

Black History Book List

Alexander, Michelle, 2010, **The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness**: 10th anniversary edition, The New Press, 352 pp. This New York Times bestseller won the NAACP Image Award. Amazon says, “The New Jim Crow inspired a whole generation of criminal justice reform activists and organizations motivated by Michelle Alexander’s unforgettable argument that ‘We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it.’ ”

Andrews-Dyer, Helena and R. Eric Thomas, 2020, **Reclaiming Her Time: The Power of Maxine Waters**: Dey Street Books, 256 pp. Named a Best Political Book of the Year by *The Atlantic*. Ibram X. Kendi says, “*Reclaiming Her Time* renders Congresswoman Waters’ extraordinary career in penetrating detail and razor-sharp wit. Andrews-Dyer and Thomas have created a beautiful celebration of Waters’ great vision, wisdom, and heart in this book.”

Baldwin, James, 1963, **The Fire Next Time**: Vintage Books, New York, NY, 128 pp. Includes an essay on the role of race in American history and an essay on relations between race and religion. Ta-Nehisi Coates said, “Basically the finest essay I’ve ever read . . . Baldwin refused to hold anyone’s hand. He was both direct and beautiful all at once. He did not seem to write to convince you. He wrote beyond you.”

Blackmon, Douglas A., 2009, **Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II**: Anchor, illustrated edition, 496 pp. Winner of a 2009 Pulitzer Prize, the book has been adapted into a PBS documentary. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution says, “The genius of Blackmon's book is that it illuminates both the real human tragedy and the profoundly corrupting nature of the Old South slavery as it transformed to establish a New South social order.”

Blaine, Keisha, 2021, **Until I Am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Enduring Message to America**: Beacon Press, 200 pp. This book was a National Book Critics Circle 2021 Biography Finalist and 53rd NAACP Image Award Nominee for Outstanding Literary Work. Amazon says the book explores the Black activist’s ideas and political strategies, highlighting their relevance for tackling modern social issues including voter suppression, police violence, and economic inequality. As Fannie Lou Hammer said, “We have a long fight and this fight is not mine alone, but you are not free whether you are white or black, until I am free.”

Blight, David W, 2018, **Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom**: Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 912 pp. Pulitzer Prize winning book about Frederick Douglass. Amazon says, “Frederick Douglass, the escaped slave who became the greatest orator of his day and one of the leading abolitionists and writers of the era.”

Brown, Dorothy A., 2021, **The Whiteness of Wealth: How the Tax System Impoverishes Black Americans--and How We Can Fix It**: Crown, 288 pp. “With clarity and conviction, Dorothy Brown reveals how U.S. tax policy sustains and deepens the wealth gap between black and white Americans.”

Cambron, Cathy, 2022, **Let the Law Catch Up – Thurgood Marshall in His Own Words**: Welcome Rain Publishers, 256 pp. Amazon’s review says, “A courageous and brilliant lawyer and jurist, Marshall won the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, ending legal racial segregation in America. In 1967, Marshall became the first Black Supreme Court justice. . . .This accessible collection of Marshall's own words spans his entire career, from his fearless advocacy with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the 1940s and 1950s, to his arguments as the first Black solicitor general under LBJ and his Supreme Court opinions and dissents.”

Cobb, Jelani and David Remnick, eds., 2021, **The Matter of Black Lives**: Ecco, 848 pp. *The Matter of Black Lives* is a collection of groundbreaking essays on race in America, spanning three decades of authors including work by James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Hilton Als, Zadie Smith, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Henry Louis Gates and others—with a foreword by Jelani Cobb.

Corn, Marti, 2016, **The Ground on Which I Stand – Tamina, a Freedmen’s Town**: Texas A & M University Press, 160 pp. Portraits of members of the Freedmen’s community of Tamina in Montgomery County, TX. Tamina was established in

1871 when freed slaves helped build the Houston and Great Northern railroad through the area. One of the photos was featured in an exhibit at the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller and Kendall Thomas, eds., 1996, **Critical Race Theory – The Key Writings That Formed the Movement**: The New Press, 528 pp. This book ranks #1 in Amazon's Civil Law Procedure category and #3 in Law Practice Reference books. The book is edited by the principal founders of the groundbreaking intellectual movement of CRT. Harvard Bookstore says, "*Critical Race Theory* was the first book to gather the movement's most important essays. This groundbreaking book includes contributions from scholars including Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Williams, Dorothy Roberts, Lani Guinier, Duncan Kennedy, and many others. It is essential reading in an age of acute racial injustice."

Du Bois, W. E. B., 2020, **The Souls of Black Folk**: Independently published, 101 pp. Du Bois was the first black man to earn a doctorate from Harvard University. In 1909, Du Bois co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and served as editor of its monthly magazine, *The Crisis*. Amazon says, "First published in 1903, this groundbreaking work is a cornerstone of African American literary history and a foundational text in the field of sociology."

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr., 2021, **The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song**: Penguin Press, 304 pp. Amazon quotes a Time review, "Blending research, interviews with scholars and insights from his own life, Gates illuminates the central role of the Black church in the movement for social justice . . ." Harvard Professor Gates' six-part PBS documentary, *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross*, earned an Emmy Award, a Peabody Award, and an NAACP Image Award.

Gibson, Larry S., 2012, **Young Thurgood – The Making of a Supreme Court Justice**: Prometheus Books, 413 pp. Scenes from the movie *Thurgood* are based on this book; researched, and written by Baltimore attorney, political consultant and University of Maryland law professor Larry S. Gibson.

Giddings, Paula J., 2009, **Ida: A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching**: Amistad; Reprint edition, New York, NY, 832 pp. Goodreads says it is a "sweeping narrative about a country and a crusader embroiled in the struggle against lynching: a practice that imperiled not only the lives of black men and women, but also a nation based on law and riven by race."

Glaude, Eddie S., Jr., 2020, **Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own**: Crown, 272 pp. Cornel West says, "In the midst of an ugly Trump regime and a beautiful Baldwin revival, Eddie Glaude has plunged to the profound depths and sublime heights of Baldwin's prophetic challenge to our present-day crisis."

Gordon-Reed, Annette, 2009, **The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family**: Norton & Company, 800 pp. Annette Gordon-Reed is a graduate of Conroe High School. She attended Dartmouth College, then Harvard University Law School. In 1982, she was the first black editor of Harvard Law Review. This book has received the National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize in History. In addition, Gordon-Reed received the 2009 National Humanities Medal, a Guggenheim Fellowship in Humanities, and a 2010 MacArthur Fellowship Genius Grant.

Gordon-Reed, Annette, 2021, **On Juneteenth**: Liveright, 144 pp. New York Times says, "Combining personal anecdotes with poignant facts gleaned from the annals of American history, Gordon-Reed shows how, from the earliest presence of Black people in Texas to the day in Galveston on June 19, 1865, when Major General Gordon Granger announced the end of legalized slavery in the state, African-Americans played an integral role in the Texas story."

Haas, Jeffrey, 2019, **The Assassination of Fred Hampton: How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther**: Lawrence Hill Books, updated edition, 400 pp. The author was an attorney at the People's Law Office in Chicago who represented Hampton's fiancé and others in a successful civil case against the FBI, Chicago Police and Cook County. Reviews call it "a true crime story and legal thriller;" "a riveting account of the assassination, the plot behind it,

the attempted cover up.” “Haas evokes with chilling precision a bloody and desperate repressive state apparatus locked in conflict with its greatest fear, a charismatic young black man with revolution on his mind.”

Huey P. Newton Foundation, David Hilliard (Editor), Cornel West, 2008, **The Black Panther Party: Service to the People Programs**: University of New Mexico Press, 158 pp. The Party pioneered free social service programs to address basic needs in their communities including free clinics, grocery giveaways, school and education programs, senior programs, legal aid program and Sickle Cell Anemia Research Foundation. Their free breakfast program served as a model for current national breakfast programs.

Kendi, Ibram X., 2019, **How to be an Antiracist**: One World, 320 pp. Amazon says, “Kendi employs history, science, and ethics to describe different forms of racism; at the same time, he follows the events and experiences of his own life, adapting a memoir approach that personalizes his arguments. Kendi's title encompasses his main thesis: simply not being racist isn't enough. We must actively choose to be "antiracist," working to undo racism and its component polices to build an equitable society.”

Kendi, Ibram X., and Keisha N. Blain, eds., 2021, **Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019**: One World, 528 pp. The Root says, “*Four Hundred Souls* consists of eighty chronological chapters that bring to life the numerous and previously overlooked facets of slavery, segregation, resistance and survival.” This anthology includes writers from multiple genres covering African Americans across four centuries.

King, Martin Luther Jr., 1964, **Why We Can't Wait**: The book is about the civil rights movement in the United States, focusing on the 1963 Birmingham campaign. King wrote “Just as lightning makes no sound until it strikes, the Negro Revolution generated quietly. But when it struck, the revealing flash of its power and the impact of its sincerity and fervor displayed a force of a frightening intensity. Three hundred years of humiliation, abuse, and deprivation cannot be expected to find voice in a whisper.”

Laymon, Kiese, 2018, **Heavy: An American Memoir**: Scribner, 256 pp. *Heavy* won the New York Times Book of the Year for 2018 and the Andrew Carnegie Medal. Amazon says, “In this powerful and provocative memoir, genre-bending essayist and novelist Kiese Laymon explores what the weight of a lifetime of secrets, lies, and deception does to a black body, a black family, and a nation teetering on the brink of moral collapse.”

Lewis, David Levering, 1993, **W. E. B. Du Bois: Biography of a Race 1868-1919**: Henry Holt & Co., 749 pp. Winner of a 1994 Pulitzer Prize. Publisher's Weekly says, “This rich, masterful biography covers the first half of the complex life and abundant career of scholar/activist William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963), whose work both redefined the history of race relations and spurred the 20th-century civil rights movement.”

Lewis, David Levering, 1993, 2000, **W. E. B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century 1919-1963**: Henry Holt & Co., 608 pp. Winner of a 2001 Pulitzer Prize. Publisher's Weekly says, “While readers will need to read Lewis' first volume to fully appreciate this one, his superb command of the complexity of his subject and time make this a major work of American biography and history.”

Lowery, Wesley, 2017, **They Can't Kill Us All**: Back Bay Books, 256 pp. New York Times bestseller. Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Wesley Lowery did hundreds of interviews documenting the Black Lives Matter movement. “Lowery examines the cumulative effect of decades of racially biased policing . . .”

McGhee, Heather, 2021, **The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper together**: One World, 448 pp. New York Times says, “*The Sum of Us* is a powerhouse of a book about the deep, enduring, cross-cultural, multi-generational, and real-life cost of racist policy-making in the United States.” McGhee is a former president and currently a distinguished senior fellow of Demos, a non-profit progressive U.S. think tank.

Montgomery County History Task Force, 2023, **African American Cemeteries in Montgomery County, Texas**: Self-published, 252 pp. The book catalogs 31 Black cemeteries across Montgomery County. The limited edition of 60 copies will be presented to all Montgomery County Library locations and some Harris County libraries.

Parrish, Mary E. Jones, J.H. Franklin, A. M. Bruner, S. Ellsworth, 2021, **The Nation Must Awake: My Witness to the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921**: Trinity University Press, 157 pp. Parrish survived the 1921 Tulsa Massacre and gathered eyewitness accounts from other survivors in her book *Events of the Tulsa Disaster*. "Bruner makes direct comparisons between the events of Tulsa in 1921 and the America of today, writing that the white mob who stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2020, was a direct descendent of the 'King Mob' her great-grandmother had written about 100 years earlier." — San Antonio Report

Rothstein, Richard, 2017, **The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America**: Liveright, 368 pp. Sherrilyn Ifill, president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, says "Through meticulous research and powerful human stories, Rothstein reveals a history of racism hiding in plain sight and compels us to confront the consequences of the intentional, decades-long governmental policies that created a segregated America."

Shipp, Robbin and Nick Chiles, 2014, **Justice While Black: Helping African-American Families Navigate and Survive the Criminal Justice System**: Agate, 160 pp. Robbin Shipp, Esq., is an attorney in Decatur, Georgia. Nick Chiles has won more than a dozen major journalism awards, including a Pulitzer Prize as a newspaper reporter in New York City.

Tatum, Beverly Daniel, 2017, **Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? and Other Conversations About Race**: BasicBooks, New York. Updated version of Tatum's 1997 book. "Beverly Daniel Tatum, a renowned authority on the psychology of racism, argues that straight talk about our racial identities is essential if we are serious about enabling communication across racial and ethnic divides."

Tisby, Jemar and Lecrae Moore, 2019, **The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism**: Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 256 pp. Jemar Tisby (B.A., University of Notre Dame, Mdiv Reformed Theological Seminary) is the president of The Witness, a Black Christian Collective where he writes about race, religion, politics, and culture. He is also the co-host of the Pass the Mic podcast.

Washington, Harriet A., 2008, **Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present**: Anchor, 528 pp. National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction. Amazon says, "The first full history of Black America's shocking mistreatment as unwilling and unwitting experimental subjects at the hands of the medical establishment." Kirkus Reviews says, "One of her goals in writing this book, aside from documenting a shameful past, is to convince them that they must participate actively in therapeutic medical research, especially in areas that most affect their community's health, while remaining ever alert to possible abuses."

Wells, Ida B., 2020, **Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells, 2nd edition**: University of Chicago Press, 496 pp. Originally published in 1970, this edition is edited by Ida's daughter, with an afterword by her great-granddaughter. Ida won a posthumous Pulitzer in 2020, "for her outstanding and courageous reporting on the horrific and vicious violence against African Americans during the era of lynching."

Whitehead, Colson, 2016, **The Underground Railroad**: Doubleday, New York, NY, 320 pp. This novel won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, the National Book Award and Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction. Author Ann Patchett says, "Colson Whitehead's book blends the fanciful and the horrific, the deeply emotional and the coolly intellectual. What he comes up with is an American masterpiece."

Wilkerson, Isabel, 2020, **Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent**: Random House, 496 pp. "Throughout human history, three caste systems have stood out. The tragically accelerated, chilling, and officially vanquished caste system of Nazi Germany. The lingering, millennia-long caste system of India. And the shape-shifting, unspoken, race-based caste pyramid in the United States. Each version relied on stigmatizing those deemed inferior to justify the dehumanization necessary to keep the lowest-ranked people at the bottom and to rationalize the protocols of enforcement."

Wilkerson, Isabel, 2010, **The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration**: Random House, 640 pp. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson meticulously chronicles the migration of almost 6 million African

Americans out of the South between 1915 and 1970, in search of a better life. In 1994 Wilkerson was the first African American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize. Barack Obama awarded Wilkerson the National Humanities Medal in 2016.

Woodfox, Albert, 2019, **Solitary**: Grove Press, 320 pp. Publisher's Weekly says, "In this devastating, superb memoir, Woodfox reflects on his decades inside the Louisiana prison system . . . The book is a stunning indictment of a judicial system 'not concerned with innocence or justice,' and a crushing account of the inhumanity of solitary confinement. This breathtaking, brutal, and intelligent book will move and inspire readers." Finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award.

Woodson, Carter G., 1933, **The Mis-Education of the Negro**: Penguin Classics, 2023 ed., 224 pp. Carter G. Woodson received the second PhD earned by an African American at Harvard University (after W. E. B. Du Bois). This text emphasized the importance of teaching Black History. Woodson wrote, "There would be no lynching if it did not start in the schoolroom." This 2023 edition includes an introduction by Jarvis R. Givens. Givens helped develop the AP African American Studies that was rejected by Florida in early 2023. It also includes an appendix of selected letters and articles by Woodson, and Suggestions for Further Reading.

Woodson, Carter G, 1922, **The Negro in Our History**: Andesite Press, 420 pp. When Carter G. Woodson's book was selected in 1925 by teachers in Oklahoma, the school board promptly banned it, punished teachers and forced out the school's principle. The book banning and teacher intimidation spread widely during the Jim Crow era. These racist actions are echoed today in school districts across the country. In response to widespread bans of this text, Woodson worked to promote Negro history and support teachers. He founded Negro History Week in 1926, which evolved into today's Black History Month.