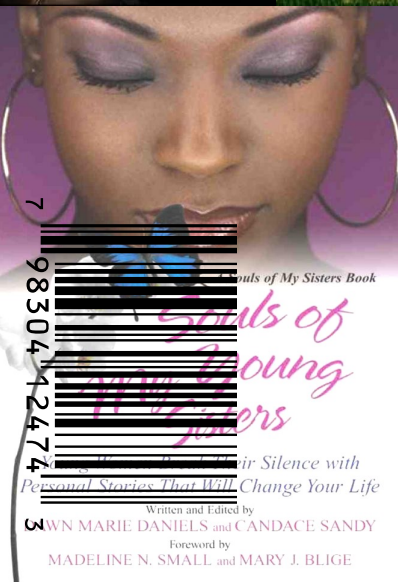
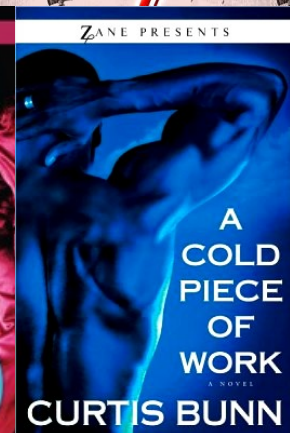
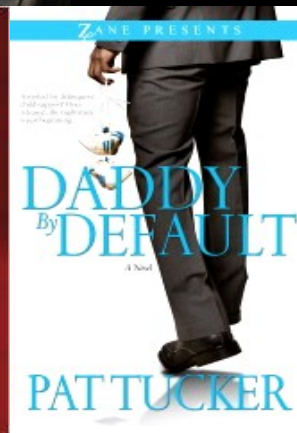
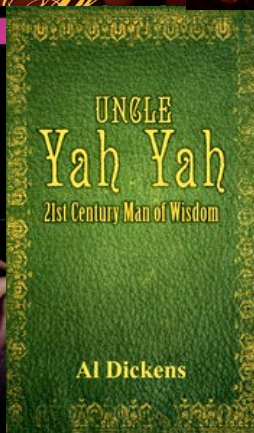
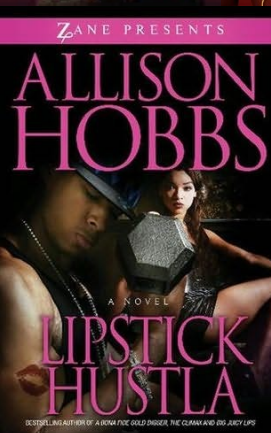
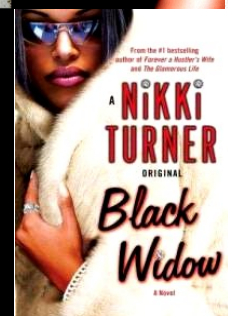
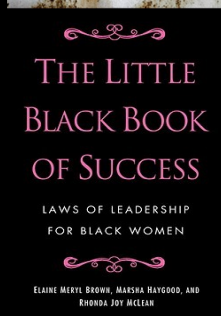
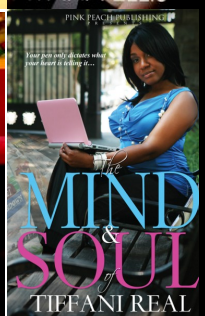
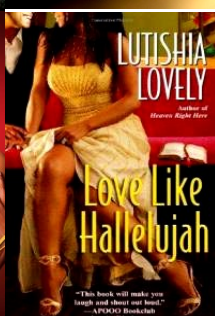
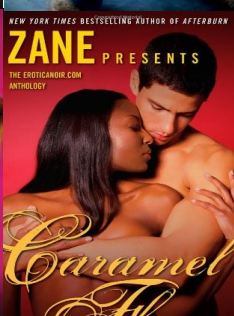
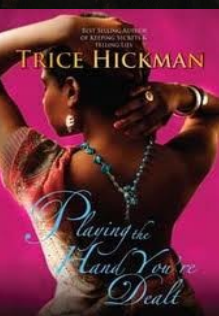
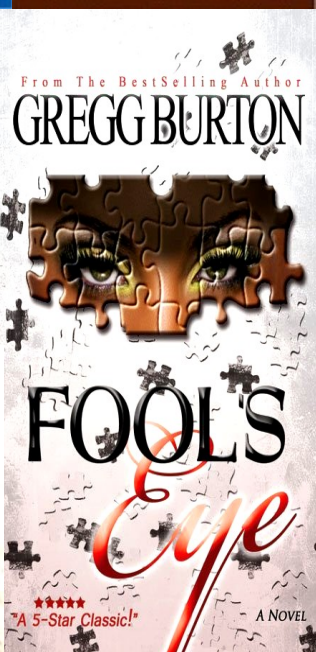
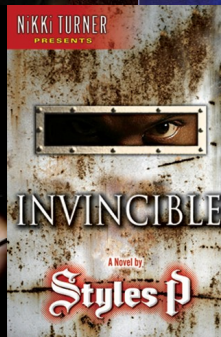
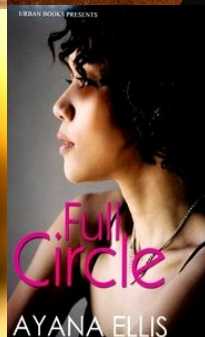
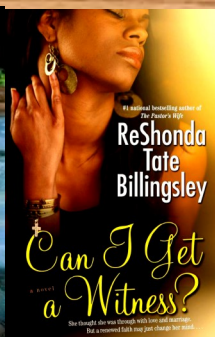
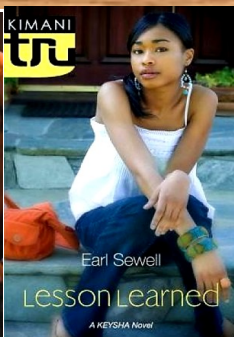
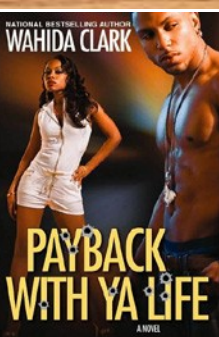
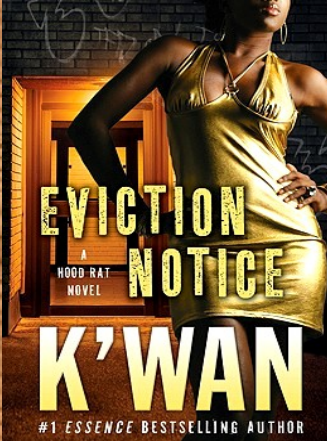


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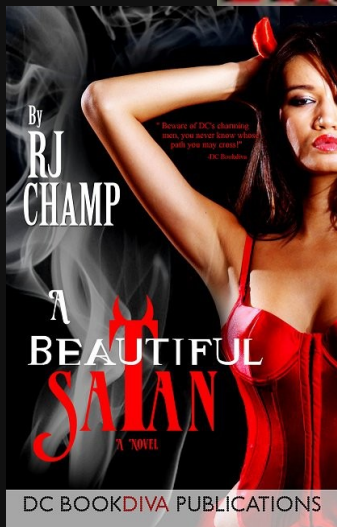
URBAN LITERARY REVIEW



What's  
behind the  
**BLACK BOOK  
EXPLOSION?**



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## LIBRARIES

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“The Help” Kathryn Stockett’s controversial bestselling book has finally made it’s way to the big screen. Will you see the movie? How did you feel about the book? Our readers **sound off on Pg. 11**



# SPOT LIGHT



## National Black Writers Conference: A quick Q & A With **Dr. Brenda Green**

**Q: Why was important for National Black Writers Conference to be involved in the celebration of August Wilson?**

Well the mission of the National Black Writers Conference is to celebrate writers and to show the general public that black literature is multi-faceted. It's a complex literature...it's more than what they see on the bookshelves or the streets. August Wilson is a writer and Pulitzer Prize winner. I think it's a tragedy that there are people who have studied American literature and who have graduated from our schools and our high schools and our colleges and they don't know August Wilson.

Part of what happens in this culture is that there's one or two writers--particularly black writers--who end up getting promoted and get anthologized in our schools. August Wilson writes about issues that are very layered and that reveal the complexity of the African American experience. Each year the National Black Writers Conference celebrates the work and the life of one particular writer. August Wilson passed in 2005 and we thought that it was time to celebrate him.

**Q: What are two of your favorite plays by August Wilson?**

I would probably say "The Piano Lessons" and "Fences." With young people you have to think of a way to always hook them in and one way to hook them in is to provide them with themes that they can readily grasp. "Fences" is about a father and son relationship so young people can really relate to that and "The Piano Lesson" has been on television also so it's really accessible.

**Q: Can you give us a sneak peek into what is happening in 2012?**

We're really very excited about the 2012 conference. We already have 3 writers confirmed and the theme of the conference is the impact of cultural memory, popular culture and natural environment in the literature of black writers. We're honoring Ishmel Reed with the John Oliver Killings Lifetime Achievement Award and we're also honoring Dr. Howard D. Johnson.





# WHAT'S HOTT



On May 24, **Cash Money Content** celebrated their launch at a private release party in New York. Urban Lit Review got exclusive access to the party and snapped more than **20 photographs** of publishing's new powerhouse.









nikki  
TURNER



# The bestselling author talks inspiration, family, and evolving as a storyteller

Nikki Turner is an accomplished author who has written 18 books. What was Nikki Turner's inspiration? Well, after Nikki Turner read "The Coldest Winter Ever" by Sista Souljah she was dismayed that there weren't other books like it. "I wanted to write the kinds of books I wanted to read," said the bestselling author, whose 2002 debut novel, *A Hustler's Wife*, went on to sell more than a few 100,000 copies.

Where do you draw your inspiration?

Reading is my passion, I like to create stories that I actually like to read.

Do you think in 5 years you will still be writing in the same dynamic style?

I think I have evolved as a story teller, so I think that I will be getting better and better. I think I will continue to grow.

Is there going to be a movie deal with one of the books?

It is always an option, but it is actually hard to get a movie made. But I am planning on taking some classes to help the process along. I felt that "Hustler's Wife," should be a play, this one felt action packed suspenseful and funny. This book shows that I have grown so it needs to go to the next level. One of my lines is going to be that I think she has shown that she has earned her throne.

Who are your favorite authors?

Jackie Collins, James Patterson, Terry McMillan—I love some of everybody. Guy Johnson, Whahida Clarke, I just love reading.

Do you ever think that you will write a children's book?

No, children's books seem kind of difficult, you have to get an illustrator, all the dynamics have to line up. I would like to do a teen book but not a children's book.

Will you ever write about your characters in your book as children, Desember and Fame, as kids growing up? Like a prequel?

Maybe one day, they were 18 when I wrote about them. That was a good starting point. You have a good handle on peoples' personal challenges. I respect anybody who can write a young adult book because children are changing so much every day. To be able to cater to children 12 to 13 years old is a great thing.

How many of your books are in the NYT bestseller list?

Quite a few.

Do you feel that the list is still highly valued?

I do, it's nothing like getting the news that you an AA author who is on the best sellers list, with James Patterson is every writers dream, also to have it made into a movie...

What's next? Do you have anything else coming?

I'm still writing and i have some collaborations...





# GETTING TO THE TOP WITH K'WAN

Born the only child of a poet and a painter, K'wan Foye was surrounded by creativity. For years K'wan composed novels and tried to get published, only to have door after door slammed in his face. Finally, in 2002, Triple Crown Publications picked him up, and K'wan shook the publishing world with his debut novel, "Gangsta." And since that first novel K'wan written 18 other novels.

## **Where is the best place to get inspiration?**

I draw a great deal of inspiration from my kids. I know me flying straight and working hard will make sure they have opportunities I didn't. But if I had to pick one thing or person it would have to be my mom. I started out trying to help her get published. I had no desire to be a writer. When she died the torch and the gift fell to me. I didn't even know I could write until I sat down and started writing "Gangsta."

## **How do you deal with the labeling that you are gangsta thug? What advice would you give to someone about breaking free of their labeling?**

It's a hard pill to swallow. At one time I was all of the things that people call me but I'm at a different point in my life. I have a career and a family, both of which I take very seriously and would do anything to protect. Don't get me wrong, my friends are still my friends and I'm in my old hood all the time, I'm just not doing the things I was doing back then because I have too much to lose. I think to truly shake that stigma you have to

get out there and show people instead of telling them, which is why I'm in the process of re-branding myself. The days of us running publishing houses like gangs and corrupt record labels are dead, at least they are to me. This blessing given to me is too precious to squander.

## **What would recommend parents to do encourage writing in their child?**

That's simple. Take an interest if you see that side of your kid peeking out. I believe writers are born, not trained or taught. I think there's a little writer hiding in us all. How much is hiding will determine if you peruse it or not. One of my daughters seems to have picked up the knack for writing so I always encourage her to keep at it. I also show her what I do, how I do it and explain why I do it. She writes all the time and is always winning awards for it in school, so I feed that passion as much as I can without forcing it on her.

## **Why do you write?**

Because I have no choice. Its like asking a man/ woman why they breathe. Some things are just natural to do.

—Martin P



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**FOOL'S**

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