

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH



a booklist by the Main Library's Reference librarians

FICTION

Kindred by Octavia E. Butler

A contemporary mixed-race couple find themselves periodically and unpredictably pulled back into the most dangerous past imaginable for them—an ante-bellum Southern plantation.

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

The new Modern Library edition of this classic includes an excellent preface by Charles Johnson and an introduction by the author himself.

The Family by Buchi Emecheta

The African author's main character in this, her ninth novel published in the U.S., is a black Jamaican girl whose family emigrates to London and leaves her behind to follow later.

Cotton Comes to Harlem by Chester Himes

This groundbreaking mystery is probably Himes' most famous novel—perhaps because of the movie made from it—and will lead you to the rest of his Harlem Cycle and even to his unjustly neglected literary fiction.

Black Water Rising by Attica Locke

Houston, 1981: a struggling Black lawyer reluctantly confronts his radical past and an even older family tragedy when he rescues a mysterious white woman from drowning.

Public Enemy #2: An All-New Boondocks Collection by Aaron McGruder

Pre-teen Black radical Huey Freeman and his little brother Riley star in not-just-another collection of cartoons—this includes strips banned from some newspapers.

Mama Day by Gloria Naylor

Naylor borrows from Garcia Marquez and Shakespeare to tell her tale of the people of an imaginary island that is not quite in America but is definitely in the South and far from New York.



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Wizard of the Crow by Ngugi wa Thiong'o

In this sprawling comedy examining the troubled dictator of the fictitious Free Republic of Aburiria, the author drew on folk tales and oral literature from Africa, as well as the examples of Pinochet and Suharto.

Drinking Coffee Elsewhere by ZZ Packer

Making use of Packer's years at Yale, the title story appeared in the 2000 Debut Fiction issue of *The New Yorker*. This volume's other stories prove that she has much to say about race, sex, and gender.

Some Sing, Some Cry by Ntozake Shange and Ifa Bayeza

Sisters Shange and Bayeza orchestrate a multigenerational saga of the Mayfield women, who find redemption in music over the long journey from Emancipation to the present.

Uncle Tom's Children by Richard Wright

This, Richard Wright's first published work, launched his career. Our copy includes the essay ("Living Jim Crow") and a story ("Bright and Morning Star") that Wright added to the original collection of four novellas.

NONFICTION

Ardency: A Chronicle of the Amistad Rebels

by Kevin Young

Conjuring an array of historical characters, Young delivers an epic built on the ironies, violence, and virtues of American history. *POETRY* Young, Kevin *Ardency* 2011

The Black Digital Elite: African American Leaders of the Information Revolution by John T. Barber

Find inspiration in the life stories of 26 African Americans who, by their innovative work with electronic resources, cast light across the digital divide. 305.52 B233bL

Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975

Never before seen footage of Black Power leaders like Angela Davis, the SNCC's Stokely Carmichael, and Black Panthers founders Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale make this an essential Civil Rights time capsule. DVD 305.8 BLA

How to Be Black by Baratunde Thurston

Beyond comedy or memoir, this guidebook, by a writer for the *Onion* offers practical advice on everything from "How to Be the Black Friend" to "How to be the (Next) Black President" to "How to Celebrate Black History Month." 305.896 Thurston

Man in the Music: The Creative Life and Work of Michael Jackson by Joseph Vogel

Spike Lee raves that this title "has brilliantly cracked the DNA, the code of the work, the artistry of Michael Joseph Jackson. This is the book I have been long awaiting -- a pointed, intelligent dissection of an epic body of work." 781.64 Jackson

The Other Brahmins: Boston's Black Upper Class, 1750-1950 by Adelaide M. Cromwell

A study of an important Boston community, with a lengthy section devoted to comparing the lives and opinions of black and white upper-class women in the 1940s. 974.46 C88o

Our Black Year: One Family's Quest to Buy Black in America's Racially Divided Economy by Maggie Anderson with Ted Gregory

Our Black Year is a blistering journal of the Andersons's efforts to buy only from black-owned businesses for a year. 330.973 Anderson

Phillis Wheatley: Biography of a Genius in Bondage by Vincent Carretta

Enjoy at last the first full biography of the 'Mother' of the African American tradition in poetry. 811.1 Wheatley

Slave Narratives

Ten narratives from famous authors such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, lesser-known works by others such as Sojourner Truth and Olaudah Equiano, and the all-but-lost James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw. 326 SL16Lib

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