
Archivists & Archives of Color Newsletter

Newsletter of the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable

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Dr. Harold T. Pinkett, 1914 -2001

Harold T. Pinkett, archivist and historian, was a man of many “firsts” in his long and distinguished career. He was the first African-American professional employed by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in Washington, D.C., and possibly the first African American archivist in a major American archival institution. Appointed Fellow of the Society of American Archivists in 1962, he was the first African American thus selected; likewise, Dr. Pinkett was the first African American editor of the *American Archivist* (1968 to 1971), and the first African American member of SAA Council (1971-1972).

Harold T. Pinkett, son of the late Levin and Catherine Pinkett, was born in Salisbury, Maryland on April 7, 1914. He attended Morgan State College, where he received the B.A. degree. Graduate study led to an M.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D in history from American University in 1953. Dr. Pinkett taught history at Livingstone College in North Carolina, where he met and married Lucille Canady.

He began his career as archivist at the National Archives when, in 1942, he was offered an archivist position there. Whereupon he resigned his teaching position at Livingstone College and accepted the better-paying job at NARA. Dr. Pinkett was fortunate to have as his mentors Theodore R. Schellenburg, archival theorist and writer, and Ernst Posner, German archivist and educator. He credited much of his understanding of archival principles and techniques to these preeminent archivists, for there were few formal training programs in archival administration during those years.

At the National Archives, Dr. Pinkett served in several positions, including chief of the Agricultural Records Branch from 1959 to 1961; appraisal specialist in the Senior Records Division from 1962 to 1968, deputy director of the Records Appraisal Division from 1968 to 1971, and chief of the Legislative and Natural Records Branch from 1971 to 1979. In recognition of his outstanding performance, he received the National Archives’ Commendable Service Award in 1964 and 1970; and in 1979, the Exceptional Service Award. Dr. Pinkett was also elected to the governing councils of the Forest History Society, the Agricultural History Society and the U.S. Capitol Historical Society, and served as president of the first two organizations. He was also on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Negro History* and *Prologue*, *Journal of the National Archives*.



During his tenure at National Archives, Dr. Pinkett was also lecturer at several local universities, including Howard University, the University of Maryland and American University.

Dr. Pinkett retired in 1979, but continued to work in the profession as a consultant. Among his clients were Howard University, the National Business League, Cheyney State University, The Links, Inc., and the NAACP.

His publications included such works as *Gifford Pinchot, Private and Public Forester* (University of Illinois Press, 1970), *Research in the Administration of Public Policy* (Howard University Press for the National Archives, 1975); *National Church of Zion Methodism* (Gateway Press, 1989); and *A History of John Wesley A.M.E. Zion Church* (D.C.).

Dr. Pinkett died on March 13, 2001 after a short illness. His personal papers have been acquired by the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University.

[This article was extracted from newspaper clippings, his obituary in the *Washington Afro-American* (March 31-April 6, 2001), and Karen Jefferson’s article in the vol. 3, no. 1, 1989 newsletter.]

Please see page 3 for a special feature in memoriam of Dr. Pinkett.

Paula Williams, 1953-2001

by Diana Lachatanere

Paula Williams, an archivist at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library, died suddenly on June 14 at the age of 47, as a result of medical complications while undergoing a surgical procedure (skin graft operation) for burns she sustained while being hospitalized at Harlem Hospital Center for a recurring illness.

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Greetings from the Co-chairs by Rosalye Settles

It's summertime --- picnics in the park, the sounds of the ocean waves on the beach, exploring new places and visiting familiar ones. Like the yearly activities of summer, the time is fast approaching for the 65th annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) meeting, which will be held in Washington, DC August 27-September 2, 2001. The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable meeting will be held during SAA on Friday, August 31 from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

This year's SAA meeting offers numerous opportunities to experience the sights and cultural heritage of the Host City. In between sessions, meetings and workshops, consider a tour and reception of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University or a walking tour of the historic Washington, DC Shaw neighborhood that Duke Ellington called home. Session, #37 After the Storm: Documenting Birmingham's Civil Rights History, chaired by former Roundtable Co-Chair Brenda Squire, and # 41, Capturing the Context of Memory: The Development of Archives in Support of the Cultural Memory of Communities, highlight sources and initiatives which address the records documenting communities of color.

Members interested in serving as nominees for roundtable co-chair or adding items to the agenda should contact Co-Chairs Taronda Spencer at spelman.edu or Rosalye Settles, at rosalye.settles@do.treas.gov by close of business, Friday, August 10, 2001

See you in the Capitol City!

Lalo Guerrero Collection Goes to the University of California, Santa Barbara

Eduardo "Lalo" Guerrero, known as the "Father of Chicano Music," has donated his papers to the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA) in the Davidson Library at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Guerrero, 84, has entertained lovers of Chicano music for six decades.



Composer, musician, singer and recipient of many awards, including the prestigious "National Medal of the Arts", Guerrero has played guitar and has sung in films alongside Jane Russell, Robert Mitchum, George Raft and Gilbert

Roland. He has serenaded the public alongside Frank Sinatra, Dinah Shore, Red Skelton, Milton Berle and Hoagy Carmichael. He also co-hosted the Paul Rodríguez Show on Spanish-language television.

According to CEMA director Sal Güereña "The University Libraries' acquisition of the Guerrero Papers is a significant milestone. This is part of a new initiative of the Library's Performing Arts Collections and CEMA to document the legacy of Mexican American music in California." Moreover, Güereña said "Time is running out, materials are getting lost, and memories are fading. For this reason it is essential to preserve the recordings and archives of performers such as Lalo Guerrero." The Guerrero Collection is rich in photographs, videos, interviews, correspondence, phonograph records, audiocassettes, scrapbooks, and ephemera.

Guerrero claims many accolades; amongst the most prominent are those from Nosotros, the Mexican Cultural Institute, El Teatro Campesino and the United Farm Workers. In December 1996 he was awarded the "National Medal of the Arts" from President Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary at a White House ceremony. Guerrero has received a Golden Eagle Award from Nosotros, for lifetime achievement, and Caminos magazine's "Hispanic of the Year" award, as well as having his name immortalized in the Tejano Hall of Fame. His name adorns streets and schools – Avenida Lalo Guerrero is found in California's Cathedral City and his former school in Tucson will soon be named after him. The Lalo Guerrero School of Music in Los Angeles, part of the "Art in the Park" non-profit organization, was founded in 1999.

Guerrero was born in Tucson on Christmas Eve 1916, after his parents immigrated to the United States from Mexico in 1912. Lalo gives all credit to his late mother for his musical ability, for it was from her that he learned to "embrace the spirit of being Chicano." At 17 he wrote and performed the classic "Canción Mexicana," a song that was endorsed by the Mexican people and became the unofficial Mexican National Anthem. He began entertaining in bars then at military camps and hospitals during WW II. By 1946 he was playing in a nightclub in LA called "La Bamba," where Hollywood stars frequented. In the 50's and 60's Lalo had five songs riding the top 10 on the Latin and American music charts in the U.S. His love and concern for his Chicano people soon had him traveling to farming areas where he championed farm workers' causes, writing songs about Cesar Chavez and calling for the decent treatment of agricultural laborers. In the 1950's Guerrero made America laugh with satires such as "Pancho Lopez" and "Elvis Perez," while in the 1960's the children of America were entertained with Guerrero's music aided by three chipmunk-type characters, "Las Ardillitas." In 1978, four of Guerrero's songs were featured in Luis Valdez' hit film and musical "Zoot Suit." Luis Valdez' papers and the archives of his Teatro Campesino are also housed in CEMA.

The Guerrero collection was established in CEMA in October 2000 and covers this astounding career from the late 1930s to the present day. It ranges from photographs autographed by President Clinton to music and lyrics sheets for his comedic "Elvis Perez" and his "El Hustle de las Ardillitas" (the "Chipmunks' Hustle"). It also includes recordings of his popular boleros, parodies such as "I Left my Car in San Francisco," as well as "La Cancion Mexicana" (unofficial Mexican national anthem), in addition to taped interviews and performances on the Univision television show "Cristina".

The original material on this page was an article from *The Crisis* magazine published in 1944. Due to a licensing agreement that specifically does not give approval for Internet publication, AAC is unable to display this page on-line. To get the original text, contact the AAC Newsletter Editors or visit your local research library and request the article, "Preserving the Past for the Present" by Harold T. Pinkett, in *The Crisis*, February, 1944, p 57.

The Jackson Davis Collection of African American Educational Photographs

by Edward Gaynor

The Special Collections Department of the University of Virginia Library has prepared a travelling exhibit available to your institution on loan. The exhibit of 42 photographs and explanatory text was selected from the Jackson Davis Collection of African-American Educational Photographs. Mr. Davis traveled throughout the South between the years of 1910-1930 as a field agent for the General Education Board and recorded his travels in both formal and candid photographs. The exhibit documents the world of segregated Jim Crow education in Virginia and the South. You can access the complete collection of over 5,000 photographs of African-American rural schools, training institutes and colleges (nearly half of which were taken in Virginia) at <http://www.lib.virginia.edu/speccol/jdavis>

The exhibit may be borrowed for a period of 6 weeks; however, if you want the exhibit for longer than 6 weeks, we can arrange a period that suits you. The materials are prepared for display and include instructions for mounting as well as copies of the exhibit catalog for distribution at your institution. There is no charge for borrowing the exhibit, although we do ask that you cover shipping charges to and from your institution; the cost of shipping one way is \$70. If you are interested in displaying this exhibit, or if you have questions about the collection, please contact me at:

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Archives of the Centro Cultural de la Raza Established in California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives at the University of California, Santa Barbara

The archives of the Centro Cultural de la Raza, a non-profit, San Diego-based Chicano/Latino cultural arts organization, have been established at the University of California, Santa Barbara. The records of this 31 year-old cultural center are now officially housed in the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (CEMA). CEMA is the leading repository for California's Chicano visual arts collectives and centers. According to CEMA director Sal Güereña, "This is the culmination of a 16-year effort. Acquiring and preserving the archives of this "Centro" was extremely important to us. The collection documents the incipience and evolution of the Chicano visual arts movement in Southern California, and it uniquely captures the dynamics of the U.S. Mexico border culture in a way that nothing else does." The Centro's archives will now be located in an institution that already houses the collections of all other major Chicano visual arts

centers in this state. Centro director Nancy Rodríguez stated "we made this decision with a sense of both accomplishment and anticipation, thankful to see the history of the Centro archived with such care and respect."

The Centro Cultural de la Raza was founded as an artists' multi-disciplinary collective in 1970. It was established as a Chicano cultural arts center during a period of great activism and social unrest. For three decades it has functioned as an alternative program to facilitate and encourage artistic growth and cultural interchange. Chicano cultural artists who were active in the late 1960's in San Diego and had a role in the founding of the Centro include Salvador Torres and Alurista, the latter a celebrated Chicano poet and author of *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*. Both were attending San Diego State University in 1968 and were involved in the Mexican American Youth Association. Other artists and community activists who were involved in the genesis of the Centro include Guillermo Aranda, Erminia Enrique, Victor Ochoa, and Mario Torero Acevedo. It was in 1968 that Salvador Torres and others succeeded in securing from the City of San Diego a then-abandoned circular building in Balboa Park that became the Centro's home. Erminia Enrique was another of the voices who argued for a Centro in meetings with officials of the City of San Diego.

The Centro gave rise to many artistic groups, such as Teatro Mestizo, The Border Arts Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo, and Toltecas en Aztlán. The Centro's cultural activities have encompassed the visual arts, especially mural art, as well as drama, music, poetry, arts and crafts, and Mexican folkloric and Aztec dances. Centro co-founder Erminia Enrique also founded the Ballet Folklorico Aztlán. It was a dynamic center of indigenismo (indigenism) in the early years of the Aztlán phase of Chicano art (1970-75), owing to the influence of Alurista, the Enrique family, and others. Contacts and cultural exchanges were initiated with Native American artistic groups as well as indigenous performance groups in Mexico, such as the Mascarones, and the Conchero groups. Ties also were made with various Mexican and Mexican American Ballet Folklorico groups who would contribute so much to the Chicano cultural movement throughout the Southwest, and later, the nation.

The Centro's archives amount to 102 linear feet and contain several hundred graphic prints, and several thousand slides of art work, murals, performances and cultural arts activities; it also consists of ephemeral materials, literary materials, correspondence, videos and other materials that date from about 1970 to the present.

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Paula Williams, 1953-2001 (continued)

Paula received her undergraduate degree from Baruch College, C.U.N.Y., and her M.L.S. degree from Pratt Institute. She also enrolled in the History and Archival Management Program at New York University during the late 1970s.

Paula began her career as the assistant archivist at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change in 1978, before moving on to the Ohio Historical Society (1980). She returned to her native New York in 1981 to serve as the Assistant Archivist at the United Negro College Fund, and in 1984 she became the Archivist with the Fund, a position she held for ten years until the national office announced its decision to move to Virginia. She joined the staff of the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division of the Schomburg Center in October 1994, where she did public service and processed manuscript collections. For the past several years she was responsible for the training and supervision of college students who worked in the division.

A member of the Society of American Archivists since the late 1970s, Paula was instrumental in the formation of the Task Force on Minorities in 1981, the precursor to the Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable, and was a "charter" member of the roundtable. Although not active in the last few years, Paula had held memberships in the Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, and the Black Caucus of the American Library Association. Paula was also an active member of her church, the New Hope Spring Grove Baptist Church in New York City, and had become a Licensed Missionary.

Paula is survived by her son Roy E. Gomes, Jr., her mother, Maggie Williams, her sister and brother, and a large extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins and other relatives.

Hofstra University Archives Announces Two Collections

The Harry Wachtel Papers, 1950-1990. Wachtel (1917-1997) was Martin Luther King's lawyer and a long-time advisor. The collection includes correspondence, information and memorabilia about the Nobel Prize tour in 1964, photos (some from MLK, some from publications that were used as illustrative of racial incidents-can be viewed but not copied), materials about Supreme Court decisions, Southern Christian Leadership Conference materials, speeches (some written with/for MLK), Vietnam War materials, FBI investigations of MLK, course materials (Wachtel taught political science courses at Columbia and Hofstra), and sound recordings (published tapes and vinyl records of MLK and others).

They also have the papers of Tuskegee Airman Lt. Col. Charles Dryden. They have done a Web exhibit about Dryden at www.hofstra.edu (click on libraries, then choose University Archives, scroll down to exhibits). Dryden (1920-) is a retired Lieutenant Colonel, an aviator, and an author (his autobiography, *A-Train: Memoirs of a Tuskegee Airman*, was published in 1997.) The collection consists of

photographs, newspaper articles, correspondence about his life and career, as well as drafts of the book. Also included are various newsletters, calendars, and print materials from Air Force Bases and Black run newspapers.

The Library of Congress National Digital Library Program announces the release of the online collection, "Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938" at the American Memory Web site at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/>

"Born in Slavery" includes more than 2,300 first-person accounts of slavery with searchable text, bibliographic records and 500 black-and-white photographs of former slaves.

The Federal Writers' Project (FWP) originally made no plans for collecting slave autobiographies and reminiscences. Interviews with former slaves were included among the activities of several Southern Writers' Projects for almost a year before these isolated efforts were transformed into a project coordinated by the national headquarters of the FWP in Washington, D.C. On April 1, 1937, the collection of slave narratives formally began with the dispatch of instructions to all Southern and border states directing their Writers' Project workers to the task of interviewing former slaves. Today, the Slave Narrative Collection provides a unique and virtually unsurpassed collective portrait of a historical population.

Co-Editors

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Mission Statements

The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable

The Archivists and Archives of Color Roundtable was established in 1987 as an interest group within the Society of American Archivists. The Roundtable's purposes are to:

- 1) identify and address the concerns of Archivists of African, Asian, Hispanic and Native American descent
- 2) promote wider participation of said archivists in the archival profession
- 3) promote the preservation of archival materials that pertain to people of color

The co-chairs of this Roundtable are:

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The Society of American Archivists

The Society of American Archivists (SAA), founded in 1936, is a professional association of individuals and institutions interested in the preservation and use of archives. Its membership includes individuals serving government, academic institutions, businesses, churches, libraries, historical societies, museums, and professional associations in more than sixty countries. Through its publications, annual meetings, workshops, and other programs, SAA provides a means for contact, communication and cooperation among archivists and archival institutions: Society of American Archivists, 527 Wells Street, 5th Floor, Chicago, IL 60607, Telephone: (312)-922-0140; Fax: (312) 347-1452; e-mail: info@archivists.org
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