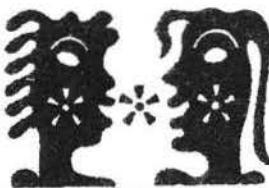


The Tallery



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December 6, 2005

Ms. Jo Bryant
City Librarian
Toronto Public Library

Dear Ms. Bryant,

I'm writing to you to support the initiative to honour Dr. Rita Cox by renaming the Black and Caribbean Collection after her. There are many reasons Toronto Public Library should consider this proposal with favour and enthusiasm. Dr. Cox has been one of the city's foremost advocates for African-Canadian cultural awareness. Through her work as a librarian, storyteller, and literacy activist, she has introduced the cultures of Africa, Black America, and the Caribbean to countless generations of Toronto children. She has been equally active working with adults, organizing storytelling and literary events, presenting authors from these (and many other) backgrounds, and teaching through the Storytellers School of Toronto and York University.

Rita Cox represents a generation of librarians who acted out of the passionate belief that libraries were both a sanctuary and a launching-pad for the imagination. By building the special collection around Afro-based themes and writers, she took seriously the mission to inspire people, both black and non-black, to discover this rich literature. Too often, we honour people when it is too late for them to enjoy it. I - and many Torontonians, library colleagues, fellow-storytellers, and fans around the world - would welcome an opportunity to celebrate the naming of this significant collection in Rita's honour (my personal affection for her overwhelms my attempt to be formal about "Dr. Cox"!). I do hope you and the Board of Directors will consider this idea with the warmth, affection, and regard with which it has been proposed.

Sincerely yours,

Dan Yashinsky
Toronto Public Library Storyteller-in-Residence

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