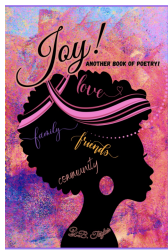




Time Is Real!

As I look forward to all that has happened, is happening and will happen in 2024, I decided to challenge myself to complete and publish my ninth literary child in celebration of my 70th birthday at the end of September! I have less than three-months to birth **JOY!** YIKES!



JOY Cover Updated!

Based on feedback received, **JOY's** book cover has been modified. The book cover credit and signed comp will be kept *in the family* because "daughter" Yuki, was the sole individual to provide the requested feedback **and** suggestions. Her suggestions led to the modifications. Thanks Yuki!

1972 Awards to Class of 2024

I was happy to attend my alma mater's Senior Awards Assembly with classmate, Rhonda Coor, to present scholarships to three deserving students -- one was absent for medical reasons.

I presented each student with a signed copy of **LET TRUTH SHINE!** inscribed with a message from me ... Huguenot's first African American cheerleader and homecoming queen. GO FALCONS!



Women and Words (UPDATE)

Many have inquired of the outcome of my going to New York in March to meet with literary agents at

Penguin Random House. In May, an email was received by participants in response to inquiries of "What's next?" I will not divulge the contents of the email, however, 30 of the 150 attendees were engaged in speed dating with over 40 agents (*I was one of the 30*), 15 advanced in discussions (*I was not one of the 15*), and four have already signed (*I definitely have not been signed*)! Forbes, partnered as a media sponsor and interviewed 15 attendees (*I was not interviewed*); three of the 15 secured opportunities to become contributing editors! This was definitely a GREAT opportunity for all attendees! Here is a [video](#) and a few official pics as proof positive your favorite poet was in the mix. #penguinrandomhouse #storehouseinabox #womenandwords

I fervently believe all of us have at least one book in us. If you have a completed manuscript or a manuscript near completion, hit me up for a referral link.

NOTE: "Women and Words" was established to support the *underserved community of black women writers*.



The early bird was sixth on the left!



Chatting with Tamir Chapman, President & CEO, Storehouse in a Box. OMG! I look like my momma!



Something GREAT was said!



Chatting with literary agent

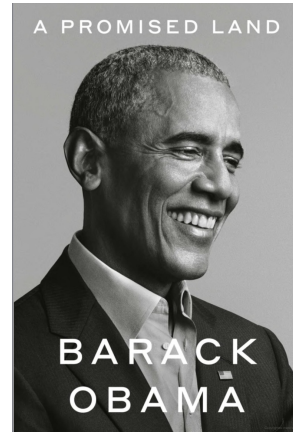
What The Author Is Reading!



The month of May kicked off with me still reading Barack Obama's *A PROMISED LAND*, which I started in March. ! This book is good and is serious reading for political junkies, which I am not. I did not foresee my completion of it prior to the end of the quarter without assistance. Therefore, I *capitulated and reaped the rewards* of giving the audio version a try. *Best decision e-vah!* Listening to POTUS44 orate his own words brought life to this book -- for me.

Via audiobook, I completed "reading" May 19. This book is heavy, not in weight -- well actually, at 768 pages and weighing 3.53 pounds -- it is heavy and heady reading! Obama takes the reader through the trials and tribulations of being the Leader of the Free World. While I was in awe and full of even more admiration for "my forever president," I found myself asking, "Why would anyone want to be POTUS?" If you have a real hunger to read first-hand accounts of politics in morion, you definitely need to pick up a copy of this book.

SIDE NOTE: *Having returned from Egypt, I found irony in hearing Obama describe, in chapter 15, his discovery of a hieroglyphic image near the Great Sphinx which resembled him. WOW! Had I read that chapter prior to going to Egypt, I may have been tempted to search for the image. Oh well!*



MY FIRST 17 by Jeffrey Charles Fleming is the author's first book of poetry. Jeffrey is the son of a now deceased soror-friend-classmate. As the title indicates, there are 17 original poems. Jeffrey's mom was supportive of my writing and I am supportive of his. When he mailed a copy to me, I promised I would provide feedback and would include here. The book is small and the poems short, but length does not determine quality. I shared the following with Jeffrey ...

- You have a voice. Do not apologize for what you have written unless you sincerely have regrets!
- Know and understand your voice/words will not always be appreciated because of generational and individual

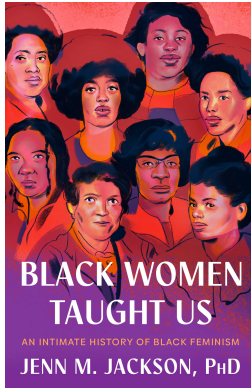
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BONUS!!!"

GROWN WOMAN TALK by Sharon Malone, M.D., was one of the books I selected to bring home from *Women & Words*. I had not looked to see that Dr. Malone would be our keynote speaker when I made the selection. GROWN WOMAN TALK is an excellent resource book to have on hand as well as an excellent reminder that we are our own primary caretakers. Dr. Sharon does an great job of explaining medical issues and concerns of women, especially women of color. She also provides a playlist of tunes befitting any and every situation. I know I will be frequently referring to this book in the future.

I was thrilled when this Delta soror and wife of former AG Eric Holder stopped and exchanged some chuckles with me while signing my copy.



BLACK WOMEN TAUGHT US by Jenn M. Jackson, Ph.D., was gifted by older daughter. I was unfamiliar with the author and the title. Therefore, I did not have my usual preconceived expectations. The author shares impactful and influential moments of her upbringing and evolution into adulthood through interactions with women such as her mother's circle of

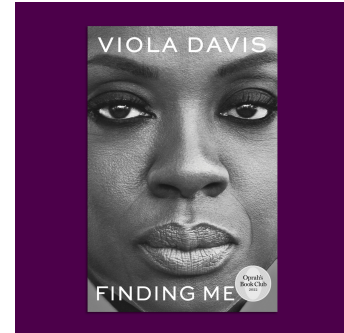


friends. In addition to her close-knit village, her evolution is also influenced by meeting or reading about women as Ida B. Wells, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, Zora Neale Hurston, Shirley Chisholm, Toni Morrison, the Combahee River Collective, Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, and bell hooks.

This was another good book on audio. Her words of discovery and revelation were inspiring as I acquired new information and knowledge of phenomenal black women.

I had a audible credit to use and decided to get Viola Davis' FINDING ME: A Memoir. I did not think I would complete my reading in time for inclusion in this newsletter, but I did. I wish to caution those who are repulsed by profanity -- this is NOT a book for you! Listening to Ms. Davis orate this book was probably easier than if I had chosen to read it. I don't know how far I would have gotten reading the copious amount of profanity she spews.

With that said, I enjoyed this book. I knew Viola Davis came from a poor background but the degree of destitution was more than I imagined. Her achievements in life are as she puts it -- because of her determination and perseverance to not remain in poverty and luck! My admiration for her is exponentially greater now that I have completed FINDING ME,



My next reading selection needs to be less intense! You know ... light summer reading! Suggestions welcomed!

If interested ...

Many are aware of my travels to Egypt and Turkey back in April -- hence, the banner! The trip was phenomenal and provided a lot of content which I have marinated and digested. Four poems in **JOY!** are based on travel. One was shared in an earlier newsletter. Poems joining *MIDDLE PASSAGE* are *KALIMERA*, *NUBIAN OF THE NILE*, and *SANDS OF THE SAHARA!*

If interested in viewing a digital version of my Egyptian photo album, click [here!](#) If interested in viewing a digital version of my Turkey photo album, click [here!](#)

If interested in the release of **JOY**, keep an eye on your inbox. There will be an announcement prior to her release.

**More copies of "LET TRUTH SHINE!" delivered to VMFA!
There will be a BIG ANNOUNCEMENT about a happening at**

the end of the fourth-quarter in the third-quarter newsletter!

Promoting Others

If you are in the RVA-metro area, gather up your little and big ones on July 10 and take them to VUU's Living Learning Center between 12 noon and 6 pm for ERSSE's (Evelyn Reid Syphax School of Education) Inaugural Children's Book Fair.

Remember, RIF ... "Reading is Fundamental" for our children's development. Our ancestors were brutalized and often killed for reading or attempting to learn to read. Let us honor them by PUSHING our children to read. Until they can read for themselves, read to them ... age is not a factor! Children are sponges and absorb!

The Book Fair is FREE! Who knows? You may get to meet the next up and coming great author! BTW, I'll be there if not in New York welcoming our second grandbaby.

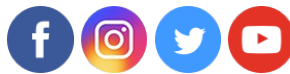


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Also, it has been brought to my attention some who subscribe through my website fail to CONFIRM their intent to subscribe in the followup email. If sharing this email with friends, please remind them to CONFIRM their intent if they choose to SUBSCRIBE!

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Thank you for your support and encouragement,
Y.B. Taylor, Writer



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