

Dear ALA Members,

**Submission of Papers for JALA Special Issue devoted to ALA 2016
Conference Theme**

We hereby invite conference participants and others to send us article-length essays on the ALA 2016 conference theme, “Justice and Human Dignity in Africa and the African Diaspora.” ALA 2016 was held in Atlanta, GA, USA, 6-9 April 2016.

Essays should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words; using MLA format for layout and citation. Please send your essays electronically to **Lucie Viakinnou-Brinson** <lviakinn@kennesaw.edu> as Word documents.

If you submit your essay for consideration in this volume, please do not submit it elsewhere at the same time—double submission is not allowed. Essays should reach us by 31 January 2017.

As reminder, please find the conference theme description below.

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Co-Editors

African Literature Association 2016
Conference

**Justice and Human Dignity in Africa
and the African Diaspora**

“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in *Stride Toward Freedom the Montgomery Story* –
Chapter XI Where Do We Go From Here?

Inspired by the words of Atlanta's most famous contributor to the civil rights movement and the pursuit of justice, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., this year's theme is *Justice and Human Dignity in Africa and the African Diaspora*. Historically, the pursuit of justice and dignity connects Atlanta to the varied experiences of African peoples, as the US Civil Rights Movement drew inspiration from struggles for decolonization and in turn inspired these struggles.

Justice and human dignity have long remained central tenets of cultural production from Africa and the African diaspora in the quest for freedom and recognition. Artists, filmmakers, writers, and intellectuals from Africa and its diaspora often explore the possibilities for justice and the challenges to human dignity in the face of various forms of oppression. Whether they work as creators of fictional worlds or as critics of the worlds they inhabit, these artists and scholars launch a call for critical rethinking and socio-political action. The just treatment of human beings and the preservation of their dignity on the African continent and beyond recur as images, motifs, and concepts for urgent consideration, critical re-imagination, and scholarly enquiry. These literary and cultural texts offer visions that counter the often myopic and prejudicial media portrayals of Africa and its people.

Recognizing the many challenges to justice that remain—and the complicated, mediated avenues by which the arts and scholarship engage with these challenges—the 2016 conference theme of justice and human dignity is an opening to critically reflect on, as well as celebrate, the current state of creative and scholarly work from Africa and the diaspora.

We encourage you to share your scholarship on topics including, but not limited to:

- African and African diaspora arts, literature, and intellectual work as practices of social justice and dignity
- Re-imagining rights, law, justice, and/or dignity in Africa and the diaspora
- African & diaspora women writers, social justice, and human dignity
- The aesthetics, forms, and/or genres of justice
- African human rights systems and precursors to human rights in Africa and the diaspora
- Colonization, neo-colonization, trauma, and human rights violations.
- War, peace, conflict management, and human dignity in Africa
- Ecological threats and environmental justice in Africa and beyond
- Education and human rights advocacy in Africa and the diaspora
- Civil and human rights movements in Africa and the diaspora
- Labor, migrant/immigrant experience, and human dignity
- Identity formation and inequality (gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, age, ability, socioeconomic status)
- Globalization, the digital age, justice, and human dignity.
- Health systems, access, and justice.
- Language politics and multilingualism in Africa and the diaspora
- Progress and human rights in Africa and the diaspora