The publication of Rite of Passage now is opportune, for Wright was far ahead of his time in several ways, but above all in illuminating the relationships among racism, juvenile delinquency, violent crime, and the black urban ghettos of America.

Wright’s journals from 1945 reveal quite clearly his deep interest in the problems of Harlem, especially among its juveniles, and in the Wiltwyck School and its assumptions and methods. On several occasions he discussed his work-in-progress Rite of Passage (then called “The Jackal”) with a black social psychiatric caseworker at Wiltwyck, who visited Wright at his home and facilitated Wright’s visit to the school. In fact, through this caseworker, and usually in his company, Wright visited, over a four-month period, several schools, courts, and other institutions concerned with juvenile delinquency as he gathered material for his new work. Wright was even drawn willingly into fund-raising efforts for Wiltwyck, and was present on March 6, 1945, when Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, was guest of honor at a tea organized to raise funds for the school. Wiltwyck stood in contrast to the growing hopelessness and cynicism that seemed to plague social work among the black youth of New York, with overburdened caseworkers and overwhelmed judges and little official understanding, apparently, of the special circumstances in the black community. To Wright, Wiltwyck stood as a beacon of enlightenment. “I’m convinced that Wiltwyck is a damn good cause,” he confided to his journal, “because it is trying to rehabilitate broken boys, emotionally smashed boys who need a chance.”

In Rite of Passage, his primary concern is the psychology of the delinquent youths. Developing the plot, Wright sought to find “the seeds” for a “good psychological study,” as he wrote in his journal. More than by the bloody consequence of rage, he was fascinated by “the whole psychology of anger,” which he called “a terribly complex thing [that] ought to be gone into more closely.” In judging the merits of a plot that would include the kidnapped black woman, Wright noted: “I have many opportunities here to deal with these boys’ emotions,—their relations to their families, their friends, their ultimate hopes.” Concerned about understanding the mentality that drove the delinquents to their antisocial acts, Wright probed the possibility of unresolved and conflicted Oedipal fixations; in his journals, he even pondered the possibility of a relationship between the most common ghetto obscenity (“mother ———”) in the mouths of young men and “the incest complex.”

Rite of Passage sets out for us many of the principal factors involved in the deterioration of youth culture in the black community of New York City in the 1940s, with an accuracy that still helps us to understand the phenomenon of similar delinquency today. Although it depicts certain of the juveniles more as parodies of humanity than as dignified individuals, it seeks to locate and understand the causes of this loss of dignity and humanity rather than to rest in censure of and contempt for the young.
Film Biography of Richard Wright
Nearly Complete

According to Madison Davis Lacy of Firethorn Productions and The Mississippi Authority for Educational Television (METV), Black Boy, the working title for a film biography of Richard Wright, is currently in the editing stages. As the first film biography on Wright, says Lacy, “Our film will reveal him to be a complex man who long ago challenged America by showing the rage, fear, and alienation that every African American possesses. Our task is to match his passion on the screen.”

Scenes have been shot in Jackson, Natchez, and other locations in Mississippi, in some cases with young actors portraying key characters in the film. Over twenty-five interviews have been held with Margaret Walker Alexander, Ralph Ellison, Julia Wright, John Henrick Clark, Joyce Ann Joyce, John A. Williams, Haki R. Madhubuti, Amiri Baraka, Mark Naison, Jean Fouillon, Michel Fabre, Louis Achille, Essie Lee Ward Davis, and Jerry Ward. Other interviews are expected with Constance Webb Pearlstein and Leslie Himes, wife of the late Chester Himes. Filming also took place in St. Louis, Chicago, New York, and Europe.

Madison D. Lacy, Jr., an independent producer with over twenty-five years work in public television, wrote, produced, and directed the documentary. Lacy also wrote, produced, and directed the first and last films of PBS’s Eyes on the Prize II, an eight-program series which stands as the premier documentary series on the nation’s civil rights movement. In addition to the program’s receiving DuPont and Peabody Awards, Lacy’s writing won him an Emmy in 1991. Other recent projects of Lacy’s include “Your Loan is Denied” in June 1992 for PBS’s Frontline, a multimedia presentation for the 1992 Black Caucus Annual Congressional Weekend, and two films for the new Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Letter from the Editors

Greetings at this holiday season. We look forward to a very good year in 1994 given the new materials, especially the publication of Rite of Passage and the film biography. Please continue to send news of Wright activities in your area and by all means, RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TODAY. We would welcome any additional contributions as well, which are, of course, tax deductible.

Maryemma Graham and Jerry W. Ward Jr.

Abstracts from Mississippi Council of Teachers of English
September 24-25, 1993

“Cultural Diversity in the Capital City: Jackson and the Work of Eudora Welty, Richard Wright, and Samuel Beadle."

Mississippi’s capital city is the setting of autobiographical works by two of the state’s best known writers. Eudora Welty’s One Writer’s Beginnings details her childhood and young adulthood in what she called “a sheltered life” in Jackson. In many ways, Richard Wright’s Black Boy presents just the opposite—a young African American’s life of struggle against various oppressive forces, including racial discrimination and blatant injustice. During the time seen in Welty’s and Wright’s books, Samuel Beadle also lived and worked in Jackson as a member of the African-American professional community. Born into slavery in the 1850s, he was a practicing attorney and a writer having published three books of stories and poems—Sketches of Life in Dixie (1899), Adam Shufﬂer(1901), and Lyrics of the Underworld(1912). Making extensive use of slides, the presentation looked at the various and diverse cultures seen in the lives and works of these writers.

Randy Patterson, Jackson State University—Professor of English

“Race and Gender in Richard Wright’s Black Boy”

Traditional readings of Black Boy in classrooms emphasize the racial content of the autobiography, but students may profit more from explorations that raise questions about race and gender in Black Boy (American Hunger). When race and gender are used as categories of analysis, they serve to expose rhetorical forces embedded in the text and to illuminate the continuing significance of Wright’s artistry in constructing a “self.”

Jerry W. Ward, Jr., Tougaloo College—Professor of English
Julia Wright Visits Rhode Island College
Reported by Amritjit Singh, Rhode Island College

A major event of Spring 1993 was the visit of Julia Wright to the Rhode Island College campus on Friday, April 2, 1993, at the invitation of its Arts and Science Faculty, the Department of English, African and Afro-American Studies Program, Women's Studies Program, and HARAMBEE, the Black Students Organization. Ms. Wright's busy day on campus included a variety of opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to interact with her. She met in the morning with President John Nazarian and Vice President John Salesse; gave a talk on Richard Wright at 11AM; met with African American-American students for an informal conversation and recorded an interview with Shoreline, the creative writing magazine, in the afternoon; and shared food and thoughts with faculty and community leaders at dinner reception in the evening.

The highlight of her visit was the electrifying speech she made about her biography-in-progress on Richard Wright to an overflowing crowd of over 100 members of the college community in the Bannister Art Gallery. She was introduced by Amritjit Singh, Professor of English and African-American Studies, who is working on his own Intellectual Biography of Wright's Final Phase, Dr. Singh reminded the audience of Wright's continuing relevance and of Julia Wright's dedication to preserving and clarifying her father's artistic legacy. Ms. Wright's talk, entitled "Writing about Richard Wright: Reflections of a Daughter" focused especially on the challenges she faces as a daughter-biographer of a famous father whose life and work remain caught up in controversies about his art and politics and whose death in still mired in mystery. At the end of Ms. Wright's 50-minute talk, in which she shared stories perspectives in a "roundabout" way, the audience rose to their feet and gave her a standing ovation.

Ms. Wright began by telling the story of how in November 1960, shortly before his death, Wright had advised her to consider a career in journalism by suggesting that she write about her experiences as a student who sprained her ankle to gain access to the crowded classrooms at the Sorbonne, the university in Paris. Richard Wright asked her to "investigate the reasons why students are made to suffer so they can learn" from what he humorously called her "window-ledge perspective." She also told the audience about how her chronically troublesome ankle has served since 1960 as a reminder to her to empower her voice (a voice her father clearly had faith in) as someone who knows the Richard Wright his readers know little about. "My ankle will heal the day my book is finished," she stated at one point during her prepared remarks. Ms. Wright has worked on her memoir since 1987 and expects to have it ready for publication by Random House in 1994.

Ms. Wright acknowledged that a candid, complex, and contradictory Richard Wright could not possibly be caught in "one single biographical net." So, her memoir by implication would extend and enrich the portraits of Wright available in existing biographies and does not aim at replacing them. But she wondered why the Wright biographers had not approached her as a resource, even though she was 18 at the time of her father's death. (She mentioned that Arnold Rampersad did attempt to contact her during the writing of his Langston Hughes biography.) But while she wondered about that omission, she was glad that as a consequence, her biographical voice was intact for her own work now. Quoting Sigmund Freud on Leonardo da Vinci, she regretted the tendency of biographers to "smooth over" any vestiges of human weakness in their subjects in order to idealize them as heroes. She hopes instead to emulate the model Sartre established in his biography of Flaubert by focusing on biographical "problems." But her task as a biographer also involves coming to terms with the anger and shock of the family surrounding Wright's sudden and mysterious death in December 1960 and her own pain and bafflement at the occasional barbs or accusations directed at family members.

In the course of her wide-ranging and richly allusive remarks, Ms. Wright offered valuable glimpses into her biographical method aimed at bringing out the psychological, artistic, and political complexity of Wright's personality and work. She hopes to offer in her memoir a series of open-ended narratives which will have the effect of removing the "brambles" from the life of Richard Wright known so far. Since her childhood memories of Wright are her main resource, she wonders where biography ends and autobiography begins. She is concerned especially in exploring the triangular relationships among her biographical subject, herself as the writer, and the still unrealized legacy of Richard Wright as a major man of letters in this century. She mourned the many missing pieces that would help to complete the portrait.

Ms. Wright gave a sensitive account of the phases she had gone through in gradually coming to grips with the many inner "resistances" she has faced in writing her memoir. To begin with, she struggled not only with the Wright biographers' neglect but also with the "indexed" versions of herself in the pages of their biographies. She wondered sometimes if she would have anything to add to the perspectives already available in dozens of theoretically and ideologically sophisticated books and articles. And then at some point, she swung to the opposite extreme, where she felt "omnipotent" like a "drunken adolescent." But this was before she realized the pain involved in re-visiting hidden memories, fingering the "jagged grain" of old scars, and resolving the many unanswered questions about Wright's death. Also, how would she, a daughter separated from her father by real class differences, unlock the secret doors of Wright's "male privacy"? How could she share Wright completely with a reading public when she herself possessed him incompletely? Such were some of the open questions Ms. Wright left her audience with.
A Literary Debate


An Eccentric Selection From the Nobel Folks
by Edwin M. Yoder, Jr.

Washington—Let’s begin with an incontestable fact: The award of this year’s Nobel Prize in Literature to Toni Morrison, the black female writer, is an event of more than literary importance. And meant to be.

The Swedish Academy, which dispenses these awards, has been accused of a tin ear for languages other than Swedish. It may be more justly accused of an incurable inclination toward the grand gesture. The Nobel folks ignored William Faulkner when he was writing imperishable works like “The Sound and the Fury,” then bestowed belated laurels for the didactic and nearly unreadable “A Fable,” a self-conscious novel of faith on the World War I battlefields.

The Nobel prize committee sat on their hands while Ernest Hemingway revolutionized fiction with “A Farewell to Arms,” only to swoon more that a quarter century later when a slightly softer Hemingway verged as close to sentiment as he ever came, in “The Old Man and the Sea.”

My private quarrel with the Swedish Academy begins with its stubborn refusal to give the prize to the greatest and most inventive writer of fiction in English of the last century and a half, Henry James. And to James, among the unawarded, you can add, just for starters, the names of Thomas Wolfe, Edith Wharton, Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, Graham Green and Evelyn Waugh.

Since I read too little current fiction, I turned for an opinion of Toni Morrison’s work to discerning readers who do not base their evaluations on the irrelevant factors of sex, race or political identity. By them, Toni Morrison is regarded as a gifted writer whose earlier novels showed promise but who has lately drifted toward what one of them calls an “oracular” voice. Were she a white man rather than a black woman, they ask, wouldn’t critics from Boston to Bombay be scratching their heads in mystification?

The old-fashioned idea that race is irrelevant to judgments of literary value is now obviously passe. When you combine the urge to patronize by race to the perennial weakness of the Swedish Academy for gestures of Social Significance, what you get is eccentric choices—like this one.

Two exalted explanations may be dismissed. One is that Toni Morrison is the new heiress of Faulknerian experimentalism, that claim would be absurd. The other is that she has for the first time breathed dramatic life into the memory of slavery.

Those who make that claim will not enjoy hearing this said, but it was, in fact, William Styron, a Southern whiter male, who did, 25 years ago, what Toni Morrison is said to have done recently.

In “The Confessions of Nat Turner,” by virtue of a powerful, sympathetic imagination and a deep understanding of human passion and suffering, Mr. Styron rescued black people of the slave era from stereotype and accorded them the dignity of human shape and dimension.

But because he declined to turn Nat Turner, the leader of a famous slave rebellion in southside Virginia, into a bloodless paragon of all virtue, he was attacked by the watchdogs of racial correctness who continue to push the notion that a writer must be of the same race or sex to understand them.

The real point here, no doubt, is that in the minds of the Swedish Academy some gesture of recognition for black American writing was overdue. And so it may be; and better late than never. But the breakthrough in American black fiction—defined as fiction written by a black—cam more than half a century ago when Richard Wright created Bigger Thomas in “Native Son.” That Mr. Wright in his bitterness turned for a time to communism perhaps soured his chance of larger recognition.

What of the late James Baldwin? He was, in my judgment, as powerful and elegant a writer of English prose as any of his generation—at least until he also went political. But there was no Nobel for him, and both he and Mr. Wright are dead.

Ralph Ellison is very much alive and his “invisible Man” is almost universally regarded as the most distinguished work of “black” fiction—ever.

I mean no insult to Toni Morrison. But what does it do for a journeyman novelist to ascend unexpectedly to the lofty rank of world-class novelist?

What’s in a prize, after all? Lord Melbourne offered the definitive view when he said of the Order of the Garter that he liked it because “there’s no merit in it.” That must sometimes be said of other great prizes as well.

This article originally appeared in the International Herald Tribune on November 4, 1993 and is reprinted by permission of the author and the New York Times Syndicate.

Of Writers and Rewards: As They Lay Dying . . .
by Julia Wright

Paris—As the daughter of the author Richard Wright, I would like to join the debate that Edwin M. Yoder, Jr. sparked around the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Literature to Toni Morrison (“An Eccentric Selection From the Nobel Folks,” Oct. 13). Mr.
Yoder, “politically correct” or not, put his finger on a sensitive spot—the subtle and less subtle ways in which our great men and women have been rewarded, or not, for their works in this century.

The Nobel Prize, by its own terms, has to be awarded during a writer’s lifetime; it carries a reward quantifiable in dollars and cents. I can’t help suspecting that Jean-Paul Sartre’s notorious rejection of the prize was less a refusal of the money than a criticism of the unexistential historical vision he felt it implied. For the slow, halting recognition given by history has a patina of its own, asserting its posthumous wisdom when the sound and fury of political storms and factionalism have long died down.

The poignant way Van Gogh and Mozart died, subsequently enriching the world not only with their genius but with the awareness of the cruel price they had paid for it, has grown into a modern myth, perhaps reflecting our age-old ambivalence toward the greatness of artists, writers and musicians in their lifetimes. There is a time for everything: portraits of the artist as a young man and portraits of the artist as a dead man.

Richard Wright did not die a pauper—but he died alone and broke, as I have documented in a forthcoming memoir about him.

I am convinced, however, that he stands immeasurably enriched by a renaissance that is returning him to the fore of his own country. The recurrent mention of his name in both Mr. Yoder’s column and in the letters it provoked is an ward in itself. But I can’t help wondering: What would prize-less but priceless writers like Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Richard Wright, or James Baldwin have said if they had been given the choice between contemporary Nobelization and posthumous recognition? I can almost hear outbursts of surrealistic grave-yard humor from those four, wherever they are now. We can only imagine what their choices might have been.

But a fact is a fact is a fact: In 1960, Richard Wright had had definite echoes of his Nobel nomination—and then died unexpectedly, only weeks after Saint-John Perse was announced as that year’s laureate. In an interesting parallel, James Baldwin (I knew him as Jimmy) was shortlisted in 1987 for the prestigious Prix Femina Etranger in France—as he lay terminally ill, and was known to be so, at least in the Paris literary circles I was in touch with. Jimmy Baldwin died within days of learning that he had, yet again, not been chosen. He had already been bypassed for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer.

What are we to make of all this? Nothing, or everything, depending on whether we accord more importance to the fierce and fragile judgement of men or to the slow, sober verdict of history.

At the risk of seeming predictable prodomo, I see Richard Wright and Jimmy Baldwin as wounded giants who were arguably the first to cut their way into the dangerous jungle of “the enemy’s language,” uprooting the taboo of silence around “how it really feels to be black” and asserting the creative terrain that they thereby gained as “a language with a language,” to borrow the terminology which the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze used recently about Franz Kafka.

This is not to deny that Richard

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Publications

Writing Chicago: Modernism, Ethnography, and the Novel (Columbia University Press, 1993) by Carla Cappetti

Cappetti explores connections between the Chicago school of sociology and three Chicago novelists, James T. Farrell, Nelson Algren, and Richard Wright. The two chapters on Wright survey the tendency in literary criticism to de-emphasize autobiographical details pertinent to interpretation and explore the significance of sociological theory in Wright’s construction of Black Boy (American Hunger). The material in these chapters is presented more pointedly in Cappetti’s essay “Sociology of an Existence: Wright and the Chicago School” in Richard Wright: Critical Perspectives Past and Present edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and K.A. Appiah.

The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness (Harvard University Press, 1993) by Paul Gilroy

Paul Gilroy posits the existence of a black Atlantic culture, neither specifically African, European, nor American, that is quintessentially modern. Chapter 5, “Without the Consolation of Tears: Richard Wright, France, and the Ambivalence of Community,” provides compelling reasons for scholars to make a more thorough analysis of Wright’s legacy, the kinds of investigation that would demonstrate the validity of Gilroy’s claim that Wright’s “work articulates simultaneously an affirmation and a negation of the western civilization that formed him.”

Conversations With Richard Wright (University Press of Mississippi, 1993) edited by Kenneth Kinnamon and Michel Fabre

University Press of Mississippi has just published Conversations with Richard Wright (1993), edited by Kenneth Kinnamon and Michel Fabre. Conversations speaks about Wright’s life in Paris and his views on race and America. Published as part of the Literary Conversations Series.
Wright to be Focus of 1994 Natchez Literary Celebration

The first ever Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award will be presented to an outstanding living Mississippi writer by the famous writer’s daughter, Julia Wright of Paris, at the fifth annual Natchez Literary Celebration June 2-4, 1994, said conference co-chairman Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez.

Other activities during the award-winning conference will also focus on Wright, the celebrated writer who was born near Natchez in 1908 and died in Paris in 1960.

Theme for the entire conference is “Mississippi’s Literary Heritage: Black and White and Read All Over.” “Richard Wright certainly fits in, since he’s a Mississippi writer whose works have definitely been ‘read all over,’” Smith said.

In addition to the Richard Wright Award, other activities focusing on Wright include:

- A showing of the 1951 film version of Wright’s novel Native Son, which stars Richard Wright as Bigger Thomas
- A discussion of Native Son as both novel and film by Dr. Jerry Ward, professor of English at Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, Miss., and Dr. Charles Vahlkamp, professor of modern film studies at Centre College, Danville, KY.
- The premiere of all or part of Black Boy, a Mississippi Educational Television documentary about Wright
- A discussion of the making of the documentary by its New York producer, Madison Davis Lacy, Jr.
- A commentary by Julia Wright, based on her new biography of her father
- And a Literary Landmark Tour, which includes Wright’s grandparents’ Natchez neighborhood, which the author visited as a young boy.

“We are delighted to be able to offer so many powerful presentations on Richard Wright,” Smith said. Working with Smith and others at Co-Lin to sponsor the award-winning conference are the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the National Park Service.

“Besides the Richard Wright activities, the conference will also offer other superlative lectures and events,” Smith said.

Topics to be covered by internationally known lecturers include such Mississippi figures as Aaron Burr, Anthony Hutchins, Jefferson Davis, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Eudora Welty, Clifton Taulbert, Shelby Foote, and Stark Young, Smith said.

“These lectures will be enhanced by special field trips and other activities,” she said. These include:

- A tour of three plantations in the aristocratic Kingston neighborhood, long associated with Anthony Hutchins
- A Literary Landmark Tour of numerous historic houses and sites, including Historic Jefferson College, Homewood, Lansdowne, Mount Rose, and Foster Mound, all associated with authors and books
- A play about Ibrahima, an African prince who was a slave in 18th-century Natchez, and his master, Thomas Foster
- An old-fashioned “dinner on the grounds” at Kingston Methodist Church, preceded by a lecture on the influence of food on culture
- A garden party at National Historic Landmark Melrose
- And a gala reception honoring the winner of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award.

For the fifth time, the Hon. William F. Winter of Jackson, Miss., will serve as director of proceedings for the Celebration. Former governor of Mississippi, he is longtime president of the board of trustees of the MDAH.

Tickets are $20 for all three days of lectures and films. The play, a dinner, receptions, and tours range from $10 to $20. Total conference fee is $75.

More information is available by calling Natchez Box Office (601) 445-0353 or 1-800-862-3259 or by writing Natchez Literary Celebration, P.O. Box 894, Natchez, MS 39121.

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Wright and Jimmy Baldwin had their differences, though my own perception of their so-called literary feud is that it was blown out of all proportion. And I still see them as having cleared an alien and tangled forest of the words—not-to-say-it, as having created a spacious area in which writers of Toni Morrison’s splendid giftedness could gyrate freely and gracefully. In turn, Toni Morrison will enlarge that clearing for her literary sons and daughters to dance in and salute her—perhaps even to surpass her.

However, where history connects, prizes may divide. And it is true that the wounds sustained by Richard Wright and Jimmy Baldwin in this invisible war of theirs have gone unmedaled in the Nobel front. But these two men were very real veterans, for they wrote against a double historical grain: first, the near impenetrable pre-civil rights language of Jim Crow ethics, and second, the dominant obsessions and stricture of the Cold War.

As Natalie Robins asks in her recent penetrating analysis of the FBI dossiers that were amassed around a galaxy of this century’s greatest American writers: Can the damage to their creativity ever be traced, assessed, quantified? Can it, I would add, ever be recognized and repaired? This question is central to our historical assessment of the noble (rather than Nobel) stamina of Richard Wright, Jimmy Baldwin and others: Will we every know what hidden springs of artistry dried up when their privacy, so necessary to creativity, was being monitored and trespassed upon?

I, for one, having lived in my father’s house and valued Jimmy Baldwin’s friendship, know that these literary veterans were too seldom offered laurels to rest upon during the thaw-less, thankless era of mid-century segregation and glaciation.
In Memoriam
Dr. Richard Kenneth Barksdale
31 October 1915 to 28 October 1993

Dr. Richard Kenneth Barksdale, professor emeritus of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, credited with pioneering the study of African-American literature, has died at the age of 77.

Dr. Barksdale, who retired from the University of Illinois in 1984, was an English Professor and College Administrator for 47 years. He worked at a number of Black Colleges and Universities, including Tougaloo College, Southern University, North Carolina Central University, Morehouse College, and Atlanta University. He joined the English faculty at the University of Illinois in August 1971 and held distinguished Professorships at seven Colleges and Universities after his retirement in 1984. To his many former students, he was a master teacher and friend.

Dr. Barksdale was a specialist in 18th Century and African-American literature. He earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, Masters Degrees from Syracuse and Harvard, and a PhD from Harvard. He was a member of Mt. Oliver Baptist Church, Champaign, IL, Phi Beta Kappa, Urbana Rotary Club, and Omega PSI PHI Fraternity.

He was a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and served in the Philippines in World War II.

Memorial contributions may be made to the United Negro College Fund or the American Diabetes Assoc.

He is survived by his wife and two sons. Condolences may be sent to:

Dr. Mildred W. Barksdale
2207 Wyld Drive
Urbana, IL 61801
(217) 328-2995

Call For Papers

New Reflections: Essays on Richard Wright’s Travel Books

Black Power (1954); The Color Curtain (1956); and Pagan Spain (1957) were produced within three years of each other. These nonfictional “travel books” function as a collective body and as a distinctive genre, reflecting the diversity of Wright’s cultural and political aesthetics in context of his American, African-American, European, Pan-African, and other international experiences. Papers are invited for a volume of critical essays giving “new reflections” of autobiography and travel literature based upon recent theoretical developments in light of issues of multiculturalism, gender representations, revisionist historicism, post-colonialism, etc. Deadlines: 2 page abstract, 15 December 1993; manuscripts, 5 January 1994. Submit to: Virginia Whatley Smith, Department of English, University of Alabama - Birmingham, Birmingham, AL 35924 (205-934-5293).

Renewal Notice

As you receive this issue of the Richard Wright Newsletter, we want to remind you that it is time to renew your membership in the Richard Wright Circle. The yearly $10 membership fee runs for one calendar year and entitles you to two issues of the Newsletter: spring/summer and fall/winter. In order to receive the next issue, you need to fill out and send us the form on the back page (to insure that we have your latest address) along with a $10 check or money order. Please remember that your membership dues still constitute the primary funding for the Circle and Newsletter.
For a one year membership to the Richard Wright Circle, send the information below and a $10 check or money order to Maryemma Graham, Northeastern University, 406 Holmes Hall, Boston, MA 02115; (617) 373-4549; Fax (617) 373-2509

NAME_________________________________________

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AREA OF SPECIAL INTEREST IN WRIGHT STUDIES_____________________________________

OTHER SCHOLARLY AREAS_____________________________________________________

LATEST PUBLICATION(S)_____________________________________________________

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