

RESOURCES

The African American Classics An Essential Library

Compiled by Wesley Williams

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN SPIRITUALITY AND DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

William Allen (1830-1889), Charles Pickard Ware (1840-1921), and Lucy McKim Garrison (1842-1877), ***Slave Songs of the United States*** (1867), Dover Publications, 1995. White musicologists published what is possibly first systematic effort at collecting and preserving genius of slave melodies.

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938), ***The Book of American Negro Spirituals*** (1925), Da Capo Press, 1977. Available from Amazon.com. Book includes rare spirituals and provides scholarly background debunking myth, current at the time that Negro Spirituals owed incalculable debt to western tradition. Available through Amazon.com.

Benjamin Mays (1894-1984), ***The Negro's God: As Reflected in His Literature*** (1938), Scribner. 1969. Amazon. com ISBN-13: 978-0689701382. Baptist minister, civil rights leader, president of famed Morehouse College and mentor of students such as Martin Luther King, Julian Bond, Dr. Mays shows how principal ideas of God in Negro literature were developed.

Howard Thurman (1899-1981), ***Jesus and the Disinherited*** (1949), Penguin Random House, (1996). A classic in the spiritual literature genre Dr. Thurman, dean of Boston University's Marsh Chapel (1953-1965), brings African-American religious experience and what he called "the religion of Jesus" to bear on the plight of the oppressed and the poor.

Rev. Miles Mark Fisher (1899-1970), ***Negro Slave Songs in the United States***, Russell and Russell, NY, 1953. Traces origins of slave melodies and tells what they meant to those who first sang them.

Edward Franklin Frazier (1894-1962), ***The Negro Church in America***, Schocken Books, 1963. A classic in the field of sociology and religion, Dr. Frazier who chaired the Department of Sociology at Howard University (1934-1962), brilliantly sets out to consider the role of religion in the social organization of the Negro life in the United States.

James Cone, ***Black Theology and Black Power*** (1969), Orbis Books; Reprint edition (October 31, 1997) Amazon.com ISBN-13: 978-1570751578. According to The Rev. Dr. Cone "racism was not a moral issue that theology might speak about; rather, racism is, first and foremost, a theological issue, and this fact

determines what it means for the Christian to think morally about “racism.” (Matthew Burdette, CATHOLIC VOICES, May 20, 2018, p. 21).

Albert J. Raboteau (1943-), *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. A classic in the study of African American history and religion. Analyzes transformation of African religions into evangelical Christianity, describing day-to-day religious life in the slave communities through variety of first and second-hand sources, including narratives of slaves, missionary reports, travel accounts, folklore, black autobiographies, and journals of white observers.

George Nierenberg (1982) *Say Amen, Somebody*. Film documenting golden age of Gospel Music, and paying homage to its pioneers, especially, founding figure, Thomas Dorsey (*Precious Lord, Take my Hand*). DVD Available through Amazon.com. B000KHX7HG

Charles (C.) Eric Lincoln (1924-2000), *Race, Religion and the Continuing American Dilemma*, Schocken Books 1984. Timely and relevant classic by eminent black sociologist which studies influence of black church in America, taking into account the assault on affirmative action and welfare. This friend to both Rev. Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, Lincoln Calls on black church to serve as leaders of moral authority in twenty first-century. Schocken Books, 1984.

James Washington(ed.) (1948-1997) *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Harper & Row, 1986.. Topically arranged works of Dr. King on issues ranging from nonviolence and civil disobedience to the nuclear issue. Includes “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”.

Washington, *Conversations with God: Two Centuries of Prayers by African-Americans*. HarperCollins, Publishers, 1994. Powerful historical collection of African-American prayers uttered within the last 250 years.

Evans Crawford (1923-2004), *The Hum: Call and Response in African American Preaching*. Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1995. Intriguing analysis of black folk preaching in the African American church and the way in which its dynamic rhythmic pulse has driven black worship.

Vincent L. Wimbush, ed., *African Americans and the Bible: Sacred Texts and Social Textures*, New York, Continuum, 2000. Pays special attention to diversity of ways in which African Americans have utilized the Bible.

African American Heritage Hymnal: 575 Hymns, Spirituals, and Gospel Songs. GIA Publications, Inc., 2001. This hymnal is commended to all worshipping Christians, but musically notates the performance style of African-Americans at worship. Includes favorites not usually found in most protestant hymnals.

Juan Williams, Juan (1954-) and Quinton Dixie, ***This Far by Faith: Stories from the African American Religious Experience.*** William Morrow, 2003. Williams (author of *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1985*). Story of how religious faith inspired the U. S. Civil Rights movement.

Horace L. Griffin ***Their Own Receive Them Not: African American Lesbians & Gays in Black Churches.*** The Pilgrim Press, 2006. Invites the Black Church into honest dialogue about homosexuality and its own homophobia and provides an instructive text on black pastoral care for LGBTQ Christians.

True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary. Brian K. Blount, General Editor, Fortress Press, 2007. Pioneering commentary sets biblical interpretation firmly in context of African American experience and role of the Bible. Representing the contribution of notable scholars, this book calls into question some long-held "laws" of traditional biblical research.

Sandhya Jha, ***Pre-Post-Racial America: Spiritual Stories from the Front Lines.*** Chalice Press, 2015. Rev. Jha employs storytelling to convey prophetic truth. Excellent resource for pastors, leaders, and laypeople who want to help their communities navigate the complex issue of race.

GOSPEL MUSIC

Harris, Michael, ***The Rise of Gospel Blues: The Music of Thomas Andrew Dorsey in the Urban Church,*** Oxford Univ. Press, 1992. Traces rise of gospel blues as seen through career of its founding figure, Thomas Andrew Dorsey.

Heilbut, Tony, *The Gospel Sound: Good News and Bad Times*. (6th ed.), Proscenium Publishers Inc., 2002. Complete history of gospel music, particularly relationship between gospel and other African-American musical forms, such as jazz and rhythm and blues. Profiles specific gospel singers and world of gospel church. Includes discography.

Bill Carpenter, *Uncloudy Days: The Gospel Music Encyclopedia*, Backbeat Books, San Francisco, 2005. Standard resource manual of gospel music tracing careers of over 650 gospel artists and personalities with over 100 interviews, glossary of gospel terms, and trivia tidbits.

LITERATURE: A BASIC LIST OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN CLASSICS

Frederick Douglass (c. 1818-1895), *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845), New York, Penguin Press, 1982. First of three autobiographies, a memoir and treatise on abolition written during Douglass' time in Lynn, Massachusetts. (See AUTOBIOGRAPHY section of this list).

William Wells Brown (c.1814-1884), *Clotel; or, the President's Daughter* (1853), Penguin Classics edition, 2003. Available from Amazon.com, ISBN-13: 978-0142437728. Brown, bi-racial son of a white man and an enslaved woman, writes what is considered the first novel by an African-American: a tale of Thomas Jefferson having fathered children with one of his slaves. Foundational in African-American literature.

Charles W. Chesnutt (1858-1932), *The Conjure Woman* (1899), SMK Books, 2012. Available from Amazon.com, ISBN-13: 978-1617206771. Collection of seven short stories by this bi-racial author from the Jim Crow era, dealing with racial issues facing the South after the Civil War. Told through character of Uncle Julius McAdoo, a freed slave, to a white couple from the north.

Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), *Up From Slavery: An Autobiography* (1900), Penguin Books, 1986. (See AUTOBIOGRAPHIES section of this list).

William Edward Burghardt DuBois (1868-1963), *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (1903), Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1979. Essays on race based on DuBois' own experiences as African-American. Introduced notion of "double consciousness", i.e. black people must be conscious of how they view

themselves and at the same time be conscious of how the world views them. Important work in social science. (See AUTOBIOGRAPHY section of this list).

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938), *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (1912), CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. 2011, Available from Amazon.com ISBN 978-1463545543. This novel of young biracial man, known as the "Ex-Colored Man," living in America during late nineteenth, early twentieth century living through a variety of traumatic experiences that convince him to "pass" for white. Regrets, however, lost opportunity to honor his race by composing black music.

Jean Toomer (1894-1967), *Cane* (1923), with a new afterward by Rudolph P. Byrd and Henry Louis Gates, Liveright Publishing Corp, NY, 2011. Series of vignettes by important writer of Harlem Renaissance evolving around origins and experiences of African Americans in the United States. Technique Combines narrative prose, poetry, and play-like passages of dialogue.

Alain Locke (1885-1954), *The New Negro: An Interpretation*. (1925), Oxford University Press, 2018. Term popularized during the Harlem Renaissance referring to assertive, outspoken advocacy of dignity and refusal to passively submit to the practices and laws of Jim Crow racial segregation.

Langston Hughes (1902-1967), *The Dream Keeper & Other Poems* (1932) Alfred A. Knopf, 2007. The importance of dreams and the importance of protecting them as narrated by the "Dream Keeper", the ubiquitous force in the poem.

Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960), *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), University of Illinois Press, 1978. Light-skinned, long-haired, teenager, Jane Crawford's coming of age and keeper of her own destiny. Experience has taught her that people can only go to God for themselves.

John Hope Franklin (1915-2009), *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (1947), 8th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2000. Probably still best text available on African American history. Traces journey of African-Americans from origins in Africa through slavery in Western Hemisphere, the West Indies, Latin America, the United States, and various other migrations. Ends with continuing struggle for racial equality in the United States. Franklin was appointed in 1997 to head President Clinton's "Presidential Initiative on Race."

Gwendolyn Brooks (1917-2000), ***Annie Allen*** (1949), Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1972. Book of poetry earning Allen Pulitzer Prize in 1950, making her first African American recipient

Ralph Ellison (1913-1994), ***Invisible Man*** (1952), Random House, 1972. Novel addressing social and intellectual issues facing African-Americans in early twentieth century, such as black nationalism, black identity. Won National Book Award for Fiction in 1953 and made list of 100 best English-language novels of 20th century by both Modern Library and Time Magazine. Model for Barack Obama's memoir, *Dreams from My Father*.

Malcolm X (1925-1965), ***The Autobiography of Malcolm X (As Told To Alex Haley)***. (1965). Ballantine Publishing Group, 1999. Should be aware of Dr. Manning Marable's book, *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*. (2011) for which he won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for History. Marable concludes that Malcolm X exaggerated his early criminal career. Book is controversial among many who feel Marable doesn't give enough stress to Malcolm's political statements and his lifelong commitment to revolutionary Pan Africanism.

THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE, Rafia Zafar, editor (2011). Two-volume set with nine great novels of the 1920s and 30s; masterworks by movement's greatest artists. Library of America #978-I-59853-099-5

Margaret Walker (1915-1998), ***Jubilee*** (1966), Bantam Books, 1975. Historical novel focusing on story of biracial slave during the American Civil War. Set in mid-19th century Georgia and later in various parts of Alabama, before, during, and after the Civil War.

Chancellor Williams (1893-1992) ***The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.*** (1974). Chicago: Third World Press.

Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950), ***The Mis-Education of the Negro*** (1933). Washington, D.C. Associated Publishers, 1977. Based on premise that American schools were indoctrinating blacks rather than teaching them, making them dependent and influencing them to seek out inferior places in greater society. Challenges readers to learn and do more about themselves. Carter is also credited with laying foundation for Black History Month.

Richard Wright (1908-1960), ***Native Son*** (1940). With an Introduction by Arnold Rampersad. Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2005. Novel about 20-year-old Bigger Thomas, an African American youth living in utter poverty in a poor area on Chicago's South Side in the 1930s. Wright doesn't apologize for Bigger's crimes, but neither does he exonerate the system that produces Bigger's inevitable destiny.

James Baldwin, ***Notes of a Native Son*** (1955), Beacon Press, 2012. Basically a non-fiction collection of ten of Baldwin's essays initially published in magazines, such as *Harper Magazine*, *Partisan Review*, and *The New Leader* which address issues of race in America and Europe.

Angelou, Maya, ***I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*** (1969), Random House; Reissue edition, 2002. Autobiography of Angelou's early years and how strength of character and her love for literature served her well in overcoming racism and trauma.

Morrison, Toni, ***The Bluest Eye*** (1970), A Plume/Penguin Book, 1994. First novel of well-known winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. Set in childhood hometown of Lorain, Ohio in the early 1940's, eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove – a black girl – prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be beautiful, so that people will look at her, so that her world will be different.

The Collected Works of Phillis Wheatley, John Shields, editor, Oxford Paperbacks, Oxford University Press, 1988. Restores work of Wheatley (1753-1784), African slave girl who grew up to be first African-American whose poetry was widely admired by major literary figures and to have published book of poetry elevated to its proper place in American literature. Buried in Boston.

AMERICAN ANTISLAVERY WRITINGS: Colonial Beginnings to Emancipation, Library of America, #978-I-59853-196-1. Anthology of America's greatest tradition of social protest, with works by Thomas Paine, Phillis Wheatley, Olaudah Equiano, Frederick Douglass, and many others.

REPORTING CIVIL RIGHTS: American Journalism 1941-19734 (2 vols.), Library of America #978-I-931082-0. Nearly 200 newspaper reports, book excerpts, and chronicling three decades of revolutionary events from the *Brown* decision to Freedom Summer to the rise of Black Power.

OTHER BOOKS

David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was In Vogue*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1984. Traces the decade and a half following WW I when Harlem was not only the largest black community in the United States but also the cultural mecca.

Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, Random House Publishing Co., 2010. Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and first African-American to win for individual reporting, *Warmth* is sweeping epic of 55-yr-long migration of black Americans across U.S. fleeing the South for northern and western cities in search of a better life.

Albert Murray: Collected Novels & Poems. Henry Luis Gates, Paul Devlin (eds.), Library of America #978-I-59853-561-7. Four-volume suite of semi-autobiographical novels of this provocative twentieth-century American thinker: *Train Whistler* (1974), *The Spyglass Tree* (1991), *The Seven League Boots* (1996), and *The Magic Keys* (2005).

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy*, One World Publishers, 2017. Collection of essays originally published in *The Atlantic* magazine between 2008 and 2016, over the course of the American Barack Obama administration, including *The Case for Reparations* and *The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration*. Coates introduces each essay with his own reflections.

Bryan Stevenson, *Just Mercy* About his non-stop work to have death row sentences reviewed, and in many instances, falsely accused inmates released. He argued several successful cases before the Supreme Court. But it's his heartfelt connections with his clients that are so compelling. He is the founder of Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) who built the National Memorial for Peace and Justice commemorating African-American victims of lynching 1877-1950, in Montgomery, AL. It has opened only this spring,

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Zemach, Margot, ***Jake and Honeybunch Go to Heaven***. Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1982. One day Honeybunch, Jake's onery mule, takes her own sweet time crossing the tracks in front of a slow freight, sending them both on quick trip to heaven. The rest is an unanticipated encounter with an all-black cast of angels in 1930's garb who turn out to be unrestrained habitués of heaven. Received NY Times Notable Book of the Year and Commonwealth Club of California Award for the Best Children's Book of the Year.

Johnson, James Weldon, ***Lift Every Voice and Sing***. Walker Publishing Co., 1993. Both James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) and his brother J. Rosamond (1873-1954), were teachers when they wrote words and music in 1900 for schoolchildren to sing at a celebration of birthday of Abraham Lincoln. Great book for children with illustrations by American-born Mexican artist, Elizabeth Catlett.

Tarpley, Natasha, ***I Love My Hair***. Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, E. B. Lewis, Illustrator, 1998. ISBN 978-0-316-52275-5. Available on Amazon.com. Story about a young African-American girl taught to celebrate her lovely head of hair as part of her heritage. Important to see the DVD, ***Two Dollars and a Dream***, the biography of Madame C.J. Walker who made a fortune during the early 20th century developing hair-straightening products and straightening techniques for black women. (BIOGRAPHIES section of this resource list).

Michelson, Richard, ***Across the Alley***, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. Abe and Willie are next-door neighbors. During the day they don't play together, because Abe is Jewish and Willie is black. But at night, when nobody's watching, they're best friends.

Sanders, Nancy, ***A Kid's Guide to African American History: More than 70 Activities (A Kid's Guide Series)***. Chicago Review Press, 2007. Stories of great African-Americans (inventors, scientists, poets, dramatists) for parents, and teachers interested in fostering cultural awareness among children of all races (reading level 7-9 years). Includes more than 70 hands-on activities, songs, games that teach children about people, experiences, and events shaping African-American history.

Karina Glaser has placed great list of ***100 Best Children's Books for African American History Month***. BOOKRIOT on Google.

BIOGRAPHIES/AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Langston Hughes (1902-1967), *The Big Sea: An Autobiography* (1940), Hill and Wang; (2nd ed.), 1993. Hughes tells his own story against the backdrop of Harlem Renaissance with humor and his legendary wit.

Hughes, *I Wonder As I Wander: An Autobiographical Journey* (1956), Hill and Wang; (2nd ed.), 1993. The second volume of Hughes' autobiography. Set in the 1930s his narratives of his travels, recall dramatic and intimate moments throughout Cuba, Haiti, Russia, Soviet Central Asia, Japan, Spain (during its Civil War), through dictatorships, wars, revolutions.

Two Dollars and a Dream, (DVD), FILMAKERS LIBRARY, NYC, (212) 808-4980. Biography of Sarah Breedlove (1867-1919), well-known black cosmetician, philanthropist, and activist known as Madame C. J. Walker, the first American woman of any color to make her own millions . Built fortune on skin and hair care products for people of color. Important for black studies, women's studies, and American social history;

Mildred Stock, Herbert Marshall, *Ira Aldridge: The Negro Tragedian* (1958) Southern Illinois University Press Paperback, 1968 . Traces international career of Aldridge (1807-1867) early 19th century black-American actor who played not only Moors – Othello, Oroonoko and Aaron (*Titus Andronicus*), but also such “white” roles as Rolla (Sheridan's *Pizarro*), Lear, Shylock, and Macbeth. Book includes original source material, such as newspaper reviews and handbills.

Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), *Up From Slavery* (1901), Penguin Books, 1986. Born a slave on a Virginia farm, Washington rose to become a leader in education, heading and developing famed Tuskegee Institute. Widely considered spokesman for his people, became embroiled in famous controversy with W.E.B. Dubois and other black leaders over aim and direction of Black progress in the United States.

Ida Barnett Wells (1862-1931), *Crusade For Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* (1928), Alfreda M. Duster, ed., The University of Chicago Press, 1970. Nearly as well known in England as in the United States, this crusader against black oppression, particularly lynching, was one of the most fearless and respected women in the United States and one of the first persons to bring legal action against a railroad due to discrimination.

Patrick O'Connor, ***Josephine Baker***. Jonathan Cape Publishing, London, 1988. Baker (1906-1975), the first black superstar, catapulted into fame by her signature girdle of bananas, was also innovative and passionate humanitarian. Received France's Croix de guerre for her work in the French Resistance during WW II. Ernest Hemingway called her "The most sensational woman anybody ever saw. Or ever will. -." See JAZZ heading on this list of resources.

Arnold Rampersad, ***The Art & Imagination of W.E.B. DuBois***. (1868-1963). Schocken Books, 1990. Incisive study of arguably the most complex leader and intellectual in the African-American struggle for equality.

Frederick Douglass (c.1818-1895), ***Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*** (1845), The Library of America (LA), 1994. The first of three autobiographies, published by the Anti-Slavery Office in Boston in 1845, selling 4,500 copies in its first printing. Launches his calling as abolitionist, but worries that disclosure of his identity has endangered his freedom. Meets Susan B. Anthony. Begins UK speaking tour. LA edition prefaced by letter from abolitionist, Wendell Phillips, with notes by Harvard historian, Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Olaudah Equiano (c.1745-1797), ***Olaudah Equiano: The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*** (1789), Penguin Books, 1995. "...recounts his kidnapping in Africa at the age of eleven, his service as the slave of an officer in the British Navy, and his years of labor on slave ships until he was able to purchase his freedom in 1766. Worked for the resettlement of blacks in Sierra Leone, and became leading respected figure in anti-slavery movement." (Backcover),

Douglass, ***My Bondage and My Freedom*** (1885), The Library of America (LA), 1994. Douglass' second autobiography, which sold 15,000 copies in two months. Here Douglass criticizes Republican party for opposing extension of slavery while tolerating its continued existence in the South.

Leeming, David, ***James Baldwin: A Biography***. Alfred A. Knopf, 1994. Writing with fierce eloquence, Baldwin (1924-1987) was one of twentieth century's most extraordinary men of letters and relentless crusaders for justice.

Martin Duberman, ***Paul Robeson, A Biography***. The New Press, 1995. Massive biography of one of the most celebrated African-Americans both here and abroad. Duberman's years of research has yielded one of the finest biographies of the twentieth century. Robeson's talent on stage and film and later his political activism are powerfully told. Amazon.com ISBN-13: 978-1565842885

Andrew Young (1932-), ***Andrew Young: An Easy Burden: The Civil Rights Movement and the Transformation of America***. Harper Collins Publishing Co., 1996. Candid autobiography in which this close colleague of Dr. King's recalls the Civil Rights movement and gives candid and affectionate account of his colleagues.

Alvin Pickle, *Jonathan Walker, The Man With The Branded Hand*. Lorelli Slater, Publisher, Everett, MA, 1998. Walker (1799-1878), a white farmer from Harwich turned abolitionist who was tried and sentenced in 1844 for attempting to help runaway slaves to freedom. Branded by the U.S. Government with the letters, "S S" for "Slave Stealer" Walker is the subject of John Greenleaf Whittier's poem "The Branded Hand" in praise of his valor. A plaque commemorating Walker was erected on the lawn next to the Harwich, Massachusetts Historical Society, and Pamela Purdy, of Harwich, has dedicated one of her stunning icons to him.

Mary Prince (c. 1788-1833), ***The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave (1831)***, Penguin Books, 2000. "I have been a slave – I have felt what a slave feels, and I know what a slave knows..." (p. 7). Thus recalls Mary Prince, a slave from Bermuda whose story is the first life of a black woman to be published in Britain, provoking rallying-cry for emancipation.

Harriet Jacobs (1813-1897), ***Incidents In The Life Of A Slave Girl*** (1861), The Library of America, 2001. True story of young black, female's struggle for self-identity, self-preservation, and freedom. Her autobiography recounts harrowing escape from predatory master, revealing how after several unsuccessful attempts and seven years of self-imposed exile, she hid in a coffin-like "garret." Despite it all, she not only escaped slavery but preserved her family.

Frederick Douglass, ***Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*** (1892), Library of America, 2001. Douglass' third autobiography sells few copies and is a financial failure. His influence in securing government jobs diminished under administration of President Chester Arthur. Continues lecturing and speaking nonetheless. Difficulties compounded with death of second wife, Anna, who is white.

Marcus Bruce, *Henry Ossawa Tanner: A Spiritual Biography*. Crossroads Publishing Co., NY, 2002. Like many African-American artists, Tanner (1859-1937) had to leave his native land, America, to find success in Europe. A painter of monumental skill, French government in 1923 made him a chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and in 1927 he became first African American to be granted full membership in National Academy of Design. Profoundly influenced by Protestant spirituality.

Katherine Reynolds Chaddock, *Uncompromising Activist, Richard Greener: First Black Graduate of Harvard College* (1870). Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017. During Reconstruction, Greener (1844-1922) was first black faculty member at a southern white college (University of South Carolina), as well as first black U.S. diplomat to a white country (Vladivostok, Russia). Died in obscurity. Fascinating account of how this light-skinned black scholar lost his family when they changed their names and vanished into white society, causing him to lose his own sense of clarity about race.

RACE FILMS

Independently produced black-cast films made roughly between 1920 and 1950 basically for segregated African-American audiences. Called “race films” because they were intended to uplift the “race,” in the same way that many African-American activists of this era (W.E.B. DuBois, for instance) referred to themselves as “race men and women.” Race films provided images of African-Americans absent from Hollywood films, i.e. black romance, urban migration, social upheaval, racial violence, alcoholism and color prejudice within black community.

FILMS

Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1903) - Although Uncle Tom was the first black character to be portrayed in American film, he was usually portrayed by a white actor. After several remakes, Universal Studios released a 1927 blockbuster with an unusual twist. James Lowe played Tom who was sensationally advertised as their “Good colored star.” Released on DVD in 1999 by Kinolorber.com., at Uncle Tom’s Cabin at the silentera.com database. Also available on Amazon.Com. The 1903 version also available on YouTube and at www.imdb.com/title/tt0000471/

A Natural Born Gambler (1916) - starring comic genius, Bert Williams (1874-1922), this 22-min. short portrays a loveable scoundrel hooked on playing poker, but loses even in his dreams. First African American hired by mainstream movie company to star, produce, direct, and write his own films. Wintz,

Cary D. , *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance*, Routledge, 2004, p. 1210. Film available from Kino Video and on YouTube.

Within Our Gates (1920) - earliest surviving film by African-American director, Oscar Micheaux. Considered counterpoint to D.W. Griffith's *Birth of A Nation* (1915) it addresses much avoided topic by both black and white filmmakers: lynching. Should be seen in conjunction with D. W. Griffith's epic film, ***The Birth of a Nation*** (1915), which romanticizes the Ku Klux Klan and outcome of American Civil War. (See *The Birth of a Nation: How a Legendary Filmmaker and a Crusading Editor Reignited America's Civil War*, Dick Lehr, under BLACK FILM DOCUMENTARIES, page 3 of this list). Both films are available from Amazon.com. Kino Classics, and on YouTube.

The Scar of Shame (1927) - Historically significant example of the "Race" movie, this film was produced by The Colored Film Players Corporation of Philadelphia for the high-minded purpose of communicating importance of education. Available on Amazon.com and YouTube.

St. Louis Blues (1929) - Produced by W.C. Handy (*St. Louis Blues*), starring blues singer, Bessie Smith, in her only film appearance, with choral arrangements by Handy and J. Rosamond Johnson (co-author with brother, James Weldon, of *Lift Every Voice and Sing*), and performed by famed Hall Johnson Choir. This film was selected for preservation in the U.S. National Film Registry by the Library of Congress for its cultural, historical, and aesthetic significance. Stereotypical drama. Sixteen minutes long and available on Kino Classics and on YouTube.

Hallelujah (1929) – Cinematic milestone produced by white film director, King Vidor (*Stella Dallas, Duel in the Sun*), featuring first all-black cast from major studio. Contains authentic spirituals, folk songs, blues and jazz. Zeke, a poor cotton farmer, succumbs to temptations of Chick (Nina Mae McKinney, cinema's first black female star), a mercenary honky-tonk girl. Amazon.com **ASIN:** B000BNTME6

God's Step Children (1938) – Young light-skinned "Negress," abandoned by her mother, won't acknowledge her race and struggles to find her place in both the black and white worlds. Another example of Race Film dealing with controversial subject within black community.

The Bronze Buckaroo (1939) – Black cabaret singer, Herb Jeffries began appearing in cowboy movies after witnessing a black boy be rejected by white playmates to play Hopalong Cassidy because “Hoppy was white.” Jeffries became race films’ answer to Gene Autry and Roy Rogers and was extremely popular in black theaters. Amazon.com ASIN: B005ENCITE

Stormy Weather (1943) – Twentieth Century Fox-produced film, starring Lena Horne (singing the title song which became her signature tune) and dancer, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson. All-black cast, includes Cab Calloway, Fats Waller, the dancing Nicholas Brothers, and Dooley Wilson (*Casablanca*). Story line less significant than archival value of greats from 1918 to 1943. *Cabin in the Sky* produced same year adding Ethel Waters and Eddie Rochester Anderson (*The Jack Benny Show*). Both available at Amazon.com ASIN: B000BOH922

No Way Out (1950) – Film that launched Sidney Poitier’s career. It spotlighted race riots following WW II and presents sensitive portrayal of young Negro doctor who finds himself at center of racial controversy. Amazon.com ASIN: B000CNE08S

LATER IMPORTANT FILMS

Island in the Sun (1957) Beautiful Dorothy Dandridge is cast in the first of her interracial-love roles, marking first time a black woman is held in the arms of a white man in an American movie and introducing integrated love to mass audience on the eve of America’s convulsion over integration. Available on YouTube and on Amazon.com B000BOH91S

The Defiant Ones (1958) Black and white film portraying two escaped prisoners, one white and one black (Sidney Poitier and Tony Curtis), shackled together and compelled to co-operate to survive. Film earned Poitier the Silver Bear for Best Actor at the Berlin International Film Festival. DVD available on Amazon.com B000646L3U

A Raisin in the Sun (1961) – Groundbreaking drama by African-American playwright, Lorraine Hansberry, portraying black family living in crowded Chicago apartment, seeing the arrival of \$10,000 insurance check as answer to their prayers. Based on play of same name, film shows strength and integrity of African American family struggling against generations of prejudice trying to achieve their piece of the American Dream.” Available on Amazon.com B00003L9CK

OTHER BLACK FILMS

The following films are included because they represent significant changes in societal perceptions of the African-American experience, for good and ill. Some are of dubious quality but are included, nonetheless, because they sparked controversy.

In the Heat of the Night (1967)

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman (1974 television movie)

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967)

Shaft (1971)

Superfly (1972)

Souder (1972)

The Color Purple (1985)

Roots (1988)

Glory (1989)

Boyz n the Hood (1991)

Malcolm X (1992)

Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored (1995)

The Tuskegee Airmen (1995 HBO Television)

Amistad (1997)

The Help (2001)

When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts (2006)

12 Years a Slave (2013)

Selma (2014)

Mudbound (2017)

The Black Panther (2018)

BLACK FILM DOCUMENTARIES

Pioneers African American Cinema, five-disc collection of so-called “race films” that flourished in the 1920s to ‘40s. Includes 80-page booklet with essays, photos, and interviews with historians and archivists. Library of Congress, Producer: Bret Wood, Distr. by KINO CLASSICS, NY, 2016; www.kinolorber.com

Oscar Micheaux: The Czar of Black Hollywood, Tells the real-life experiences that inspired the films of this preeminent black filmmaker, who directed or produced 22 silent movies and 15 talking pictures. BLOCK STARTZ MUSIC TELEVISION, 2014; www.blockstarzt.com

Midnight Ramble, PBS THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE series presenting life and career of Oscar Micheaux. against historical backdrop of black film industry from 1910 to 1940s. Includes rare clips and highlights. SYNERGY ENTERTAINMENT; www.synergyent.com

Blacks and Vaudeville, PBS documentary on vaudeville in America which features 19 minute-segment on African-Americans in vaudeville. Access on YouTube by that title.

Banned Cartoons, Uncut and unedited archive of shameful racial abuses of Hollywood’s production of racist cartoons from the 1930s and 40s. Available on Amazon.com B01BMH1Q20

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON FILM

Donald Bogle, ***Blacks in American Films and Television: An Encyclopedia***, Garland Publishing, Inc., 1988. This somewhat dated but richly illustrated and exhaustive reference guide by our greatest

authority on black films lists the cinematic accomplishments of African-American icons while offering critique and insightful analysis.

John Kisch and Edward Mapp, ***A Separate Cinema: Fifty Years of Black Cast Posters***, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1992. First book to present history of black-cast films through their iconic posters. Covers years 1915 to 1965 and includes more than 200, many very rare.

Natalie Zemon Davis,, ***Slaves On Screen: Film and Historical Vision***, Shows how film industry portrayed slaves in five major films spanning four generations: *Spartacus* (1960), *Burn! (1969)*, *The Last Supper* (1976), *Amistad* (1997), and *Beloved* (1998). Demonstrates film's potential for narrating authentic historical past in effective ways.

Anna Everett, ***Returning the Gaze: A Genealogy of Black Film Criticism, 1909-1949***, Duke University Press, 2001. Race is central to this history of the American cinema. Features contributions by black film critics, academics, journalists, poets, writers, and film aficionados during early twentieth century.

Donald Bogle, ***Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films (4th ed.)***, Continuum Books, 2003. In this classic study of black images in American motion pictures, Bogle shows how image of African-Americans in American movies gradually changed yet, in many ways, remained the same.

Melvyn Donaldson, ***Black Directors in Hollywood***, University of Texas Press, 2003. Overview of contributions and thinking of major black directors.

Melvyn Stokes, ***D.W. Griffith's The Birth of a Nation: A History of 'The Most Controversial Motion Picture of All Time,'*** Oxford University Press, 2007. Stokes studies the origins, production, reception, and continuing history of Griffith's controversial 1915 film.

Jeremy Geltzer, ***Race Films: 50 Years of Independent African-American Cinema (2nd ed.)***, The Hollywood Press, 2014. Shows how so-called Race films served as counterpoint to white Hollywood.

Dick Lehr, *The Birth Of A Nation: How Legendary Filmmaker and A Crusading Editor Reignited America's Civil War*, Public Affairs Book, 2014.

IMPORTANT COMPOSERS

Joseph Boulogne Chevalier (1745-1799) – Afro-French champion fencer, classical composer, virtuoso violinist, and conductor of the leading symphony orchestra in 18th-century Paris. Born in Guadeloupe, son of wealthy planter, and his African slave, Nanon, Saint-Georges is best remembered as first composer of western classical music of African ancestry. Reputedly Mozart's nemesis. Compositions available on YouTube and on Amazon.com, B00005AYEL

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875 –1912) – Afro-English composer and conductor born of English mother and African father. Dubbed the “African Mahler” by white New York musicians, Taylor is especially known for his three cantatas based on the epic poem, Song of Hiawatha by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Available on YouTube and on Argo Compact Disc, Welsh Nat'l Opera and Orchestra, Kenneth Alwyn, conductor. Amazon. Com B0013XLFCU

Clarence Cameron White (1880-1960) - Neo-romantic composer and noted concert violinist, best known for dramatic works, such as the incidental music for the play *Tambour* (1929) and the opera *Ouanga: An African American Opera about Haiti* (1932). Hear his *Levee Dance* (1927) on YouTube, performed by Jascha Heifetz.

Florence Beatrice Price (1881-1953) - first African-American woman to be recognized as symphonic composer, and first to have a composition, *The Symphony in E Minor* (1932), played by major orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Available on YouTube and from Amazon.com B000056QE4

Nathaniel Dett (1882-1943) - Canadian composer, organist, pianist, and music professor whose professional career flourished in the U. S. Leading Black composer of his day, Dett used African-American folk songs and spirituals as basis for choral and piano compositions. Compositions available on YouTube and Amazon.com B017AVXQPW

William Grant Still (1895-1978) - Often referred to as dean of African-American composers, his compositions embraced blues, spirituals, and jazz as well as other ethnic American genres. The *Afro-American Symphony* (1930) established his reputation worldwide. Naxos Compact Disc 8.559174. Compositions available on YouTube and from Amazon. Com B000AMMSO4

William Dawson (1899-1990) - African-American composer, choir director, and professor (Tuskegee Institute, 1931-1956). Composer of chamber music, orchestral compositions (*The Negro Folk Symphony*, premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski, 1934), and arrangements of variations on spirituals, *Spirituals: Celebrated Arrangements and Compositions, Music for Mixed Chorus, vols. 1 & 2*. Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, Neil A. Kjos Music Co. San Diego, CA – Sole Distributor ISBN-10: 0-8497-4215-3; ISBN-13: 978-0-8497.4215-6, 2008. CD recording, *Spirituals, Tuskegee Institute Choir*, under Dawson's direction, available on YouTube and from Amazon.com B000MDE3QC

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington (1899-1974) - Embracing term "Beyond category" as philosophical principle, "The Duke" considered his compositions to be part of general category of American music rather than to any musical genre. Elevated jazz, nonetheless, to art form on par with more traditional musical genres. Many of his more than one thousand compositions became standards. Awarded special posthumous Pulitzer Prize for music in 1999. See page under SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Mary Lou Williams (1910-1981)- Pianist, arranger and composer, and first woman to be ranked among the greatest jazz musicians. Career spanned more than half a century. Became devoted religious convert in late 50's, and wrote number of religious works, including *Mary Lou's Mass* (1964), performed at St. Patrick's Cathedral. *Mass* available on Smithsonian Folkways Recordings SPW CD 40815, on YouTube and from Amazon.Com B0007727TS

Margaret Allison Bonds (1913-1972) - American composer and pianist. One of first black composers and performers to gain recognition in U.S. Best remembered for frequent collaborations with poet, Langston Hughes (*The Negro Speaks of Rivers*; voice and piano, 1942). Available on YouTube performed by various artists.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History*. W.W. Norton & Co., 1971. History of musical activities of African-Americans and how this new music, African-American in style, spread its influence throughout the world. Includes outline of Black American musical history.

Hugh Gregory, *Soul Music A-Z*. Sterling Publishing Co., N.Y., 1991. Lists nearly 600 names from world of soul music, including singers, performers, musicians, producers, writers, and record labels. Wealth of information from gospel and blues to international modern sounds in A to Z directory form.

Harold Courlander, *Negro Folk Music USA*. Dover Publications, 1992. White American novelist, folklorist, anthropologist, and expert in study of Haitian life explores essence and development of American Negro folk music.

Howard Kaplan, *Marian Anderson*, Pomegranate Communications, Inc. Library of Congress, 2007. Most concise biography of preeminent African-American vocal artist, Marian Anderson, in text and image, and places her firmly in equal rights struggle as “The Voice that Challenged a Nation. Also, see www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/Anderson/. Other informative websites include the Marian Anderson Historical Society (www.mariananderson.org); The PBS program *NewsHour* (www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/remember/1997/anderson_2.26a.html); and an audiovisual biography presented by Metropolitan Opera (www.marian-anderson.org/timeline.htm).

Karen M. Bryan, Naomi Andre, Eric Saylor (eds.), *Blackness In Opera*. University of Illinois Press, Chicago, 2012. Collection of essays critically examining intersections of race and music in multifaceted world of opera.

Andre, Naomi, *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement*, University of IL Press, 2018. Broad study by professor in Women’s Studies at the Department of Afro-American and African Studies, University of

Michigan. Shows shifting function of opera to an even more shifting world and makes reader consider why opera's appeal be restricted to those of the race and classes for which it was produced.

JAZZ

John Coltrane, a spiritual man and leading jazz composer and player of the 20th century! A new never released recording has been found so he's in the news. Re recordings, **A Love Supreme**, 1965 is classic

Edward "Duke" Ellington (1899-1974), **Music Is My Mistress**. Doubleday & Co., 1973. Basically a memoir more than autobiography, Duke recalls times with people he's known throughout his career – and he's known them all, from presidents to "just plain folk." Fascinating reminiscence!

JAZZ: The Story of America's Music, Ken Burns, PBS American Masters, 2001. PBS American Masters. Filmmaker Ken Burns tells the story of jazz through rare archival footage of music, photos and video clips. Available on YouTube.

The Long Night of Lady Day. 1984 PBS documentary on Billie Holiday (1915-1959). Available on YouTube.

Lena Horne on Lena Horne (1917-2010). American Masters, PBS, 1996. (See RACE FILMS list on page of this list the 1943 movie, *Stormy Weather*, which is also Lena's signature tune). Available on YouTube.

Something To Live For. (Documentary on Ella Fitzgerald (1917-1996). American Masters, PBS, 2005. "She was the best. She was the best there ever was. Amongst all of us who sing, she was the best." Johnny Mathis on this fascinating documentary about "The first Lady of Swing." Available on YouTube.

Chasing A Rainbow: The Life of Josephine Baker. 1986. Archival footage and interviews, profiles life of Baker (1906-1975), American expatriate from St. Louis whose stage talents won her fame in 1920s Paris as well as France's prestigious Legion d'honneur and Croix de Guerre for her work in the French resistance during WW II. Winner of 1986 International Emmy for Best Documentary. Available on YouTube.

Nat King Cole. Afraid of the Dark. BBC TV special. The first African-American to host an American television series, the legendary Nat King Cole (1919-1965) sold so many records for Capitol Records that its iconic Los Angeles building became known as "The house that Jack built." Available on YouTube.

Ken Burns and Wynton Marsalis interview on "Jazz" with Charlie Rose, (2001), PBS. Available on YouTube.

RECORDINGS (CD)

The Roots of Rap; Classic Recordings from the 1920's and 30's. YAZOO, Division of Shanachie Entertainment Corp., LC5762, 1996. Compiled from rare re-mastered 78s this CD traces roots of rap far into the past and shows how rapping technique has been present in many American musical genres, for over 100 years, including early rural music, both black and white, religious songs, blues, ragtime, vaudeville, and hokum (humorous song using euphemisms to make sexual innuendos).

Tribal Chants, Drums and Songs of Africa. Legacy CD 421, Box 249, Pismo Beach, CA93448.

ART AND ARTISTS

Beardon, Romare & Harry Henderson, ***A History of African-American Artists: From 1792 to the Present.*** Pantheon Books, 1993.

Peggy Gillespie, ***LOVE Makes a Family: Portraits of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Parents and Their Families.*** Photographs by Gig Kaeser. University of Massachusetts Press Amherst, Interviews and photographs of parents and children in various familial configurations, showing love in all its beauty and courage. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst. 1999.

Samella Lewis, ***African American Art and Artists.*** Presents lives and works of artists from 18th cent. to time of this book's publication. University of California Press, 2003.

Elizabeth Gwinn, Lauren Haynes, & Thomas J. Lax, ***Harlem.*** Divided into three major periods chronicling Harlem's rich artistic and political history by leading scholars. Includes 250 photographs testifying to its timeless presence. Studio Museum Harlem, 2005.

George Wein & Joyce, ***Syncopated Rhythms,*** Collection of outstanding art representing accomplishments of African-American artists of the last century. Boston University Art Gallery, 2005.

James Van Der Zee James Van Der Zee (1886–1983) Photographer best known for his portraits of black New Yorkers during Harlem Renaissance. Documents major figures as well as ordinary people. See “*African American Art: Harlem Renaissance, Civil Rights Era, and Beyond*”. Cultural Institute. Smithsonian American Art Museum. February 2016.

Deborah Willis, ***Black: A Celebration of a Culture***.. Photographing compelling stories that enhance our understanding of African-American culture. Skyhorse Publishing, 2014.