

POETRY

Brown, Jericho. *The Tradition.*

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, 2020, Brown has written poems of blackness, queerness, trauma, fatherhood, and legacy.

Clark, Tiana. *I Can't Talk About the Trees Without the Blood.*

The poet reflects the pain of African Americans in her poetry.

Gay, Ross. *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude.*

Winner of the National Book Critics Award for Poetry, and Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award.

Giovanni, Nikki. *The Collected Poems of Nikki Giovanni.*

Giovanni is one of the most celebrated and influential poets of the 1960's, and her work has endured the test of time.

Girmay, Aracelis. *Kingdom Animalia.*

Through Aracelis Girmay's lens, everything is animal: the sea, a jukebox, the desert. These are poems about what is both difficult and beautiful about our time here on earth.

Jess, Tyehimba. *Olio.*

A number of sonnets celebrate the performance of musicians.

Lorde, Audre. *The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde.*

Lorde has a special place in a generation of African American women poets. She was a self styled "black lesbian mother warrior poet", and matriarch of the North American lesbian feminist movement.

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen: an American Lyric.*

Citizen is a powerful testament to the individual and collective effects of racism in our contemporary, often named 'post-race' society.

ADULT FICTION

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *The Water Dancer.*

Hiram is saved from a drowning by a strange gift; a blue light that lifts him up and takes him a mile away. Hiram, leaves his plantation home, only to want to return to free the family he left behind. First, he must master his precious gift to take on slavery, and help his loved ones.

Cole, Alyssa. *An Extraordinary Union.*

A Massachusetts woman trades her life of freedom to return to the South and slavery to spy for the Union Army.

Fisher, Rudolph. *The Conjure-Man Dies.*

The first detective novel written by an African American.

Gyasi, Yaa. *Homegoing.*

The story of two half sisters: one will marry an English Colonel and will live in comfort, the other will be sold in slavery in America. Stretching from the tribal wars of Ghana to slavery and civil war in America, coal mines in the North, to the great migration in 20th Century Harlem.

Kincaid, Jamaica. *Lucy.*

A coming of age story in which a teenager comes to America from the West Indies discovers her sexuality and new adventures.

Morrison, Toni. *Sula.*

Nel and Sula grow up best of friends; one becomes a pillar of the black community, the other a pariah. Their friendship endures until a betrayal pulls them apart.

Pink, Randi. *Angel of Greenwood.*

Two African-American teenagers with different ideas on how blacks can achieve their goals, are brought together when their teacher offers them a job in a mobile library. Life changes when a vicious white mob storms their community in the area of Tulsa, OK known as the Black Wall Street.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH Recommended Books



Black
History
Month



Belmont Public Library
366 Concord Avenue
Belmont, MA 02478
617-489-2000
belmontpubliclibrary.net

MEMOIRS/NON-FICTION

Abdurrahaquib, Hanif. *A Little Devil in America.*

A history and criticism of African-Americans in the performing arts, sports, writing, and comedy.

Ball, Erica. *Madam C.J. Walker: Making of an American Icon.*

Madam C.J. Walker is reputed to be America's first self-made woman millionaire. Born to former slaves, she rose to become one of the most famous African-American figures in the nation as the owner and President of a hair care company.

Blain, Keisha N. *Until I Am Free.*

The story of a key political thinker and civil rights leader, she refused to be sidelined by others in the movement that had more social status. Her words and actions still ring true to the ideal's of "equality and justice for all."

Brown-Nagin, Tomiko. *Civil Rights Queen.*

The story of the first black woman to argue a case before the Supreme Court, and the only black woman member in the legal team at the NAACP.

Broome, Brian. *Punch Me Up to the Gods.*

A New York Times Editor's Pick and Winner of the Kirkus Prize. A poetic coming of age memoir about blackness and growing up gay in the 1970's and addiction.

Bunn, Curtis. *Say Their Names.*

Five journalists look at the disparities facing Black America, while proposing necessary next steps to move forward.

Cartwright, Keith Ryan. *Black Cowboys of the Rodeo.*

The story of African-American cowboys against the backdrop of reconstruction, and Jim Crow, told by the cowboys themselves..

Cerami, Charles. *Banneker: Surveyer, Astonomer, Publisher, Patriot.*

The first biography of Benjamin Banneker, a self-taught mathematical genius, who achieved status as an astronomer, navigator, and engineer. He was instrumental in planning Washington, D.C. and was an abolitionist.

Foner, Philip. *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619-1981.*

The history of organized labor and Black workers.

Gates, Henry Lewis. *The African-American Century.*

Provides a history of 20th century African Americans in several disciplines including , performing arts, sports, literature, law, and politics.

Hannah-Jones, Nikole. *The 1619 Project.*

The 1619 Project illustrates the origin of the United States is based on slavery, when 30 enslaved people from Africa arrived in Jamestown in August of 1619. The work places the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the center of the story of America.

Harris, Jessica. *High on the Hog: a Culinary Journey From Africa to America.*

Foods, techniques, and ceremonies of the African continent in the diaspora.

Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl.*

Jacobs, Harriet A. (Harriet Ann), 1813-1897 In one of the most significant slave narratives ever written, Harriet Jacobs, born a slave to mulatto parents in 1813 North Carolina, recounts her remarkable story of emancipation, and her extraordinary courage.

Kendi, Ibram X. *Stamped from the beginning: a Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America.*

Kendi illustrates the lives of 5 famous American intellectuals: Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, W.E.B. DuBois, and Angela Davis. Each of these proslavery and pro-civil rights thinkers have challenged or helped spread racist ideas in America.

McGhee, Heather. *The Sum of Us. What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together.*

Illustrates how the whole economy suffers at the hands of racism, and how we can work together to overcome it.

Mayes, Kyle T. *An Afro-Indigenous History of the United States.*

Explores the relationship and differences between Black American fight for freedom, and the Native American fight for sovereignty in the United States.

Pryde, Jessica. *Black Loves Matters.*

Depicts the importance of Black love.

Snorton, Riley. *Black on Both Sides: a History of America's black and transgender people.*

Riley Snorton identifies multiple intersections between blackness and transness from the mid-nineteenth century to present-day anti-black and anti-trans legislation and violence.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns: the Epic Story of America's Great Migration.*

The story of the decades long migration of black citizens who fled the south for northern and western cities in search of a better life.

Wills, Shomari. *Black Fortunes*
The story of Black millionaires, 1830-1927.