis in the global south).

The LIS profession is a microcosm of what is happening in the larger society and we need to make changes where we can. Some of the changes and acknowledgments are individual; some are organizational within the library; and others are within the larger parent institution. With a social justice lens, archivists and archival institutions can be sustainable, meet the needs of our stakeholders and workers, and document our environment most comprehensively and effectively.

“VOTEless People Are Hopeless People”: Under

by George

The importance of archives is its ability to hold documents that provide insight into the past. This, in turn, helps us realize how that history affects us in the present. Archivists are often asked, “What is your favorite document in your archive?” My answer to this question is a typescript found on a document in the Bernice Robinson Papers [AMN 1018], the “Sample State of South Carolina Application for Registration.” It is a mock voting questionnaire with various intrusive and humiliating questions that Robinson and Septima Poinsette Clark used during their instruction in the Citizenship Education Program on Johns Island, South Carolina. What is captivating about this simulated application is the quote found on the bottom of the form: “VOTEless People Are Hopeless People.” This saying is a paraphrase of “A Voteless People Is a Hopeless People” (aka VPHP), a quote Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. initiated in its 1932 “Education for Citizenship” program. This robust national initiative using this slogan, along with the tagline “First of All...We Vote,” continues today.

Much has been written about these grassroots schools initiated by the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, a school that educated adult Black Americans to learn how to read and write to take and pass literacy tests. Because of the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments, African Americans legally had the right to vote; however, many were barred from doing so due to numerous disenfranchisement efforts. Tactics implemented included poll taxes, threats of reprisal and/or violence, fraud, and lack of education about the voting process. One of the most common barriers many African Americans faced as they fought for enfranchisement was the voter registration test. Though tests varied from state to state, they typically involved a multiple-choice exam on state and federal politics, history, and literacy. Absurd questions like, “How many bubbles are in a bar of soap?” were specifically designed to prevent African Americans from registering to vote.

State of South Carolina
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

Dated at _____, S. C., _____ day of _____, 19____

I _____ hereby apply for registration as an elector and certify under oath that:

1. I am a female, a member of the _____ race, born at _____ male _____, on _____

I reside at _____ Street in the town or city of _____ or _____ Road in _____ Township or Parish in _____ County. My nearest voting place is _____ My weight is _____ lbs., my height is _____ ft. _____ in., the color of my eyes _____ the color of my hair _____

() 2. I (a) will have resided in South Carolina for at least one year, in this County for at least six months and in my voting precinct for at least three months prior to any election at which I will be entitled to vote if a registration certificate is issued to me upon this application, or
() (b) am a minister or spouse of a minister in charge of an organized church in this State, or
() (c) am a teacher of public school or spouse of a teacher and will have resided in South Carolina for a period of six months prior to any such election.

() 3. I am not an idiot, or insane, a pauper supported at public expense or confined in any public prison.

4. I will demonstrate to the Registration Board that
() (a) I can both read and write a section of the Constitution of South Carolina; or
() (b) I own and have paid all taxes due last year on property in this State assessed at \$300.00 or more.

() 5. I (a) have never been convicted of any of the following crimes: burglary, arson, obtaining goods or money under false pretenses, perjury, forgery, robbery, bribery, adultery, bigamy, wifebeating, housebreaking, receiving, stolen goods, breach of trust with fraudulent intent, fornication, sodomy, incest, assault with intent to ravish, miscegenation, larceny, or crimes against the election laws; or
() (b) Have been legally pardoned for such conviction.

Sworn to and subscribed before me }
this _____ day of _____ } _____ Applicant
_____, 19____ } _____
Examined and found (not) qualified

Member of Registration Board Member of Registration Board

VOTEless People Are Hopeless People



Septima Clark (seated center), and Bernice Robinson (standing) conducting class at the Johns Island Citizenship School. These classes enabled African Americans to get voter registration cards.

Richard Miles, field director of the South Carolina Voter Education Project (1964-1967) was motivated to use the “VOTEless” phrase immediately after President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law on August 6, 1965. Miles prepared the sample registration application found in the Bernice Robinson Papers to help prepare potential voters, bluntly reminding them that “VOTEless People Are Hopeless People.”

Voter education is as imperative now as it was in the 1930s when the Citizenship campaigns began. The “Application for Registration” magnifies how obstacles for the right to vote persist today, and current voter suppression tactics include methods such as identification requirements and voter roll purges. Though the “VOTEless” phrase remains significant decades later, the easiest and most powerful way to retain our hope is to go out and vote!

Ways to Prevent "Hopelessness"



VOTING IS A KEY WEAPON IN THE FIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE. HERE ARE WAYS TO ASSERT YOUR AGENCY.

1. Create change locally. Do not disregard your local, primary, midterm, and special elections as their results affect our communities directly.
2. Investigate local and national organizations that support voter education. One such organization is a new local initiative called the "Soul to Sol Salon Project." Founders Tamika Gadsden and Brittany Mathis started this program to engage women of color in the voting process. This salon-based project brings us full circle with Bernice Robinson's voter activism. In a recent *Post and Courier* newspaper article (2018, May 20), Mathis refers to Robinson, a beautician by trade, and her Citizenship involvement conducted in her home beauty salon in Charleston. Robinson actively encouraged her clients to register to vote even while styling their hair. Similarly, the Soul to Sol Salon Project is a bicultural outreach effort designed to equip salons in Black and Latinx communities with voter registration information and resources. Mathis brings the conversation regarding the importance of voting to a familiar, safe space outside the Black church, "Not all of us go to church, but we all get our hair done."
Visit the Soul to Sol Salon Project website: <https://www.soultosolvote.com/>.
3. Educate yourself on the candidates and their positions. How do they coincide with your issues and concerns? If candidates do not, advocate for your priorities.
4. Identify quality potential candidates in your community and encourage them to run for office. Support them financially and/or with your volunteerism. Better yet, consider running for office yourself.
5. Encourage and register others to vote. On Election Day, take people to the polls.
6. Become a poll worker through the South Carolina County Election Commission; this is a paid day position.
7. Once in office, hold your elected officials accountable to their promises.
8. Finally, always remember your vote has power!



***"Do you know what power is?
Power is the ability to make the power
structure say 'yes' even when it wants to
say 'no.' The way to do this is to be voters."
—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.***

VOTING RIGHTS

Major Dates in History

- 1776** The right to vote during the Colonial and Revolutionary periods is restricted to landowners, most of whom are Protestant White men over twenty-one years old.
- 1787** U.S. Constitution adopted. There is no federal voting standard—states can decide who can vote.
- 1789** George Washington is elected president; only six percent of the population can vote.
- 1790** The Naturalization Law is passed, explicitly stating only “free White” immigrants can become naturalized citizens.
- 1848** Activists for abolition and women’s rights attend the women’s rights convention held in Seneca Falls, NY. Frederick Douglass gives a speech supporting universal voting rights.
- 1856** Voting is extended to all White men. The property ownership requirement is removed.
- 1866** Women’s rights activists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony form an organization for White and Black women and men dedicated to the goal of universal voting rights. The organization later divides over disagreements in strategies to gain the vote for women and African Americans.
- 1867** An 1867 Congressional law required former Confederate states to include Black male suffrage in their new state constitutions. Ironically, though African American men began voting in the South after 1867, the majority of Northern states continued to deny them this basic right.
- 1868** The 14th Amendment to the Constitution is passed. Citizenship is granted to those born in the U.S., including the formerly enslaved. Voting regulations remain male only, over twenty-one years old, and determined by states.
- 1870** The 15th Amendment passed, stating that the right to vote cannot be denied (to men) by the federal or state governments based on race.
- 1872** Women try to vote in the presidential election but are turned away.
- 1876** The Supreme Court rules Native Americans are not citizens as per the 14th Amendment and, thus, cannot vote.
- 1890** Indigenous people must apply for citizenship.
- 1895** South Carolina enacts a poll and literacy tax for elections.
- 1896** A new “grandfather clause” is adopted by Louisiana legislators, disenfranchising African American voters. The percentage of registered Black voters drops considerably. Statewide disenfranchising conventions specifically designed to undermine Black voters are held in Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, and Virginia from 1890 to 1902.
- 1920** The 19th Amendment gives women the right to vote.
- 1924** The Indian Citizenship Act grants citizenship, but the right to vote is denied.
- 1940** Only three percent of eligible African Americans in the South are registered to vote. Many African Americans cannot afford to pay the poll tax, effectively denying them the right to vote.
- 1963-1964** There are large-scale efforts in the South to register African Americans to vote; however, state officials prevent registration by using taxes, literacy tests, and violent intimidation.
- 1964** The 24th Amendment abolishes the poll tax for federal elections.
- 1965** **Grassroots movements force change in law. The Voting Rights Act is passed. It forbids states from imposing discriminatory restrictions on who can vote and provides mechanisms for federal government enforcement.**
- 1971** The 26th Amendment is passed, granting voting rights to eighteen year olds. This amendment is largely a result of protests based on the premise that people who are old enough to fight in wars are old enough to vote.
- 2000** A federal court decides Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico, though U.S. citizens, cannot vote for U.S. President. Residents of U.S. territories including Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands cannot vote in presidential elections and do not have voting representation in the U.S. Congress.
- 2001** Debates begin: Should voting rights be taken away from felons; if so, for how long? The laws prohibiting a person with a felony conviction from voting are a legacy of post-Civil War attempts to prevent African Americans from voting. Ex-felons are largely poor and of color.

Celebrating 53 Years of the Voting Rights Act!

Seven Days in Berlin

2018 CENTROPA INSTITUTE SUMMER ACADEMY

by Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane

Earlier this year, the Centropa Institute invited Daron Calhoun and me to attend its annual Centropa Summer Academy in July, which brings educators from all over Europe and the Jewish diaspora together for lively conversation, thoughtful engagement, and rigorous curricula development for seven days in a historic center. This year, the summer academy was held in Berlin, Germany.

We participated in an international teacher training workshop and cross-cultural think tank that focused on infusing Holocaust history into elementary, high school, and college curriculum. On the face of it, one might ask why African American public historians and educators would be interested in Holocaust history. But African Americans can learn a great deal from the successes that Jewish people—namely those in Germany—have had in documenting their forbearers' horrific experiences under Hitler's Third Reich, their will to survive and ultimately thrive as a people, and their acknowledgement of their collective suffering and loss through financial reparations. This training workshop was seeing the ways in which one's story is remembered, heard, and honored.

Berlin is an important city where history is everywhere, even African-American history. While there, visiting places like where the Berlin Wall once stood, I thought of the many African-American soldiers who helped liberate this city and others in Europe during World War II. This feeling was visceral as we walked by Checkpoint Charlie and saw young German actors, dressed like American soldiers, posing with tourists. It was truly public history unfolding right before my eyes.

Daron and I saw firsthand the innovative ways teachers and professors have used the recorded personal histories, photos, and other ephemera to give voice to those who witnessed the trials, tribulations, and triumphs of a people whose spirit would not let them die. We returned to Charleston armed with renewed vigor about the Avery Research Center's oral histories collection that featured of some of the oldest Avery graduates and teachers, as well as the stories of those on whose shoulders we stand, like Deborah Wright and Curtis J. Franks. Their institutional memories of important events and figures in Avery's history must be documented and preserved.

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# Avery News Briefs

Reported by Savannah Frierson and Georgette Mayo

## Lessane Promoted to Associate Dean in College of Charleston Libraries

College of Charleston Dean John White announced Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane will be the Associate Dean for Strategic Planning and Community Engagement for all College of Charleston Libraries effective October 16, 2018. In her new role, Dr. Lessane will chair the Libraries' strategic planning working group, take on a larger role in fundraising and other community engagement, and expand her already-impressive leadership on campus to include a number of diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Dr. Lessane will continue as executive director of the Avery Research for African American History and Culture in addition to her new leadership role as associate dean. Congratulations, Dr. Lessane!

## Henrietta Snype Receives the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award



Native Mount Pleasant sweetgrass basket maker and educator Henrietta Snype received the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award in Columbia, South Carolina, on May 2, 2018. Established by the South Carolina state legislature in 1987, this award recognizes lifetime achievement in the traditional arts. Recipients of this award practice art forms that have been passed on through their families and communities and have demonstrated a commitment to keeping their traditions alive.

A third-generation basket maker, Ms. Snype actively promotes the African-inspired tradition of "sewing" sweetgrass baskets and her trademark ornamental accessories. Her work is featured throughout the Lowcountry and nationally in museums, including the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. Snype provides workshops for public and private schools throughout Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties. She also holds numerous demonstrations throughout South Carolina.

In 2009, the Avery Research Center was honored to launch Ms. Snype's initiative, "The Next Generation," which taught local youth to create their own sweetgrass

baskets to exhibit. The children also learned about museums, archives, and becoming entrepreneurs. We proudly recognize Ms. Snype for her continuous achievements!

## The College of Charleston's Black Women's Caucus Hosts Inaugural Luncheon



Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane speaking at the inaugural Black Women's Caucus Luncheon on September 24, 2018.

Established in 2017, the College of Charleston's Black Women's Caucus (BWC) is a membership organization of tenured and tenure-track African-Diasporan women who are committed to championing Black women's issues at the College of Charleston.

BWC's primary goal is to provide a safe space for honest and candid discussion, to conceive and implement proactive strategies that combat issues and practices negatively impacting College of Charleston's marginalized communities on campus, and to embrace and celebrate its members. Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane, executive director of the College of Charleston's Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture, is part of the organization's leadership.

## Avery Research Center Supports the Third Annual Black Ink: A Charleston African-American Book Festival

The Third Annual Black Ink: A Charleston African-American Book Festival was held on Saturday, September 8, 2018, at the Charleston County Public Library Main Branch. Coming from Charleston and beyond, sixty Black authors of all genres and ages participated in the event. Hundreds of visitors were able to meet authors, buy books, and attend panel discussions. National best-selling author **Terry McMillan** was this year's keynote speaker. In keeping with this year's Black Ink theme of Black creativity, empowerment, and agency, McMillan and sponsors encouraged everyone to support the authors and also to vote in the upcoming November elections. This was the second year that the College of Charleston's Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture cosponsored the event, with Avery Research Center colleagues Savannah Frierson and Georgette Mayo serving on the planning committee.



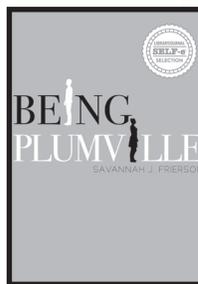
### Studio Visit with Sweetgrass Basket Maker Mary Jackson

Faculty and staff members from the College of Charleston's Avery Research Center and Addlestone Library visited the West Ashley studio of legendary sweetgrass basket maker Mary Jackson.

(l-r) Stoney Jackson; Dr. Dale Rosengarten (Addlestone Library); Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane (Avery Research Center); sweetgrass basket maker Mary Jackson; Georgette Mayo (Avery Research Center). Not shown Aaisha Haykal.  
Photo by Aaisha Haykal.

## Conseula Francis Book Circle Continues at the John L. Dart Library

We are ready to start a new season with exciting book selections. The book club list offers a great mix of recent best-sellers, classics, and even a noted local author. As in previous years, the Book Circle will meet on the third Thursday, from October to May, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. We will not meet in the month of December. In October, Avery Research Center's prolific author, Ms. Savannah J. Frierson, will visit as we discuss her book, *Being Plumville*.



The complete **Conseula Francis Book Circle** dates and readings:

- October 18, 2018: *Being Plumville* by Savannah J. Frierson
- November 15, 2018: *Barracoon* by Zora Neale Hurston
- January 17, 2019: *The Sun Does Shine* by Anthony Ray Hinton
- February 21, 2019: *An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones
- March 21, 2019: *Delicious Foods* by James Hannaham
- April 18, 2019: *Kindred* by Octavia Butler
- May 16, 2019: *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison

**Books will be available at your local Charleston County Public Library branch. Spread the word and bring a friend or two!**

## AVERY INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP NEWS



**TONY BELL,**  
Membership  
Chairman

### Greetings!

We would like to thank you for your continued support. Your support of the Avery Institute Board ensures that we can continue to supplement the Avery Research Center.

The membership committee is busy updating member information on our respective lists. We want to ensure that members receive all pertinent information.

And please do not forget to renew your membership today! Remember, it is tax deductible!

Thanks again for helping us to make sure the Avery Research Center remains the community jewel and national treasure it is.

Also, visit us online at:  
[www.averyinstitute.us](http://www.averyinstitute.us).



# AVERY INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIP 2018

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Herbert and Emily DeCosta  
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## LIFE (\$5,000+)

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## Avery Research Center thanks SunTrust Bank Foundation for its continued support!



### SunTrust Bank Foundation presenting the Avery Research Center (ARC) with a donation check.

(l-r) Georgette Mayo (Processing Archivist, ARC); Aisha Haykal (Manager of Archival Services, ARC); Dr. Patricia Williams Lessane (Executive Director, ARC); Omar Ramberan (Representative, SunTrust); Dr. Steve Osborne (Interim President, College of Charleston); Daron L. Calhoun II (Facilities, Outreach, and Public Programs Coordinator, ARC); Dean John White (Dean of Libraries, College of Charleston); Halley Cella Erickson (Development Officer, College of Charleston). Photo by Savannah Frierson.

### Special thank you to SunTrust Bank Representative Omar Ramberan!

## Avery Research Center Renovation Update

by Daron L. Calhoun II

**The Avery building** renovation project continues to move forward. Currently, the building has a new HVAC system installed and running and a fresh coat of paint on the exterior. As part of the project's final stages, the contractors gained the City of Charleston's approval to begin installing new windows and doors that will ensure a 2019 reopening to the public.

**We would like** to thank Brent Wheatley, Sarah Marshall, and the MSK Construction team for their hard work and dedication to this project. Also, we are forever indebted to the Avery Community for your patience in this process.

**We look forward** to reuniting with everyone and our collections in the Avery building next year!





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—JASON REYNOLDS, National Book Award Finalist  
and bestselling coauthor of *All American Boys*



**ANGIE THOMAS**

**Avery Research Center  
Supports 2018–2019 College Reads:  
*The Hate U Give*  
by Angie Thomas**

The College of Charleston's Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture is a sponsoring partner of the College of Charleston's 2018-2019 College Reads! Program.

This year's selection, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, is a young-adult novel and film about a teenage Black girl who finds her voice in activism when a police shooting silences her friend forever. *The Hate U Give* is nuanced, multilayered, and imbued with heart.

The Avery Research Center will host community screenings of *The Hate U Give* in October 2018 at the Terrace Theater on Maybank Highway.

Author Angie Thomas will speak at the the College of Charleston's Sottile Theatre on Monday, January 14, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.