

## **An Endangered Species: The Black Male Librarian**

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Washington, D.C.**

Despite the small numbers of Black librarians, there is a rich but untold or forgotten history of Black American's contributions to the profession. This program will examine the history and contributions that Black male librarians have made in the Nation's intellectual and cultural past and present and discuss strategies to encourage Black males to pursue careers and leadership positions in library and information science fields. In addition, The program will highlights issues Black males encounter in the workplace and the recruitment and retention of Black male librarians.

A close-up photograph of a man's face and neck, focusing on his lips and chin. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a red dress shirt, and a patterned tie. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of his skin and the fabric of his clothing.

# The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

Presented by **Julius C. Jefferson, Jr.**

The National Diversity in Libraries Conference  
October 1- 4, 2008  
Louisville, Kentucky

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## Topics

- Statistics - Credentialed Librarians by Characteristics
- 19th and 20th Century Black Male Librarians
- Issues Facing Black Male Librarians
- Solutions to Recruit

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a man's face and neck. He is wearing a dark grey suit jacket, a red dress shirt, and a red tie with a small, repeating square pattern. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of his skin and the details of his clothing. The background is a plain, light grey color.

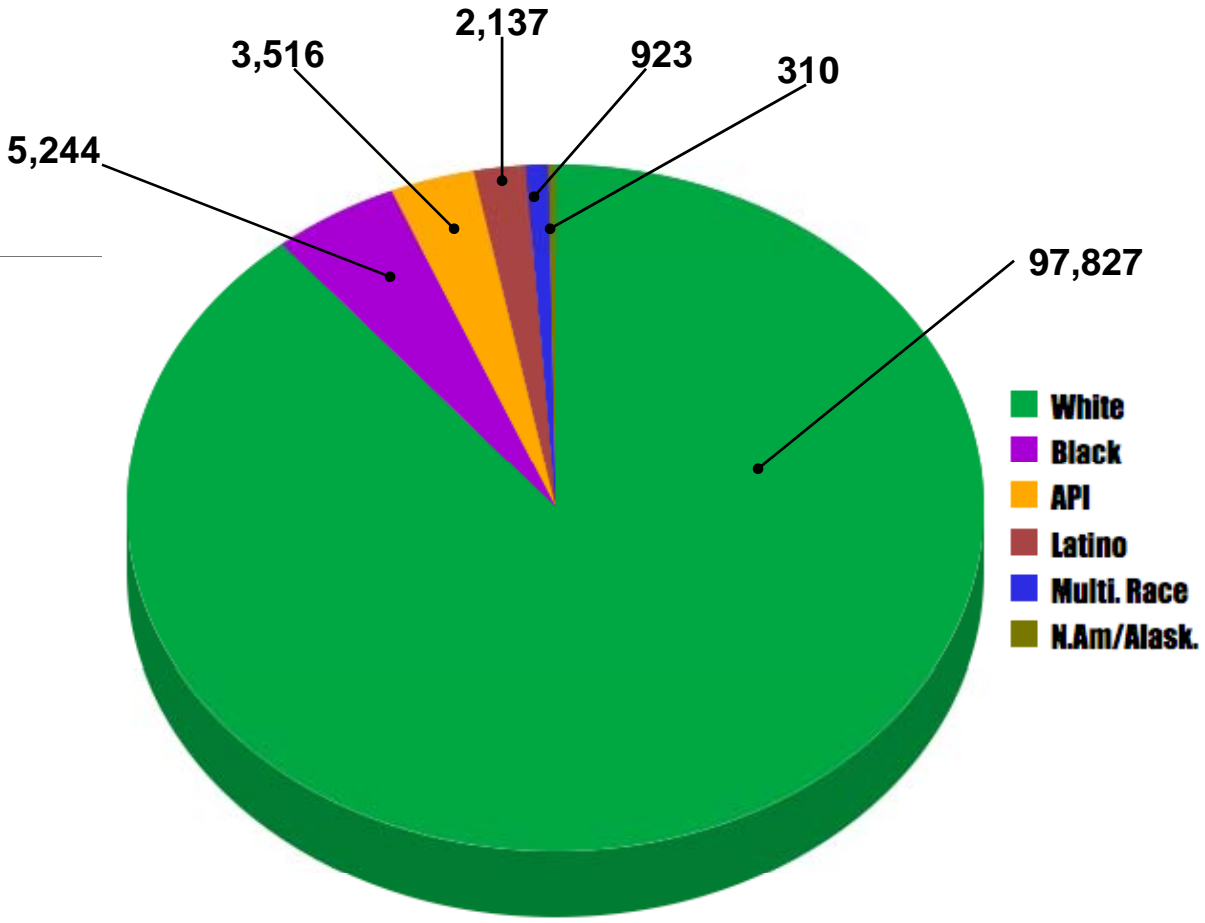
# Credentialed Librarians by Characteristics



# The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

Statistics for Librarians — 2000

Number of Credentialed Librarians by Race — Total 109,958\*

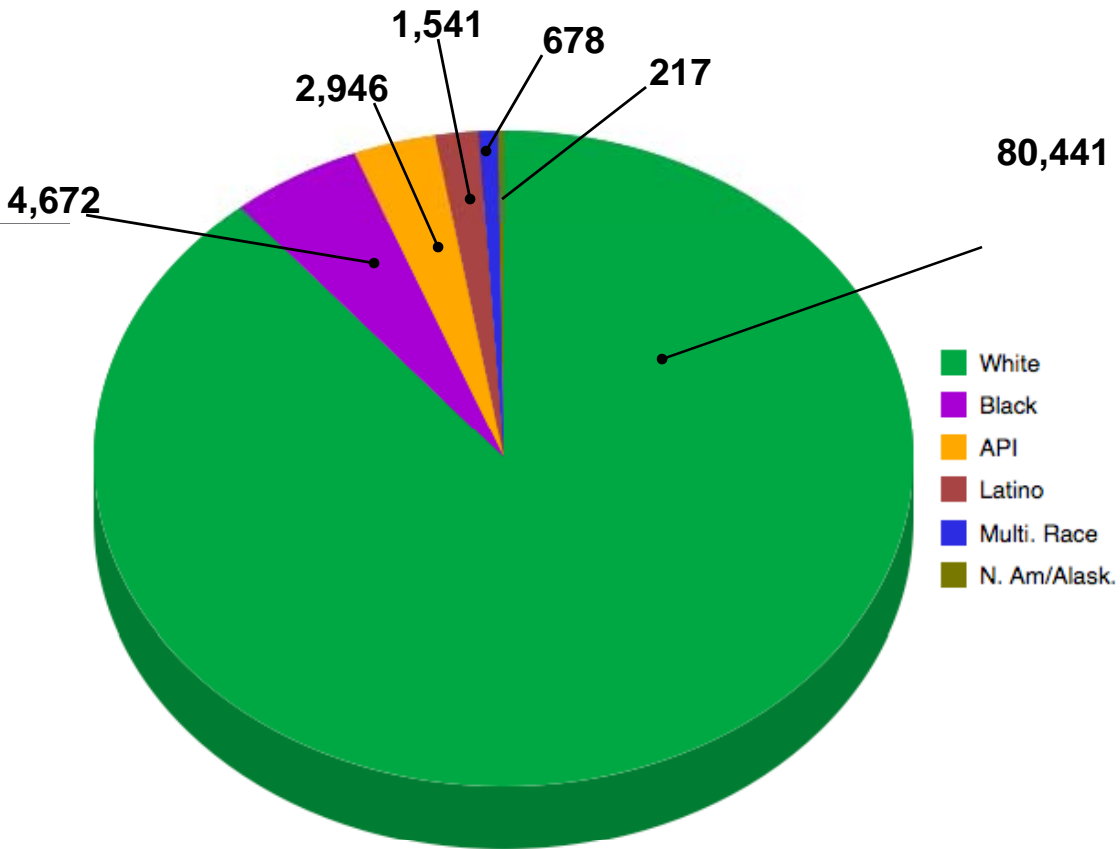


\* Diversity Counts Office for Research and Statistics Office for Diversity — Table 1: Number of Credentialed Librarians by Characteristic, 2000



# The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

Number of Credentialed Librarians by Race and Sex:  
FEMALES — Total 90,495\*

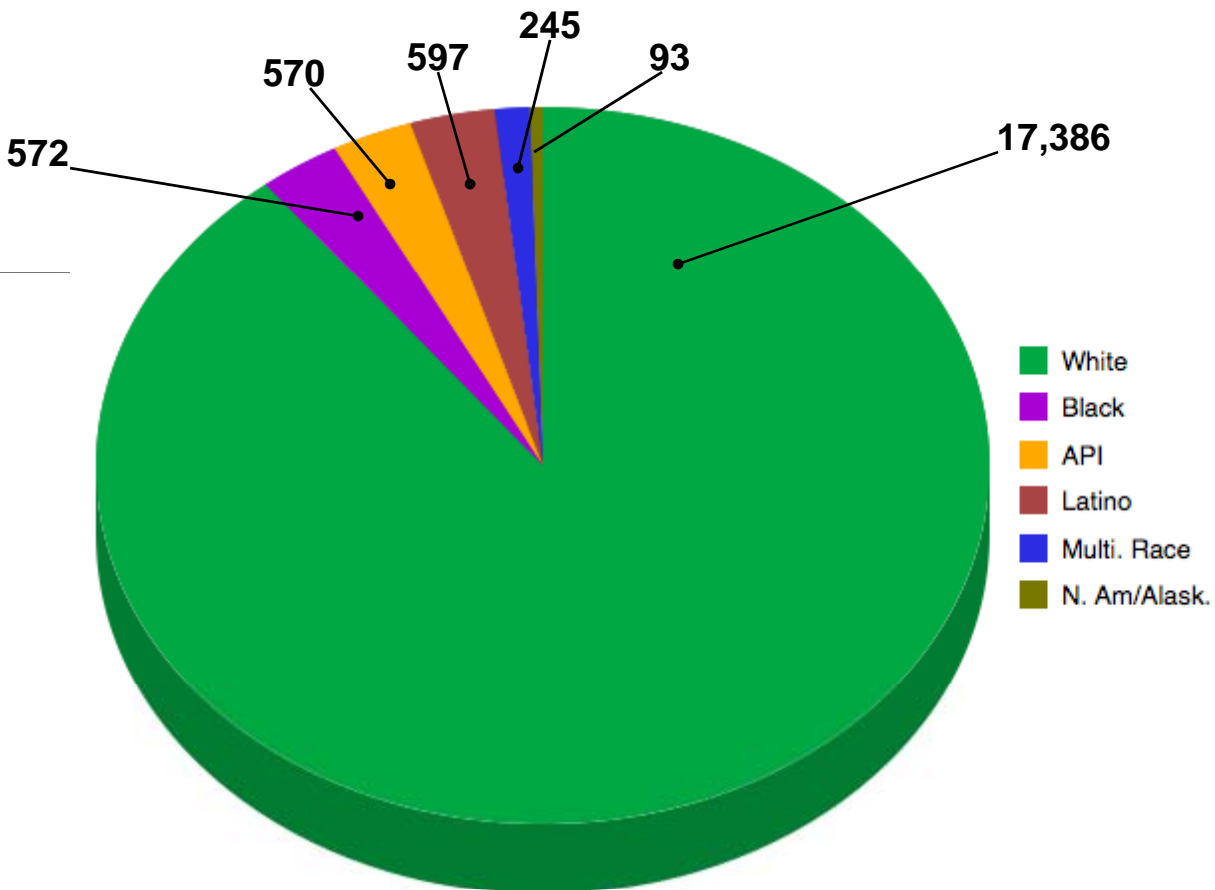


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# The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

Number of Credentialed Librarians by Race and Sex:  
MALES — Total 19,463\*

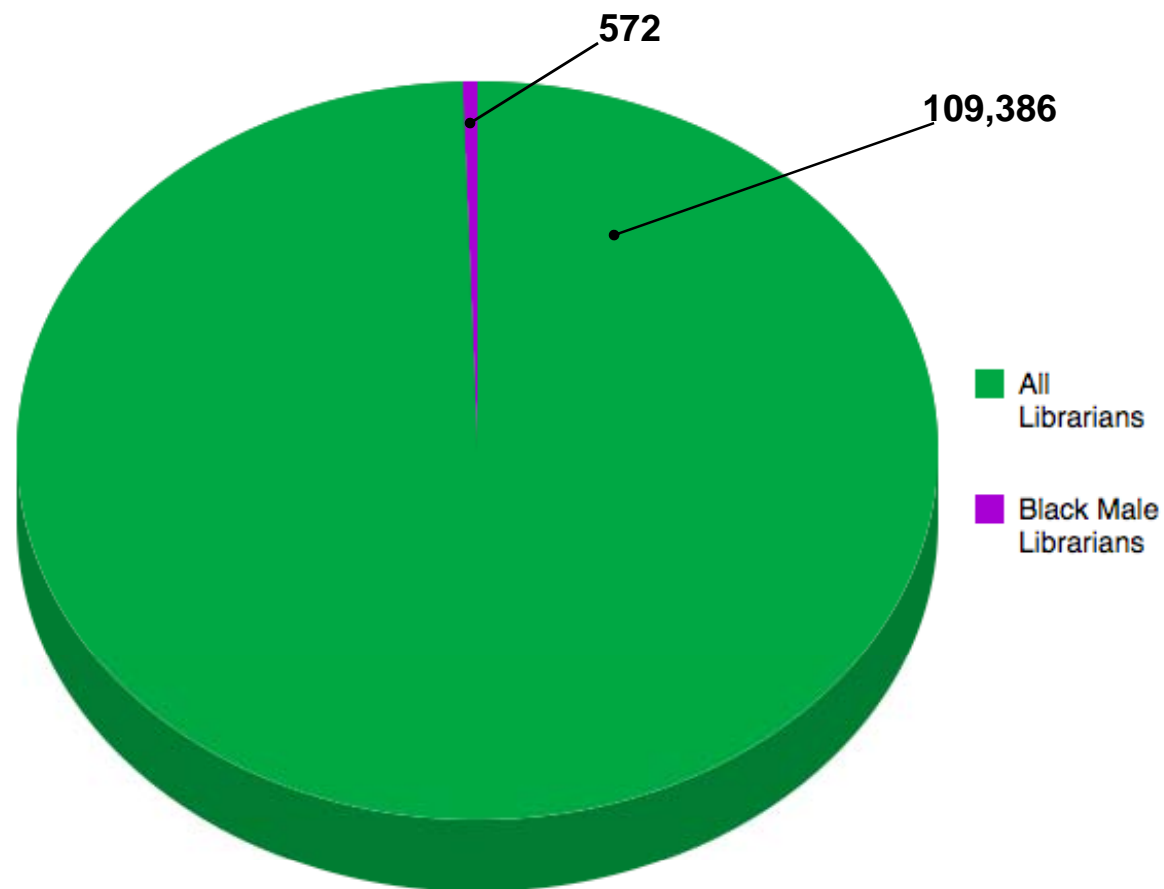


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## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

Number of Credentialed Librarians by Race and Sex — Total 109,958\*



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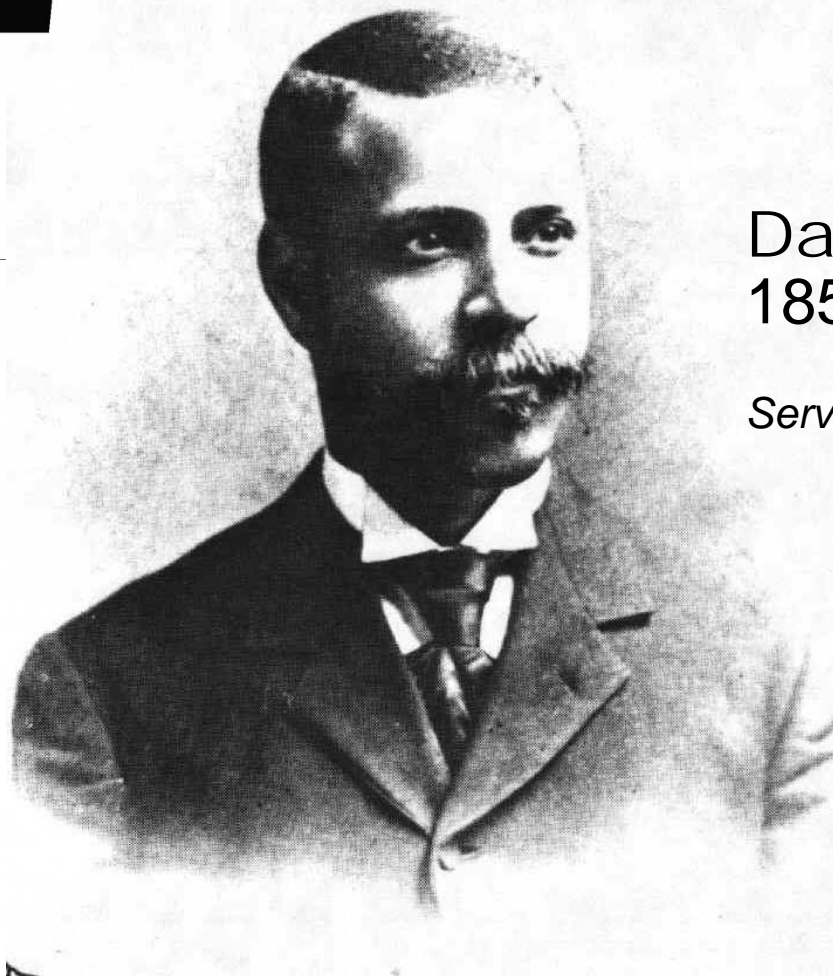
A close-up photograph of a man's face and neck, focusing on his lips and chin. He is wearing a dark grey suit jacket, a red dress shirt, and a red tie with a small, repeating square pattern. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of his skin and the fabric of his clothing. The background is a plain, light grey color.

19th Century African-American Librarians...



## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS



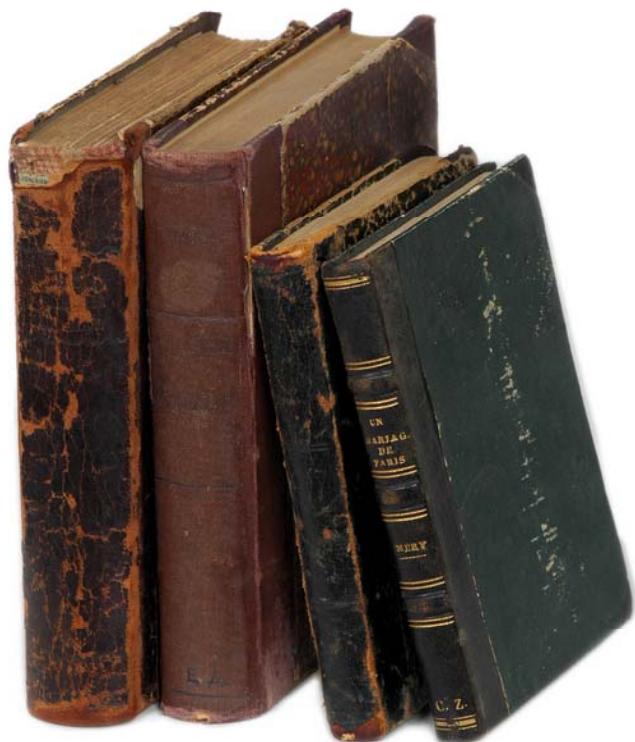
Daniel Murray  
1852-1925

*Served 52 years at the Library of Congress.*



# The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS



John F.N. Wilkerson

*Assistant in the Library of Congress  
Law Library from 1857-1912.*



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19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS



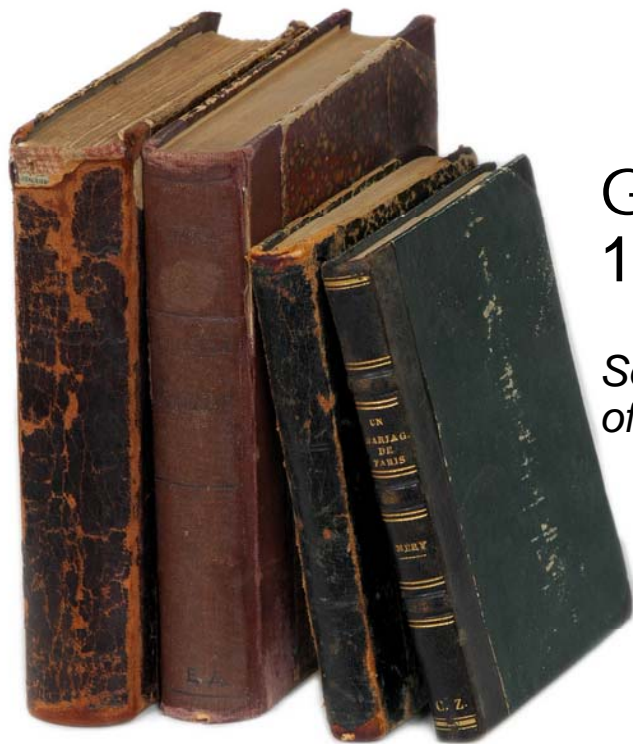
William H. Grimshaw

*First attendant in the Jefferson  
Congressional Reading Room*



## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS



George W. Forbes  
1864-1927

*Served as assistant in the West End Branch  
of the Boston Public Library from 1896-1912.*





## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

Monroe Nathan Work  
1866-1945

*Founder and director of the Department of Records and Research at Tuskegee in Alabama. Founded the annual "Negro Year Book."*



WORK, MONROE NATHAN (1866-1945) / From: *Black Librarians*



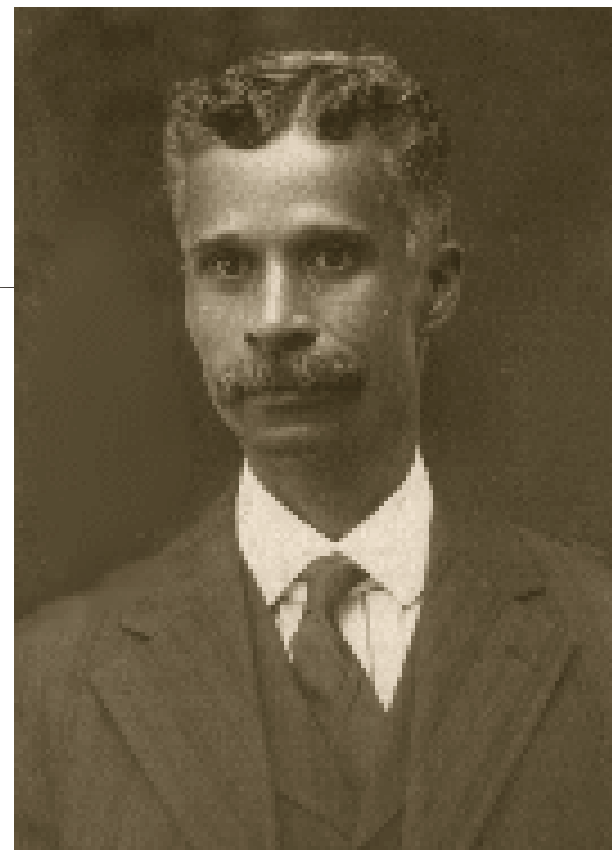
## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

### Thomas Fountain Blue 1866-1935

*Headed the first public library to establish branch services for Blacks in the South (Louisville, KY).*

*First African American to speak before the American Library Association.*





## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

Edward C. Williams  
1871-1929

*First professionally-trained African-American librarian, educator, and writer.*

*Cited as one of American Libraries' 100 library leaders of the century.*







## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS



Henry Proctor Slaughter  
1871-1958

*Typographer and journalist by occupation,  
but best known as a bibliophile and collector.*




## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

19TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

Arthur A. Schomburg  
1874-1938

*In 1911, co-founded the Negro Society for Historical Research. Between 1931 and 1932 Schomburg served as Curator of the Negro Collection at the library of Fisk University.*



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20th Century African-American Librarians...



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20TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

### Robert E. Wedgeworth

*In 1972, became the first African-American Executive Director of the ALA, the first black dean of the library school at Columbia University, the first black library director at the University of Illinois, and the first African-American as well as non-European to head the IFLA in more than sixty years.*





## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

20TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

Joseph Henry Reason  
1905-1997

*Elected the first African-American  
President of the Association of College  
and Research Libraries in 1971.*





## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

20TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

Major R. Owens  
1936-

*The country's only librarian who  
was a member of the U.S.  
Congress.*





## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

20TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

Arna Bontemps  
1902-1973

*Served as head librarian at Fisk University from 1934-1964.*





## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

20TH CENTURY AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARIANS

E.J. Josey  
1924-

*Cofounder, Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), 1970; ALA, president, 1984-85.*





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# Issues and Solutions



## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

### Survey of Black Male Librarians Shows Following Issues:

- Not being promoted
- Not enough librarians of color
- Not enough mentors that can offer inside knowledge of how a library works politically
- Not getting the same opportunities as whites
- Ostracized by patrons
- Not being seen as qualified
- Stereotyped as only good for handling difficult people
- Not taken seriously as a professional, going beyond to prove worthy
- Feeling like a token hire
- When stating difference, seen as angry or confrontational



## The Black Male Librarian... *An Endangered Species*

### Solutions for Recruiting:

- Reiterating the value of the profession
- Sell the diversity of profession  
(*ex: make a connection between the library and sports*)
- Introduce profession to children, as early as kindergarten
- Highlight the role of the Internet
- Mentorship
- Need more African Americans in academia and positions to hire

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