

# New Book, **HOMEBY**, Tells Jawara's Journey from the Crack House to the Courthouse



PHILADELPHIA – By the time he was eight-years-old, Jawara Griffin, was abandoned by his crack-addicted mother and left squatting with his siblings in a condemned crack house with no running water or electricity. Rather than become debilitated by the trauma he encountered while homeless, living in foster care and group homes, or his brief stint in jail, the author of the recently released autobiography, *HomeBoy*, says his challenging childhood motivates him to spend his life and career inspiring and empowering others.



Jawara Griffin

“When I look back at my life and try to figure out why I didn’t end up as a statistic like many of the people I knew, the things that were consistent once I got on the right track are my perseverance, positivity, and preparation. I also sought out mentors,” says Griffin. “I realize that mentors had a positive impact on my personal and professional growth and it’s incumbent upon me to pay it forward. I’ve mentored several young people going through challenges and encourage them to be resourceful, self-reliant, positive, and prepared to take advantage of opportunities. I hope that message resonates in the book.”

“HomeBoy” is a heartfelt story about growing up a ward of the state in North Philadelphia. The book is a gripping testimony to how hard-work, determination, and positive mentors can transform a lost “home boy” and low-level hustler with a bad attitude, into a successful criminal attorney fighting for the rights of the indigent and disenfranchised.

In the forward to the book Griffin's former law school classmate, Denis Gelnnon describes him as "cash-poor and rich with integrity." Gelnnon continues, "He was resourceful and proud. I watched Jawara's transformation from an aggressive, street smart kid from the hood, to an articulate, well-dressed, polished attorney... It wasn't until he asked me to read the manuscript of this book that my eyes were opened to his earlier journey... I never heard him utter a complaint about the hand he was dealt."

Griffin has come full circle. In addition to his day-to-day responsibilities as an assistant federal public defender for the Western District of Tennessee, he travels the country speaking to disadvantaged youth, juvenile justice workers and social service professionals. Griffin recently served as a keynote speaker for Restoring Hope Ministries in Fort Pierce, Florida and returned home to deliver a Thanksgiving message of hope to youth at Northern Homes for Children, his former group home in Philadelphia.

"I love working with juveniles. I was a product of the system so I understand their challenges," said Griffin. I made sure my book is a fast, easy read, and will release the audio version next year for those who don't like to read. I want to make it available to as many people as possible to let them know that no matter what they are going through today, if they put their mind to it and their heart in it, they will be winners in life."

After graduating from Roxborough High School, Griffin went on to earn a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration from Mansfield University in Pennsylvania. He worked as a juvenile social worker in Philadelphia for four years before several attorneys at the public defender's office where he worked – including one that assisted him when he was arrested – encouraged him to go to law school. He received a Juris Doctorate from University of Massachusetts Dartmouth School of Law, and started his legal career as a public

defender with the Committee for Public Counsel Services in Massachusetts. He eventually accepted a position with the Maryland Office of the Public Defender as an assistant public defender in Baltimore before taking his current job in Tennessee.Â Â

To schedule a book signing, or to request Griffin for a speaking engagement contact Edrea Davis viaÂ [edmedia@dogonvillage.com](mailto:edmedia@dogonvillage.com). Â

Connect with Jawara on social media:Â

Facebook,Â [Jawara Griffin](#); Instagram,Â [lawyer\\_2\\_the\\_stars](#); and Twitter:Â [JawaraGriffin](#).Â Â

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*HomeBoy* is available for purchase on [Amazon.com](#)Â

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## Media Questions Of The Week



Did Elton John embellish anything for his book like his stories about Michael Jackson not being able to handle adult company and Tina Turner being abusive towards him?Â Â

[youtube id="yjG33B0UAUE"]

Did Diddy really send the group Total to beat up Wendy Williams back in the '90s?

[youtube id="LDSAMDdtfv4"]

Now that En Vogue members Maxine Jones and Dawn Robinson [reunited](#) for the City of Hope's Spirit Of Life Gala will this lineup appear in *Coming 2 America*?Â

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# R.I.P. Toni Morrison



American author, editor and professor Toni Morrison passed yesterday at age 88 after falling ill with pneumonia. Morrison's name came into the mainstream when her Pulitzer-prize winning *Beloved* was made into the 1998 feature film directed by Jonathan Demme. Her lauded first two novels *The Bluest Eye* and *Sula* opened up discussions about internalized racism, incest and motherhood. These titles were among her work that became a cornerstone of Black feminist literary criticism despite her resistance to having her work labeled as such. In the '60s, she became the first Black woman fiction editor at Random House and opened the way for Angela Davis, Toni Cade Bambara and Gayl Jones and the biography of Muhammad Ali.

As a writer, she earned many distinctions including the Pulitzer Prize and American Book Award for *Beloved* and the Nobel Peace Prize in literature. President Barack Obama presented Morrison with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012. She held the Robert F. Goheen chair in the humanities department at Princeton University since 1989. In 2016, after the election of Donald Trump into the presidency, Morrison wrote an article for November 21st issue of *The New Yorker* stating that white Americans who voted for Trump did it to keep white supremacy alive. [Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am](#) was released in June of 2019.

[youtube id="BtWdy8pFktM"]

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# Legendary Black Arts Movement Author Horace Mungin Celebrates 50 Year Career Anniversary With Re-Release of 10 Literary Works



Ridgeville, SC – It was 1968 when literary giant Horace Mungin penned his first published work, “Dope Hustler’s Jazz,” part one of a two-volume set of anti-drug poetry. “Dope Hustler’s Jazz” was the beginning of a writing career that started in the Black Arts Movement and would extend over five decades of literary contributions. Horace Mungin Books is celebrating 50 years of intellectual success with the re-release of ten books, written between 1968 through to 2018 including his latest, “Swing, Hard Bop, Bop & Bebop.” The full collection of Mungin’s work provides a distinct and insightful perspective into the heart of African American culture and world views.

Mungin’s full collection includes a dozen titles: “Dope Hustler’s Jazz” 1968; “Now, See Here Homes” 1969; “How Many N\*\*\*\* Make Half a Dozen” 1970; “Sleepy Willie Talks About Life” 1991; “Sleepy Willie Sings the Blues” 2001; “San Juan Hill” 2006; “Subway: After the Irish” 2008, “Poetic Portraits: The African People of San Juan Hill” 2010; “A Different Point of View” 2013; “The Devil Beats His Wife” 2013; “Truth & Absurdities: Social and Political commentary” 2014; Or Does It Explode, 2016 and “Swing, Hard Bop, Bop & Bebop” 2018. The

author is offering a free shipping special on autographed copies purchased directly at [Horace Mungin Books](#) and all titles are available in paperback and eBook at [Amazon.com](#).

“It is my hope that the re-release of my past works incites, instigates and awakens a deep yearning for true freedom that I feel is lost with today’s hustle and bustle,” expresses Mungin, a former New Yorker now living in Ridgeville, SC in the Charleston, Lowcountry area. “I consider my books, whether poetry or prose, lyrical Afrocentricity. I have always given voice to the oppressed, providing what I consider a liberation patois where freedom is the goal. My books are written in that universal dialect which is the weapon of the powerless that annuls one’s ability to feign ignorance. These books were written to satisfy the desire for an indisputable African American presence and greater knowledge of that existence in literature and in American life.”

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The ten re-released titles traverse timelines, characters and plots. In 1980, Mungin started a syndicated column called “Sleepy Willie.” These columns gave birth to two Sleepy Willie books. Sleepy Willie, the protagonist in both “Sleepy Willie Talks About Life” and “Sleepy Willie Sings the Blues” is a seemingly whimsical old man whose wisdom derives by way of his longevity and experience.

Mungin’s works range from the African American transformation of the New York City Transit workforce in the 1960s in “Subway: After the Irish,” to the fictional “...Or Does It Explode”, a cautionary look at where injustice could lead Black Americans. On the other hand, “The Devil Beats His Wife” is a series of shorts set in the New South, chronicling the first and second generation of black and white people pushing against old racial barriers as they establish the new norm in attitudes.

“San Juan Hill” presents the coming-of-age memoir of a young

boy growing up in the Amsterdam projects in mid-town Manhattan during the 1950s on the crest of the Civil Right Movement. With "Truth & Absurdities," Mungin presents essays that chronicle his family history in South Carolina and New York City while intertwining defense of the Barack Obama presidency.

A companion book to "San Juan Hill," "Poetic Portrait: The African People of San Juan Hill," provides sketches of the author's neighbors who lived in the Lincoln Square community, from the famed Thelonious Monk to William Walker, the prototype for Sleepy Willie. "A Different Point of View" presents fifty years of Mungin's Black Liberation era poetry arranged in a manner that allows the reader to trace racial progress from the 1960s to 2015.

"Swing, Hard Bop, Bop & Bebop," Mungin's most recent title, and the pinnacle of his vast library of work, is a celebration of the bebop era of jazz music with a collection of biographical prose and poetry, exploring over 60 of the greatest jazz artists of swing and bebop music ever assembled. The Music Department at Allen University, in Columbia, SC, produced "Manteca" a Bebop Jazz Revue based on the book! Mungin's magazine, Black Forum, which he started in 1970 and published for twelve years, is also part of a permanent exhibition at the National Museum for African American History and Culture about the Black Arts Movement.

Mungin's vast catalog of writing paints a vivid scenario of Black life in America spanning several decades. Get educated and inspired by reading along at [www.horacemunginbooks.com](http://www.horacemunginbooks.com) and at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

Watch the Horace Mungin Books' trailer:  
[youtube id="-5vLNjiPZPM"]