

## FBA CULTURAL ORIGINS

*A structural and historical lens on how a distinct American lineage shaped its own culture*

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### INTRODUCTION

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Culture is the living system of shared memory, language, values, practices, and institutions through which people make sense of the world and organize daily life. *Foundational Black American (FBA)* culture is the distinct, lineage-specific culture formed by the descendants of those enslaved in the United States. It is expressed through faith, music, humor, food, fashion, sports, creative arts, family, community, and self-governance. It is not interchangeable with broader categories, nor collapsible into a general “Black” experience. Within USBA, it functions as the code of belonging, stewardship, and representation.

These categories reflect FBA culture and the expressions of identity, resilience, and creativity that define who we are and how we endure. Cultural delineation also extends to our national symbols, which serve as visible affirmations of FBA identity and covenantal belonging.

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### FAITH & SPIRIT

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Faith has anchored survival and resistance across generations. It continues to guide moral vision and collective resilience.

- **Faith:** Spiritual practices rooted in the Black church, gospel, and biblically grounded resilience that sustained enslaved and free communities.
  - **Restorative Practices:** Prayer, testimony, song, and communal care as sources of healing and covenant alignment.
  - **Moral Compass:** A lineage-based ethic of justice, accountability, and truth-telling.
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### FAMILY & KINSHIP

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Family is the center of continuity, care, and intergenerational strength in FBA life.

- **Family Bonds:** Kinship networks, chosen family, and shared caregiving formed in resistance to the fracturing of enslavement.
- **Elders & Youth:** Respect for elders as carriers of wisdom, youth as defenders of the future, with intergenerational teaching at the center.
- **Gendered Contributions:** Distinct and indispensable leadership of FBA women in sustaining families, institutions, and cultural continuity.

- **Traditions:** Family reunions, homegoing celebrations, call-and-response, oral storytelling, line dancing, and cookouts.
  - **Consciousness:** A tradition of cultural awakening and political clarity rooted in self-determination, history, and spiritual insight.
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## ARTS, LANGUAGE & STYLE

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Art and expression are living archives of resistance, creativity, and cultural leadership.

- **Music & Dance:** Birthplace of spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, R&B, soul, funk, disco, house, hip hop, spoken word, battle rap, breakdancing, c-walking, stepping, footwork, and jookin.
  - **Literature:** Writers, poets, and playwrights capturing memory, humor, and brilliance — shaping national and global culture.
  - **Visual Arts & Design:** From Harlem Renaissance painting and photography to architecture and digital aesthetics.
  - **Fashion & Aesthetics:** Expressive style in hair, clothing, jewelry, and presentation — statements of pride and self-definition.
  - **Humor & Language:** Distinct wit, satire, coded language, Black American Vernacular English (BAVE), and regional dialects as creative defense and global influence.
  - **Digital Culture:** Innovation in social media, digital organizing, and online cultural production.
  - **Entertainment:** Storytelling through film, television, theater, and comedy that turns lived experience into global influence while navigating exclusion.
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## FOOD & DAILY LIFE

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Food and everyday practices nourish both survival and community connection.

- **Cuisine:** Soul food, barbecue, Sunday dinners, fish fries, and migration-inspired blends that nourish both body and memory.
- **Health & Self-Care:** Holistic practices in wellness, restoration, beauty, and grooming industries sustaining identity and pride.
- **Celebrations:** Community-centered gatherings of remembrance, joy, and solidarity.

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## KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION

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FBAAs have built and sustained knowledge traditions that preserve memory and fuel progress.

- **Education & Institutions:** Black-led schools, HBCUs, cultural centers, and advocacy groups protecting memory and advancing self-determination.
- **Research & Scholarship:** Independent study, archival preservation, and thought leadership to secure lineage clarity and sovereignty.
- **Medicine & Science:** From smallpox inoculation and midwifery to breakthroughs in surgery, public health, and cancer treatment — often uncredited.
- **Achievements:** Contributions in agriculture, engineering, technology, and the military — foundational yet frequently erased.
- **Recognition:** Global awards and honors earned despite systemic exclusion.
- **Legacy:** Generations of resistance and institution-building, from maroon communities and Reconstruction to the Civil Rights and Black Empowerment eras.

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## LABOR, LAND & ECONOMY

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Labor and land stewardship are the foundation of FBA survival, wealth creation, and resilience.

- **Nation-Building:** The unpaid labor that built America's wealth, infrastructure, and institutions.
- **Historic Communities:** Greenwood, Rosewood, Wilmington, Seneca Village, and other towns built through vision and destroyed by violence and policy.
- **Great Migration & Reverse Migration:** Transforming U.S. cities through relocation north and west; returning south to reclaim land and rebuild.
- **Economics:** From Black Wall Streets and cooperative trusts to modern business and venture ecosystems.
- **Agriculture & Land Stewardship:** Generational knowledge of cultivation, land defense, and environmental balance.
- **Resistance to Extraction:** Pushback against economic sabotage and cultural theft of FBA labor and creativity.
- **Heritage:** Lineage forged through slavery, Black Codes, Jim Crow, redlining, and state violence—endured with courage and collective resolve.
- **Regional Subcultures:** Distinct Southern, Midwestern, East Coast, and West Coast traditions in sound, slang, food, and style within a unified culture.

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## LEADERSHIP & INSTITUTIONS

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Leadership and institution-building remain central to self-determination and representation.

- **Political Leaders:** From Reconstruction legislators to grassroots and modern civic movements.
  - **Institutions:** Black churches, fraternal orders, civic leagues, advocacy groups, and trade schools — centers of self-governance.
  - **Black Press & Journalism:** Chicago Defender, Jet, Ebony, and countless outlets that informed, mobilized, and united communities.
  - **Community:** Mutual respect, neighborhood solidarity, safety, and economic support to ensure no one is left behind.
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## DEFENSE & GLOBAL IMPACT

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Defense of freedom and global influence demonstrate FBA resilience, sacrifice, and leadership.

- **Freedom Movements:** Generational struggle for liberation, civil rights, and sovereignty within hostile systems.
  - **Military & Defense:** Service in every U.S. war, asserting citizenship even when denied rights, contributing strategies, labor, and sacrifice.
  - **Influence:** Global shaping of language, fashion, art, activism, sports, and politics.
  - **Solidarity:** FBAs engage global Black communities with mutual respect and shared struggle, while affirming that our identity and reparative claims remain distinct and lineage-specific.
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## CULTURAL POSITION

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Foundational Black Americans (FBAs) carry a cultural lineage shaped inside the contradictions and violations of the United States. Our culture was forged through generations of survival, resistance, innovation, and contribution under conditions no other group endured — slavery, exclusion, extraction, displacement, and the constant need to create brilliance in the face of erasure.

This lineage is not defined by skin color, phenotype, racial grouping, or shared oppression. It is rooted in a specific historical formation within the borders of the United States. It cannot be borrowed, substituted, blended, or dissolved into pan-ethnic identities without causing harm.

Shared ancestry across the diaspora does not replace the need for cultural specificity. Lineage shapes experience, and experience shapes entitlement, responsibility, and repair. When specificity is lost, harm is repeated, history is blurred, and justice is redirected away from the people who paid the highest cost.

Protecting FBA culture is not exclusion — it is accountability. It is clarity. It is stewardship. And it ensures that what our ancestors built, preserved, and sacrificed for remains in the hands of the lineage that created it.

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