

## 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.

**Jones, Ashley M. *Reparations Now*.**

In formal and non-traditional poems, award-winning poet Ashley M. Jones calls for long-overdue reparations to the Black descendants of enslaved people in the United States of America.

**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.

## ADULT FICTION

**Asim, Jabari. *Yonder*.**

Cato and William meet at Placid Hall, a plantation in an unspecified part of the American South. Subject to the whims of their tyrannical and eccentric captor, Cannonball Greene, they never know what harm may befall them: inhumane physical toil in the plantation's quarry by day, a beating by night, or the sale of a loved one at any moment.

**Black, Daniel. *Don't Cry For Me*.**

A Black father makes amends with his gay son through letters written on his deathbed in this wise and penetrating novel of empathy and forgiveness, for fans of Ta-Nehisi Coates, Robert Jones Jr. and Alice Walker.

**Johnson, Jocelyn Nicole. *My Monticello*.**

A young woman descended from Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings driven from her neighborhood by a white militia. A university professor studying racism by conducting a secret social experiment on his own son. A single mother desperate to buy her first home even as the world hurtles toward catastrophe. Each fighting to survive in America.

**Jones, Gayl. *Palmares*.**

The epic rendering of a Black woman's journey through slavery and liberation, set in 17th-century colonial Brazil; the return of a major voice in American literature.

**Morrison, Toni. *Recitatif*.**

A beautiful, arresting story about race and the relationships that shape us through life by the legendary Nobel Prize winner—for the first time in a beautifully produced stand-alone edition, **with an introduction by Zadie Smith**.

**Wilkerson, Charmaine. *Black Cake*.**

Two estranged siblings delve into their mother's hidden past—and how it all connects to her traditional Caribbean black cake—in this immersive family saga, "a character-driven, multigenerational story that's meant to be savored."

## BLACK HISTORY: Recommended Books



BELMONT  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

Belmont Public Library  
366 Concord Avenue  
Belmont, MA 02478  
617-489-2000  
[belmontpubliclibrary.net](http://belmontpubliclibrary.net)

## MEMOIRS/NON-FICTION

**Blay, Zeba. *Carefree Black Girls*.**

An exploration and celebration of black women's identity and impact on pop culture, as well as the enduring stereotypes they face, from a film and culture critic for *HuffPost*.

**Brown, Adrienne Marie. *Pleasure Activism*.**

How do we make social justice the most pleasurable human experience? How can we awaken within ourselves desires that make it impossible to settle for anything less than a fulfilling life? Editor adrienne maree brown finds the answer in something she calls "pleasure activism," a politics of healing and happiness that explodes the dour myth that changing the world is just another form of work.

**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.

**Bryant, Terry. *Black Food*.**

A beautiful, rich, and groundbreaking book exploring Black foodways within America and around the world, curated by food activist and author of *Vegetable Kingdom* Bryant Terry.

**Evans, William. *Black Nerd Problems*.**

Evans and Holmon have built a large, dedicated fanbase eager for their brand of cultural critiques, whether in the form of a laugh-out-loud, raucous *Game of Thrones* episode recap or an eloquent essay on dealing with grief through stand-up comedy. Now, they are ready to take the next step with this vibrant and hilarious essay collection, which covers everything from X-Men to Breonna Taylor with "alternately hilarious, thought-provoking, and passionate.

**Giddings, Paula. *Ida: A Sword Among Lions*.**

From a thinker who Maya Angelou has praised for shining "a brilliant light on the lives of women left in the shadow of history," comes the definitive biography of Ida B. Wells—crusading journalist and pioneer in the fight for women's suffrage and against segregation and lynchings

**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.

**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.

**Lewis-Giggets, Tracey. *Black Joy*.**

In this essay collection, Tracey Michae'l-Giggets celebrates Black joy as a tool for resilience, a weapon of resistance, and a challenge to the narrative that being Black is solely a life of trauma and challenges.

**Parker, Wheeler. *A Few Days Full of Trouble*.**

The last surviving witness to the lynching of Emmett Till tells his story, with poignant recollections of Emmett as a boy, critical insights into the recent investigation, and powerful lessons for racial reckoning, both then and now.

**Perry, Imani. *South To America*.**

This nonfiction history book is an essential guide to the complex Southern history and culture that weaves together countless stories and offers hope for a more humane future than seen in our Southern past.

**Taylor, Goldie. *The Love You Save*.**

Goldie Taylor's debut memoir shines a light on the strictures of race, class and gender in a post-Jim Crow America while offering a nuanced, empathetic portrait of a family in a pitched battle for its very soul.

**Whitaker, Mark. *Saying It Loud*.**

In gripping, novelistic detail, *Saying It Loud* tells the story of how the Black Power phenomenon began to challenge the traditional civil rights movement in the turbulent year of 1966.

**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.

**Williams, Kidada. *I Saw Death Coming*.**

In *I Saw Death Coming*, Kidada E. Williams offers an account of the much-debated Reconstruction period, transporting readers into the daily existence of formerly enslaved people building hope-filled new lives.

**Woo, Ilyon. *Master Slave Husband Wife*.**

The remarkable true story of Ellen and William Craft, who escaped slavery through daring, determination, and disguise, with Ellen passing as a wealthy, disabled White man and William posing as "his" slave.