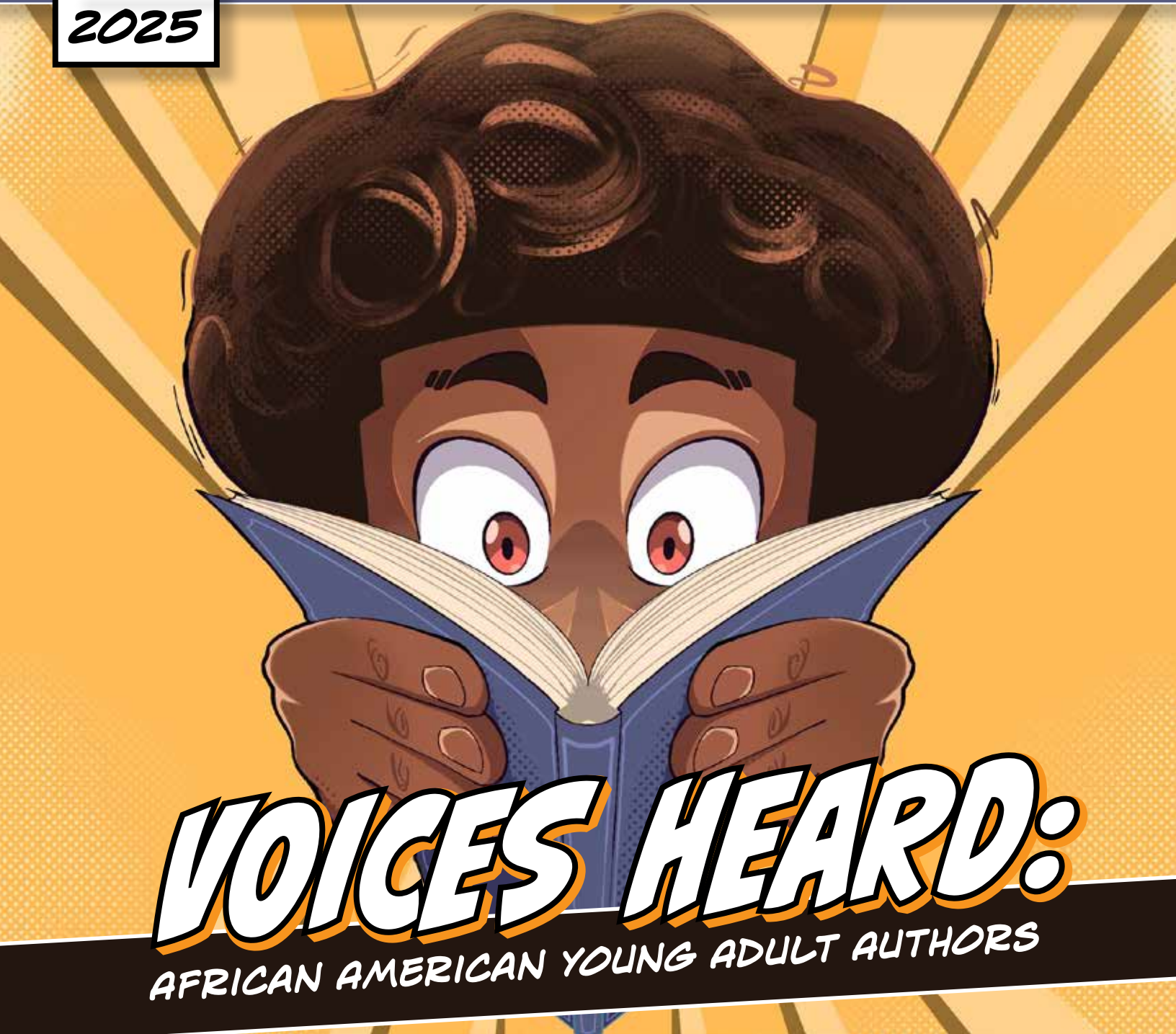
DETROIT PUBLIC LIBRARY

2025

AFRICAN AMERICAN BOOKLIST



VOICES HEARD:

AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUNG ADULT AUTHORS

2025 AFRICAN AMERICAN BOOKLIST

The Detroit Public Library has published its African American Booklist for more than 50 years. This bibliography provides a selected list of books by and/or about African Americans. The works of fiction and nonfiction for adults, children and young adults were reviewed and recommended by librarians of the Detroit Public Library.

The African American Booklist began as a way to commemorate Black History Month and since that time has continued to feature the accomplishments of African Americans in the literary world. Our booklist has become an annual tradition in the community and beyond, and continues to be a highly anticipated publication for book lovers all across the nation.



COVER ART: KYLE BLESSETT

Kyle Blessett is a young Detroit artist who has been drawing since childhood. He continues to study and develop his style. A fan of public libraries, he was eager to contribute to this year's Booklist. His art appears throughout the publication and is influenced by manga and comics. A perfect complement to our theme of young adult literature.

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BLACK NATIONAL ANTHEM

LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING

Lyrics by: James Weldon Johnson
(1871-1938)

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the listening skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us,
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand.
True to our God,
True to our native land.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



PHOTO CREDIT:
KATHRYN DOWGIEWICZ

While our African American Booklist has been published annually for more than 50 years, this year marks the tenth year of the current format. I am especially thankful for the many scholars, local and national, who have contributed insightful essays that highlight the expansive world of African American literature.

Our 2025 Booklist, "Voices Heard: African American Young Adult Authors," focuses on literature specifically for young people ages 12-18. These authors' stories meet a critical need for many. Books that feature characters and stories about African Americans that young people relate to can be enlightening and sometimes life changing. We thank Dr. Pauletta Brown Bracy, Associate Professor in the School of Library and Information Science at North Carolina Central University, for this informative historical overview of the development of literature for African American teens. We also thank Ms. Deborah Taylor, former Young Adult Coordinator at the Enoch Pratt Free Library, who has provided the comprehensive milestone titles that are "must reads."

New York Times bestselling author, Denene Millner's revealing interview of metro Detroit native author, Ebony LaDelle, includes how Detroit has influenced LaDelle's creativity. And, we are pleased to present the work of Kyle Blessett, a young Detroit artist whose comic/manga graphics capture the wide-eyed energy of teens who cannot put down a good book!

A sincere thank you goes to the members of the adult and juvenile/teens literature selection committees for their outstanding work in the development of the "best of lists" for fiction and non-fiction. Of special interest is the listing of recently published teen titles – fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels – the genre has much to offer to readers of all ages. Last but not least, thank you to the production team for their eye appealing creative design of this year's Booklist.

Please visit the Detroit Public Library in-person or online www.detroitpubliclibrary.org.

Yours for reading,

Jo Anne G. Mondowney

Jo Anne G. Mondowney
Executive Director



EBONY LADELLE:

DETROIT INFLUENCES HER CREATIVITY

BY DENENE MILLNER

OH little Ebony LaDelle had friends, sure, and they did all the kid things—bike-riding through the inner-ring suburban Detroit cities of Oak Park and Southfield most memorably. But the self-proclaimed introvert's heart would beat fastest from the backseat of her mother's car, particularly when its headlights were winding their way to the local library. The conversations with her mother about the books she'd found the last time they'd gone, the anticipation of what she'd find once they arrived, it was the height of excitement for Ebony, whose very best friends—books—lived on shelf-upon-stately shelf in her favorite place in all the world. Those friends—*The Boxcar Children*, and the *Goosebumps* series and *The Babysitters Club* collection, among others—they all taught. They encouraged. They shined a light. "Once the evening came, I was in the books or driving in the car with my mom with a book, or reading with friends," said LaDelle. "It was just one of those comfort things for me, sort of like a blankie."

Books, reading also taught little Ebony to dream big. So enamored was she by words on a page that in elementary school, a bio she wrote to accompany a poem she penned for class, entitled, "The Garden of Eden," about her grandmother's garden, read straight into the future like an Audre Lorde tome—predicted Ebony's "I am."

"My bio said, 'One day, I hope to publish one of my stories or poems,'" she recalled. "I just knew I always loved [books] and maybe one day, I'd get the courage to [write them], too. They truly were special to me."

And so came what she divined, in the form of *Love Radio*, LaDelle's young adult debut. Set in Detroit, the 2022 novel tells the story of Prince Jones, an aspiring deejay and hopeless romantic who helms a dating advice segment on a popular hip hop radio station, and Dani Ford, a high school senior with her eyes trained so hard on a scholarship to college in New York City and a career as a writer that the last thing on her mind is falling in love with some boy. The hook: Dani grants the love expert exactly three dates to win her heart or leave her be. The chase ensues.

It is a story LaDelle says came natural to her because it was personal. "Dani has parts of young Ebony, or at least I conceptualized her with me in mind," she said. "I wanted a character who was afraid to write and had a solid family and managed life's difficulties in her own special way." Prince, she added, is a "Black, teenage version of me," with elements of Black girls I knew and know that make us wonderful humans." Ultimately, she said, "it felt so nice to have people completely fall in love with these characters and be touched by how I captured the city."

LADELLE (CON'T)



Detroit found its footing as a third character in the book, based, LaDelle said, on her memories of growing up near the city and spending time with her father's family on Detroit's east side, listening to radio shows like "Mason in the Morning," and deejays like Rickey Smiley and Tom Joyner. "I thought about the celebrity gossip, the hilarious pranks and the love advice, and I knew then that's how I wanted Prince to give love advice. And once that was determined, I realized I couldn't write this story without it being set in Detroit."

Indeed, *Love Radio*, gave LaDelle exactly what she manifested in her childhood bio and so much more; with a star turn on the *Today* show, her novel took bookshelves by storm, having been named a 2023 Michigan Notable Book, a *People* magazine's Best Book of the Summer, a 2023 Audie Award Finalist, an Amazon Editor's Pick and an Apple Books' best book of 2022.

In May, LaDelle brings yet another "friend" to bookshelves when her latest YA novel, *This Could Be Forever*, debuts. Much like *Love Radio*, her latest work is a love story that explores human connection and all its complications, this time between a Black college-bound girl who wants to be a scientist and business owner, and a Nepali teen boy, an artist at heart whose dreams of being a tattoo artist are challenged by his parents' insistence he pursue a career in engineering. LaDelle said her goal with *This Could Be Forever* was to show, through a growing romance, the similarities between two people from different cultures and backgrounds.

"For instance," she noted, "both families in this book have an affinity for gardening, and they connect through food. They both value their religions and tradition, but sometimes that can get in the way of being a fair and good human being, and so I wanted to touch upon that. But mainly I wanted to show through both families their hesitation to accept the relationship because of their own fears and ways in which they want to protect their kids."

She acknowledged the "love between cultures" theme presents a subject worth the exploration, particularly in a political and social

climate where the lines between us all are becoming darker, deeper and so much more defined. How, exactly, does love find its way over, around, under and through? "I think when writing it and considering everything happening in today's climate, I was trying to write through ways it can be possible through a love story. Because I definitely had those questions myself, and still do."

LaDelle's journey to becoming a critically-acclaimed author was travelled on a windy road through the publishing industry; she found her way to the trade first as a student employee at Howard University's campus book store, where, she said, she "learned about the publishing industry through a Black lens first." Working in the bookstore's marketing department and meeting Black publicists at the store's book events helped her understand the behind-the-scenes world of publishing, "and I knew then," she added, "I wanted to be part of it."

Her gig at Howard gave LaDelle the confidence to work in the industry as a marketer; she got her start at Simon & Schuster, the company that would later go on to publish her novels, and worked in both the children's and adult's genres at several other companies over the course of a decade before working exclusively in the children's space. "It's something so magical being part of making something special for children," LaDelle said, noting that her goal was to help that audience feel "seen and respected" in the same way she felt when she saw herself in books like Sharon Draper's *Skin Like Me*. "That has such a power," she said.

Being in marketing did not come without its challenges. LaDelle said she had a time trying to get publishers to understand the benefits of thinking outside the traditional marketing box. "But I feel like once I got approval to do innovative marketing ideas and they worked out, the satisfaction of the work paying off and the books getting into the hands of the right readers truly was triumphant."

LaDelle has since employed a deep reach into the industry, working not only as an author and marketer, but also a podcaster, speaker and presenter, giving her a deep and rich reach into the industry. Floating between the roles comes easy to LaDelle—"Maybe it's me being a Gemini… I love pushing myself and trying new things, because I feel like I grow so much from it, even if it's not my thing." But it's her love of YA and dedication to it that stands tallest—meant not just for teens, but for everyone, especially Black readers.

"I am writing the stories thinking of teens," she said. "In many ways, I make them a bit more mature for their age, so that I can sprinkle some lessons in there. But after I started to do virtual book clubs and hearing women talk about how this book healed their childhood selves, it really helped me appreciate the *everyone* part. I love that I can help do that. It's really special." Black YA stories "represent us and humanize us and our experiences." ■



DENENE MILLNER IS AN AUTHOR, EDITOR, TELEVISION AND PODCAST HOST, AND JOURNALIST. SHE HAS WRITTEN AND COLLABORATED ON MORE THAN 30 BOOKS, SEVERAL OF WHICH HAVE APPEARED ON THE *NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLERS LIST*. SHE IS THE CREATOR AND DIRECTOR OF DENENE MILLNER BOOKS, AN IMPRINT OF SIMON & SCHUSTER.



HAVING OUR SAY:

VOICES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUNG ADULT AUTHORS

BY: PAULETTA BROWN BRACY AND DEBORAH TAYLOR

AS I DISCOVERED WHO I WAS, A BLACK TEENAGER IN A WHITE-DOMINATED WORLD, I SAW THAT THESE CHARACTERS, THESE LIVES, WERE NOT MINE. I DIDN'T WANT TO BECOME A "BLACK" REPRESENTATIVE, OR SOME SHINING EXAMPLE OF DIVERSITY. WHAT I WANTED, NEEDED REALLY, WAS TO BECOME AN INTEGRAL AND VALUED PART OF THE MOSAIC THAT I SAW AROUND ME. - *WALTER DEAN MYERS, 2014.*

Walter Dean Myers (1937-2014), a luminary in African American literature, was primarily a writer of young adult books. He wrote over one hundred books, including picture books and non-fiction. He served as the third United States National Ambassador for Young People's Literature in 2012 and 2013. The Library of Congress presents this prestigious literary honor to an author or illustrator who is a United States citizen and has substantially contributed to young people's literature.

The quote from author and activist Myers best captures the topic of this essay, "Having Our Say: Voices of African American Young Adult Authors" for it defines the essence and urgency of a relatively young category of literature reflecting connections to African American adult literature and the voices of young adult literature. Its intrinsic value for use in school and public libraries has been described as literature that can provide Black young adults with a means of transcending racism and segregation, can lead to self-discovery, and can help them eliminate whatever sense of isolation or alienation they may have. It can also help them overcome entrenched personal problems.[1] Nor can the need for it be understated. For African American young adults to appreciate literature, their sensibilities must be tapped in realistic and authentic ways. These sensibilities are best tapped by writers of **African American Young Adult Literature** who write with creativity

1 Collins, Carol Ann. "A Tool for Change: Adult Literature in the Lives of Young Adult African Americans." *Library Trends,* Winter, 41, no. 3 (1993): p. 378.

and candor, speaking directly to the African American experience in its varied dimensions and perspectives. African American literature for young adults is defined as literature *by* and *about* African Americans created for young adults 12-18 years of age.

We will begin with a history of African American young adult literature, then provide a view of its evolution through selected titles published during the decades, and conclude with a discussion about issues of interest in the field.

CONNECTION TO AFRICAN AMERICAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



Mrs. A. E. Johnson
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library

In the wider literary landscape, young adult literature did not appear until the 1930s because until that time, teens were still widely regarded as children and there was no separate category of literature specifically targeted at them.[2] *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott and *Ragged Dick* by Horatio Alger, Jr. published in 1868, were considered to be the first writers for young adults to gain national attention.[3] Series fiction such as *The Hardy Boys* and *Nancy Drew*, among others, followed in the 1920s and 1930s, but it was not until 1942 that the publication of Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer* appeared to certify the legitimacy of the literature. The hugely successful story of a teenage summer love had been the defining launch of a new genre and establishment of the category of young adult literature. The books of the 1940s and 1950s continued to focus on romance for girls and other genre fiction for boys who read car books, science fiction, and novels of adventure, sports and animals.[4]

A discussion about the beginnings of African American young adult literature must give homage to early children's literature, its predecessor. Children's literature serves the important role of mediator between children, cultural knowledge, and socialization by adults. Moreover, because children's literature has long maintained this traditional role in society it possesses both symbolic and real power.[5]

African American children's literature may have had its beginnings in the 19th-century newspapers and periodicals published by Black religious and secular organizations and activist individuals.[6] A notable example, *The Christian Recorder*, published between 1854 and 1964, was a forum

2 Cart, Michael. *Young Adult Literature: From Romance to Realism.* 3rd ed. Neal-Schuman, 2016, p. 8.

3 Neilsen, Alleen Pace, James Blassingame, Don Nilsen, and Kenneth L Donaldson. *Literature for Today's Young Adults.* 9th ed., 2012, p. 37.

4 Cart, p. 20.

5 Harris, Violet J. *The Journal of Negro Education 59*, no. 4 (1990): p. 541.

6 Bishop, Rudine Sims. *Free Within Ourselves: The Development of African American Children's Literature.* Greenwood Press, 2007, p. 10.

for news and views related to the A.M.E. Church. Features in the paper during this period were about family-marriage, parenting, and the welfare of children. An early editorial in the paper addressed a present crisis of ensuring the proper education and training of children, specifically African American children. Material contained in the children's column was from well-known white authors such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Hans Christian Anderson. African American contributors likely produced the unsigned or unattributed works. Many stories were moralistic or religious cautionary tales. Poems for and about children ranged from the sentimental to the didactic to the nonsensical.[7]

According to African American children's literature scholar Violet Harris[8], in an overview of the first one hundred years of African American children's literature, the first literature appeared in 1890 with the publication of *Clarence and Corrine; or, God's Way*, the story about a sister and brother who overcome poverty to succeed in productive careers, by Mrs. A.E. Johnson. Johnson, regarded by many scholars to be the first African American woman to publish a novel for children, had previously launched a magazine, considered to be the first African American periodical for children, entitled *The Joy* which was devoted exclusively to imaginative (fiction) literature. A second magazine for children called *The Ivy* focused on Black history.[9] "The implicit purpose of the novel was not necessarily to entertain but to promote piety, obedience, refinement, and morality among children and convince them of the virtues of achieving stable middle-class status and sensibility."[10] These developments occurring between 1890 to 1900 have been referred to as the beginnings of a new tradition, so defined because it was a period purposely countering the literature of the past that was greatly saturated with stereotypes and misrepresentations of African Americans.

"IT IS IMPERATIVE TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEEDS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUNG ADULTS TO SEE THEMSELVES IN BOOKS..."

The next era, 1900-1920, was marked by "oppositional texts," works that contradicted a theme, motive, or stereotype, continuing the efforts begun in the previous decade. A significant development during this time was the publication of *The Brownies' Book* by DuBois and Dill, a publishing company formed by sociologist and civil rights activist W.E.B. DuBois and Augustus G. Dill, a fellow sociologist and civil rights organizer. Edited by Jessie Fauset, the periodical for children contained fiction, folk tales, biographies, poetry, drama, and news, all with a purpose: "1.To make colored children realize that being colored is a normal beautiful thing; 2.To make them familiar with the history and the achievements of the Negro race; 3.To make them know that other colored children have grown into beautiful, useful, and famous persons; 4.To teach them delicately a code of honor and action in their relations with white children; 5.To turn their little hearts and resentments into emulation, ambition and love of their homes and companions; 6.To point out the best amusements and joys and worthwhile things of life; and 7. To inspire them to prepare for definite occupations and duties with a broad spirit of sacrifice."[11] The magazine was published for only two years, from January 1920 through December 1921.

7 Bishop, p. 11,12.

8 Harris, p. 541.

9 Bishop, p. 16.

10 Harris, p. 543.

11 DuBois, W.E.B. "The True Brownies." *The Crisis* 18, no. 6, 1919.

OUR SAY (CON'T)

During the 1930s and 1940s, historian and activist Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week (now observed as Black History Month), the Associated Publishers, and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. The Associated Publishers published several folklore collections, biographies, poetry anthologies, and histories explicitly designed to educate, entertain, and emancipate.[12] In addition, during this time, Woodson wrote *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, advocating for reform in the approach to educating African Americans.

Arna Bontemps, the renowned poet and novelist, emerged as a prominent figure during 1940 to 1970. Over two generations, his extensive body of work helped propel African American children's literature into the mainstream.[13] Bontemps has been characterized as the contemporary "father" of African American children's literature, in part, because his body of work represents the acceptance of African American children's literature among white publishers and readers and the continued expansion of the literature for African American children.[14] Books of this period were deemed "social conscience literature,"[15] because they seemed clearly intended to create a social conscience in "non-Afro American" readers, to encourage them to develop empathy, sympathy, and tolerance for "Afro-American" children and their problems.[16]

Other books could fit into the category of "melting pot" books which epitomized assimilation. These books "ignored all differences except physical ones: skin color and other racially related physical features."[17]

During the 1970s and beyond, writers have distinguished themselves because their works are decidedly African American in tone and range of content, and because the literary quality of the works equals and, in some cases, surpasses the quality of general children's literature.

Violet Harris concludes her examination, optimistic that African American children's literature will "remain an available, vibrant tradition, albeit one that remains unfairly neglected."[18] To date, the number of published titles of African American children's and young adult literature has sizably increased since Harris' work was published 34 years ago in 1990. However, the number of books written by African American authors is considerably less than titles published by white authors.

12 Harris, p. 548.

13 Harris, p. 548.

14 Harris, p. 548.

15 Sims, Rudine. *Shadow and substance: Afro-American experience in contemporary children's fiction.* Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English, 1982, p. 17.

16 Harris, p. 549.

17 Sims, p. 33.

18 Harris, p. 552.



Childhood in Colored America
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library

African American authors say their works are rejected by publishers because of a lack of understanding about the Black experience and a persistence by editors to control their narratives. Publishers' perceived (limited) market appeal is another issue facing aspiring African American authors. But some large publishers have made concerted efforts to attract and publish African American young adult authors through imprints established at their companies. Still, there is much work to do to ensure greater representation among the diverse voices.

This rich history of African American children's literature is the foundation upon which African American young adult literature stands and continues to thrive. As marketing analyses of publishers of books for young adults have revealed, there is a need to target the African American demographic. It is imperative to accommodate the needs of African American young adults to see themselves in books – to relate to characters and connect to experiences similarly as was the case for children in the evolution of African American children's literature. The following section highlights African American young adult books that have met the imperative with critical acclaim.

MILESTONE TITLES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

In the first decade (the 1970s) of contemporary Young Adult literature (YA), African American creators became important contributors to the field of Young Adult literature. Walter Dean Myers for ***Fast Sam, Cool Clyde and Stuff***, Mildred Taylor for ***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry***, James Haskins for ***The Story of Stevie Wonder,*** and Virginia Hamilton for ***Justice and Her Brothers***, were award winners and well received by readers. Each of these authors and titles served as forerunners of trends that grew and developed in African American YA literature. Myers affirms the bonds of friendship and showcases a group of teens who have few material things but who show incredible spirit. Taylor demonstrates the resistance of African American families in the face of relentless racism. In her award-winning novel, Mildred Taylor centers young people who are fortified by their parents' drive for self-determination. Recognizing the role of music in the lives of teens, James Haskins presents the life of an important musician working to overcome both racism and prejudice against the blind through solidly researched nonfiction. Virginia Hamilton provided an example of the African American literary fantasy that resonates with today's readers. These writers set high standards for appreciation of the various styles, approaches and formats that would highlight the African American experience.

THE 1980S

This decade saw a number of interesting developments in the field of African American children's books. Prominent themes continued to include realism, examination of history through the lens of the African American experience, and the retelling of folk tales. The decade began with recognition for Walter Dean Myers' ***The Young Landlords*** and ended with high praise for ***Fallen Angels***. Myers then went on to become the writer who has received the largest number of awards from the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Roundtable. This highly skilled and prolific writer won nearly every accolade available in the field, and he continued to create

OUR SAY (CON'T)

interesting and thought-provoking work for teen readers in a variety of genres until his death in 2014. Writers who had established themselves in the adult market were compelled to write for younger readers, such as Alice Childress with ***Rainbow Jordan***, and Julius Lester with ***This Strange New Feeling***. This was also a period of multiple recognitions for a writer who made an indelible mark on the field: Virginia Hamilton. Hamilton was the first African American to win a John Newbery Medal. The body of work she produced during this period was as varied as it was distinguished; there were realistic novels, such as ***A Little Love***, retellings of folktales such as ***The People Could Fly***, works of fantasy, such as ***The Magical Adventures of Pretty Pearl***, and historical biography such as ***Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave***. Before her death in 2002, Virginia Hamilton became the first children's writer awarded a MacArthur Foundation "genius" award.

"PARENTS OF WHITE CHILDREN MAY CENSOR AN AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUNG ADULT BOOK ABOUT SLAVERY OR RACIAL CONFLICT BECAUSE THESE BOOKS MAKE THEIR CHILDREN UNCOMFORTABLE."

THE 1990S

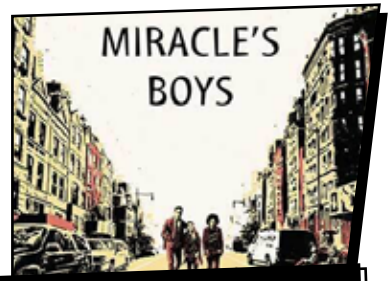
This decade continued to see authors responding to the themes of realism and historical fiction. Mildred Taylor explored the lives of Black families as World War II begins in ***The Road to Memphis*** while Walter Dean Myers continued to examine the reality of urban Black males in ***Slam!*** It was also a period when some focused on exploring the lives of prominent figures in Black history in ways that would interest young readers. Walter Dean Myers wrote about the charismatic leader in ***Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary.*** This decade saw a profusion of well researched and lively written nonfiction. ***A Long Hard Journey: The Story of the Pullman Porter*** by Patricia C. and Frederick L. McKissack provides insight into the struggle for equality that proceeded the Civil Rights movement; and Walter Dean Myers wove his family story into his compelling narrative in ***Now Is Your Time: The African American Struggle for Freedom.*** The novels recognized demonstrated a prominent level of sophistication in the storytelling and literary aspects. Angela Johnson received her first Coretta Scott King Author Award for ***Toning the Sweep***, a poetic multi-generational story of loss and reconciliation. Sharon Draper would begin her tenure as a popular writer with ***Forged by Fire***, a hard-hitting novel about a young man struggling with the gritty side of urban life. Rita Williams-Garcia used her considerable talent to uncover the humanity of a streetwise teen mother in ***Like Sisters on the Homefront***. Jacqueline Woodson's novel, ***If You Come Softly***, was an important work about the tragic outcome of a police shooting. Sharon Flake's ***The Skin I'm In***, an unflinching look at colorism in the Black community, heralded a willingness to include deep introspection in this work. Other trailblazing books were created by prominent African American writers. ***Monster***, by Walter Dean Myers, departed from traditional narrative and used the format of the character's screenplay to

engage teen readers. It also had the distinction of winning the first Michael L. Printz Award for literary achievement in a young adult novel.

2000-2010

In the first decade of the millennium, novels for teen readers continued to distinguish themselves. ***Miracle's Boys***, Jacqueline Woodson's novel of three brothers struggling to remain a family in the face of tremendous loss, further demonstrated her mastery of storytelling with spare lyrical prose. Three accomplished yet vastly different depictions of slavery were explored in Sharon Draper's ***Copper Sun***, Christopher Paul Curtis' ***Elijah of Buxton,*** and Joyce Hansen's ***The Captive***. Black writers deepened their exploration of the lives of young people, their families, and their communities. For example, Kekla Magoon's well-received first novel, ***The Rock, and the River***, explored the tensions that manifest in a family over the best way to fight for civil rights during the sixties. Magoon would build on that first success in subsequent novels. Writers also provided insight into the issues that teens were confronting in unique narratives. G. Neri's text for the graphic novel, ***Yummy***, took a hard-hitting look at the impact of gun violence and neglect of urban neighborhoods, while Walter Dean Myers explored the interior life of a young man in juvenile detention in ***Lockdown.*** Angela Johnson, who would be named a MacArthur Fellow, used a unique narrative form and strong voice to tell the story of a teen father in ***First Part Last***.

The amazing power of poetry to connect with young readers was on full display during this period. Nikki Grimes' novel in verse, ***Bronx Masquerade***, provides an emotional bond with its cast of high school characters. Marilyn Nelson, an established adult poet brought her considerable talents to the field, particularly for three of her unique collections: ***Carver: A Life in Poems, Fortune's Bones: The Manumission Requiem***, and ***A Wreath for Emmett Till***. Nelson used challenging poetic forms to illuminate challenging subjects in African American history.



Miracle's Boys
Jacqueline Woodson

2010-2024

The themes that formed the foundation of African American Young Adult Literature, authentic representation, honest depiction of historical figures and influences, and the significant role of African American culture in the world, maintained their position in the work of creators during this time. Graphic novels and nonfiction grew in YA literature and became a useful format for African American stories. The ***March*** trilogy in which the late U.S. Representative John Lewis and his collaborators used text and images to tell his role in the Civil Rights movement was both popular and critically acclaimed. The graphic memoir of Olympian Tommie Smith, ***Victory. Stand! Raising My Fist for Justice*** demonstrated the power of sports and social activism. The challenges of navigating a white private school are artfully depicted in Jerry Craft's ***New Kid*** and its sequels. Two of the most impactful Black YA writers, Jacqueline Woodson and Jason Reynolds, continued to build on the legacies of the early icons. Woodson's memoir ***Brown Girl Dreaming*** became one of the most highly honored titles of the era. Reynolds launched a well-received career, beginning with ***When I Was the Greatest***. Both followed in the footsteps of legendary Walter Dean Myers by serving as National Ambassador for Young People's Literature. In addition, both were selected as MacArthur Fellows. This period brought enormous success

OUR SAY (CON'T)

as well as challenges. First time novelist, Angie Thomas's ***The Hate You Give***, spent over 250 weeks on the *New York Times* Bestseller list (as of 2022) and became the focus of book bans because of its unflinching look at a police shooting. Black creators tackled issues of race and gender identity. Writers such as Kacen Callendar in ***King of the Dragonflies,*** Jas Hammond, in ***We Deserve Monuments***, and Leah Johnson in ***You Should See Me in a Crown*** told compelling stories of young people who are also LBGTQ. YA writers increasingly explored various genres such as thrillers, fantasy, Afrofuturism, and romance. Lamar Giles' ***Spin***, Tomi Adeyemi's ***Children of Blood and Bone***, Nicola Yoon's ***The Sun Is Also a Star***, and Namina Forna's ***The Gilded Ones*** delivered satisfying narratives that reflected the wide range of the Black experience. The YA "coming of age novel" added levels of complexity that reflected a growing determination to present a fully human and multifaceted teen. Works such as Jason Reynolds' ***Boy in the Black Suit***, Kwame Alexander's ***Solo***, and Renee Watson's ***Piecing Me Together***, are prime examples of this direction.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS



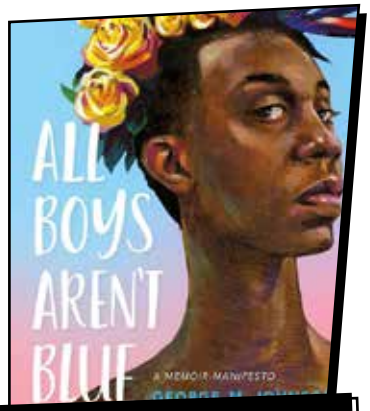
Banned and Challenged Books

According to the American Library Association (ALA), intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored.[19] Censorship is defined as a change in the access status of material, based on the content of the work and made by a governing authority or its representatives. Changes include exclusion, restriction, removal, or age/grade level changes and book banning (the removal of materials) continue to pervade the American way of life. Regretfully, it compromises one's right to "know and "grow." These acts to deny access to new knowledge for children and young adults can particularly affect their social and intellectual development. In their efforts as advocates for the freedom to read for all, two organizations monitor censorial and book-banning activity nationwide.

The ALA publishes an annual report of censorship in the United States. Data on reported incidents filed by librarians and attained from media reports are collected to track the activity of challenges to books and other resources in libraries throughout the country. In its latest report of 2024, the Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) documented books and resources during 2023**.** The number of titles targeted for censorship surged 65% in 2023 compared to 2022,

19 "Intellectual Freedom and Censorship Q & A." American Library Association, https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/faq

reaching the highest levels ever documented by OIF in more than 20 years of tracking: **4,240 unique book titles were targeted for removal from schools and libraries.**[20]



All Boys Aren't Blue
George M. Johnson

Of the "Top Ten Most Challenged Books of 2023," two African American titles appear on the list. They are *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson for "LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit" and Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, not specifically a young adult title but one that appears on reading lists in secondary schools, for reasons of "rape, incest, claimed to be sexually explicit, EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) content.[21]

Another organization monitoring efforts to ban books is PEN America,[22] founded over one hundred years ago to support writers in their work and defend their freedom to write. Since 2021, it has recorded incidents of book banning in public schools nationwide. For the 2023-2024 school year, it documented 10,046 cases of book banning.

For our purposes, the most compelling finding was that disproportionate to publishing rates and like prior school years, books in this prominent subset include books with people and characters of color at 44%, and books with LGBTQ+ people and characters at 39%.[23] Of the nineteen books banned in fifty or more school districts nationwide, two are by renowned African American writers: *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison and *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, both popular choices in English curricula. A sample of African American young adult literature authors appearing on the complete list of book bans are Jamie Adoff, Kwame Alexander, Tonya Bolden, Coe Booth, Dhionelle Clayton, Sharon Draper, Tiffany D. Jackson, Walter Dean Myers, Jason Reynolds, Angie Thomas, and Rita Williams-Garcia, some of who appear on the list of milestone titles.

Some observers have suggested that the controversies surrounding critical race theory (a way of analyzing systems, institutions, and power through a lens of race and racism) account for the increase in the number of challenges of books with characters of color. The reason for a challenge to a book may be "critical race theory" simply because its content is about African Americans and not specifically about the theory. Citing it as a reason to ban a book becomes a convenience for the individual who challenges a book or is successful in banning one. The current efforts to eliminate all DEI programs in schools is another factor related to the current rise in censorship. Parents of white children may censor an African American young adult book about slavery or racial conflict because these books make their children uncomfortable.

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20 "Censorship by the Numbers Banned Books." American Library Association https://www.ala.org/bbooks/censorship-numbers

21 "Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2023'." American Library Association https://www.ala.org/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10

22 "Banned in the USA: Beyond the Shelves." PEN America, https://pen.org/report/beyond-the-shelves/

23 "Banned in the USA."

OUR SAY (CON'T)

The beauty of African American young adult literature is its characteristic honesty and candor in captivating narratives, strong relatable characters, and honest dialogue. The authors write with authentic voice; they owe it to their readers to do so whether they are white or Black. *They keep it real.*

"A PRIMARY CRITERION FOR LITERARY MERIT SHOULD BE AUTHENTICITY IN EXPERIENCE AND VOICE."

Creators and consumers of African American literature for children and young adults have long argued for more diversity. A valuable source of statistics about the publication of African American young adult literature is the Center for Cooperative Children's Books Center (CCBC),[24] which since 1994, has been documenting books it has been receiving annually by and about Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). Between 1985 and 1993, the CCBC documented books by and about Black people only. In 2018, the CCBC began to document additional aspects of identity including disability, LGBTQ+, and religion. Its annual diversity report for 2023 is based on 3,491 books.

Findings revealed a modest increase in the share of books, including significant BIPOC content in 2023, meaning they have a primary or significant secondary character or human subject who is BIPOC, or the setting or topic of the book relates to BIPOC people or history. In 2023, 49% of the books documented had significant BIPOC content (up from 46% in 2022) and 40% had at least one BIPOC primary character (up from 39% in 2022).

On the other hand, the share of books having at least one creator (such as an author illustrator, or compiler) who is BIPOC was nearly identical to 2022. Forty percent of the books received in 2023 were by a person of color. This includes 18% that had at least one Asian creator, 13% that had at least one Black creator, and 11% that had at least one Latine creator. By comparison, 70% of the books the CCBC received had at least one white creator.

The fact that 70% of the books had at least one white creator is a source of significant contention. It raises the question of who is telling the story. It is the "insider" versus "outsider voices" lingering debate. Who should portray the African American experience? "Storytelling from Black perspectives could not be more important. Stories sustain us through oppression, transmit our ancient and precious traditions through all kinds of adversity, and create palimpsests with traces just beyond our fingertips. Stories that move beyond the shadows to become known across the world are always connected to power, positioning, and privilege."[25]

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24 "CCBC's Diversity Statistics Show Small Changes in Number of Diverse Books for Children and Teens Published Last Year." Cooperative Children's Book Center. Cooperative Children's Book Center, April 3, 2024.

25 Thomas, Ebony Elizabeth. "Young Adult Literature for Black Lives: Critical and Storytelling Traditions from the African Diaspora." The International Journal of Young Adult Literature 1, no. 1 (November 2, 2020): 1–15.

White writers defend their right to write "outside of the culture." However, writers like Hamilton [Virginia] and Julius Lester, Patricia McKissick, and John Steptoe, among others who have made a lifetime choice of listening to collecting and transmitting the stories of their own culture, reveal that it *does* matter who tells the stories. They are the ones who know the stories firsthand from their own family and community storytelling traditions. They are the ones who have heard and internalized the language patterns and the cultural transmissions. They are also the ones who often spend long hours searching out the long-hidden or forgotten African American and African sources for new tellings. They are the ones with the cultural imperative to do the telling and to get it *right*.[26]

A primary criterion for literary merit should be authenticity in experience and voice. The voices of African American writers can *better* relate to their experiences than those outside of the culture who attempt to share the African American experience in "their own words." A writer outside of the culture can only legitimately tell a story in another voice as an observer of the culture and should represent his or her story as such.

Young adult African American literature continues to expand and justify itself as a viable genre as more writers of color are published. The literature offers young adult African Americans opportunities to see themselves in books and validate their existence in Walter Dean Myers' mosaic as integral and valued parts. The voices of African American writers of young literature help them do just that.

26 Mikkelsen, Nina. "Insiders, Outsiders, and the Question of Authenticity: Who Should Write for African American Children?" African American Review 32, no. 1 (1998): 33–49.



Pauletta Brown Bracy is a professor in the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University. Her areas of expertise are children's and young adult literature and school media librarianship with foci on authentic representation and cultural diversity in children's and young adult literature.

She is a graduate of Fisk University, The University of Pittsburgh, and The University of Michigan.



Deborah Taylor retired as Coordinator of School and Student Services for the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland. She was a recipient of the Coretta Scott King/Virginia Hamilton Award for Lifetime Achievement, has served on many book award committees and is currently a reviewer and moderator for young people's literature.

MILESTONE TITLES IN AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

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Alexander, Kwame. ***Solo***. 2019.

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Craft, Jerry. ***New Kid***. 2019.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. ***Elijah of Buxton***. 2007.

Draper, Sharon. ***Copper Sun***. 2006.

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Flake, Sharon. ***The Skin I'm In***. 1998.

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Giles, Lamar. ***Spin***. 2019.

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Hammond, Jas. ***We Deserve Monuments***. 2022.

Hamilton, Virginia. ***A Little Love***. 1984.

_____. ***Anthony Burns: The Defeat and Triumph of a Fugitive Slave***. 1988.

_____. ***Justice and Her Brothers***. 1978.

_____. ***The Magical Adventures of Pretty Pearl***. 1983.

_____. ***The People Could Fly***. 1985.

Hansen, Joyce. ***The Captive***. 1995.





JOHN LEWIS
THE MARCH TRILOGY

Haskins, James. ***The Story of Stevie Wonder***. 1976.

Johnson, Angela. ***First Part Last***. 2003.

_____. ***Toning the Sweep***. 1994.

Johnson, Leah. ***You Should See Me in a Crown***. 2020.

Lester, Julius. ***This Strange New Feeling***. 1982.

Lewis, John. ***The March Trilogy***. 2013-2016.

Magoon, Kekla. ***The Rock and the River***. 2009.

McKissack, Patricia C. and Frederick L. McKissack. ***A Long Hard Journey: The Story of the Pullman Porter***. 1989.

Myers, Walter Dean. ***Fast Sam, Cool Clyde, and Stuff***. 1975.

_____. ***Fallen Angels***. 1988.

_____. ***Lockdown***. 2010.

_____. ***Malcolm X: By Any Means Necessary***. 1993.

_____. ***Monster***. 1999.

_____. ***Now is Your Time: The African American Struggle for Freedom***. 1991.

_____. ***Slam!*** 1996.

_____. ***The Young Landlords***. 1979.

Nelson, Marilyn. ***Carver: A Life in Poems***. 2001.

_____. ***Fortune's Bones: The Manumission Requiem***. 2004.

_____. ***A Wreath for Emmett Till***. 2005.

Neri, G. ***Yummy: The Last Days of a Southside Shorty***. 2010.

Reynolds, Jason. ***The Boy in the Black Suit***. 2015.

_____. ***When I Was the Greatest***. 2014.

Smith, Tommie. ***Victory. Stand! Raising My Fist for Justice***. 2022.

Taylor, Mildred. ***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry***. 1976.

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Watson, Renee. ***Piecing Me Together***. 2017.

Williams-Garcia, Rita. ***Like Sisters on the Homefront***. 1995.

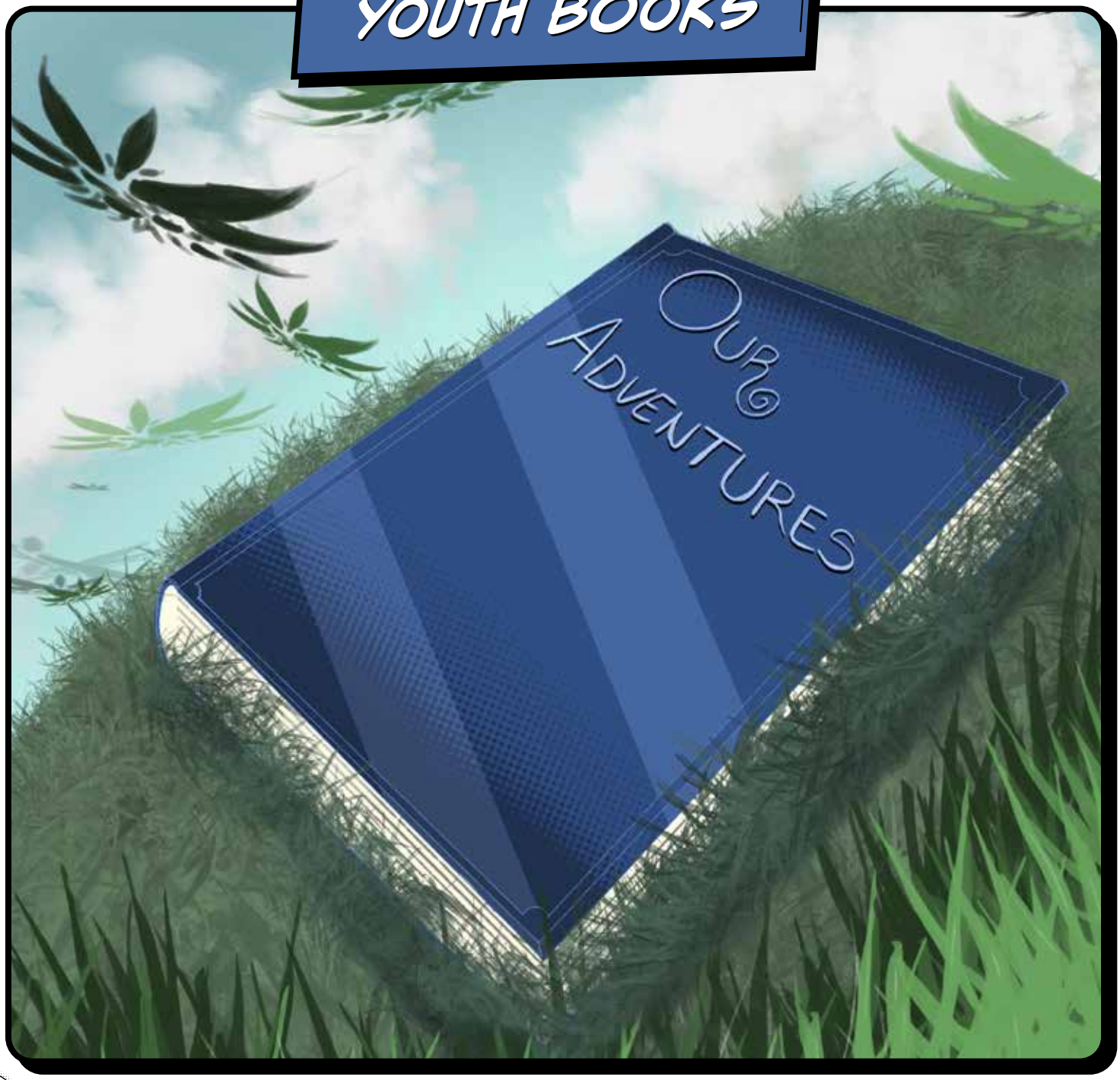
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_____. ***If You Come Softly***. 1998.

_____. ***Miracle's Boys***. 2000.

Yoon, Nicola. ***The Sun Is Also a Star***. 2016.

YOUTH BOOKS



TEEN NON-FICTION

Azad, Nafiza
Writing in Color: Fourteen Writers on the Lessons We've Learned
Margaret K McElderberry Books, 2024
A collection of essays by authors of color detailing their advice, encouragement, and empowerment for new writers in the process and path to publication. **(e-book available)**

Dyson, Michael Eric
Represent: The Unfinished Fight for the Vote
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2024
This book explores the historical efforts to secure voting rights.
(e-book, audio available)

Johnson, George M.
Flamboyants: The Queer Harlem Renaissance I Wish I'd Known
Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR), 2024
This powerful collection of essays recognizes the LGBTQ+ artists and activists whose identities have been buried throughout history.
(e-book, audio available)



Michael Eric Dyson
Represent: The Unfinished Fight for the Vote

Steenz and Samuel Sattin
Side Quest: A Visual History of Roleplaying Games
Harper Collins Children's Books, 2024
This graphic novel delves into the history of RPG's and the personal histories of its authors.
(e-book available)

TEEN FICTION

Adia, Jade
Batgirl: Possession
Random House, 2024
As she starts at Gotham Academy, Barbara Gordon must face rich kids, being the new girl, and a risk of possession by evil forces.
(e-book, audio available)

Agyemang, Elizabeth
Heart-Shaped Lies
Random House Children's, 2024
Right after three teens find out they've been betrayed by the same boy, his body is found and they become the top suspects.
(e-book, audio available)

Allen, Charlene
My Fairy God Somebody
HarperCollins, 2024
A New England teen heads to NYC for a summer journalism program, where she tries to unravel the mystery of a secret someone from her past.
(e-book, audio available)

Anyakwo, Diana
My Life as a Chameleon
IgKids, 2024
A young girl navigates her father's schizophrenia while also dealing with her own struggles.
(ebook available)

Arnold, Marie
I Was Told There Would Be Romance
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2024
Fancy will do whatever it takes to get invited to the party of the school year, even if that means ruining her friendship with her best friend and lying to her crush.
(e-book, audio available)

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Baptiste, Tracey
Boy 2.0
Algonquin Young Readers, 2024
A teen foster kid finds out he can become invisible in this action-packed urban adventure.

Bello, Abiola
Only for the Holidays
Soho Teen, 2024
A contemporary teen romance fit for the Hallmark channel.
(e-book, audio available)

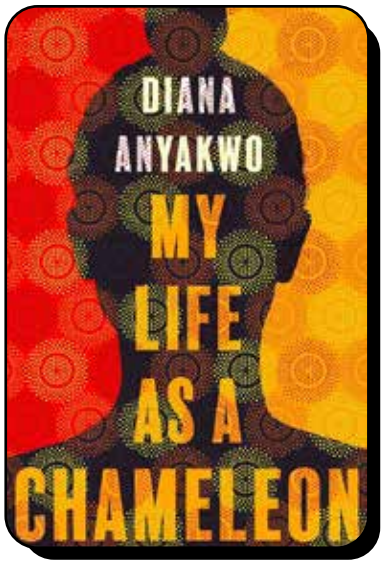
Bou-Montes, Louangie
Till the Last Beat of My Heart
HarperCollins, 2024
A teen who grew up in a funeral home learns he has the ability to raise the dead.
(e-book, audio available)

Brophy, Aislinn
Spells to Forget Us
G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, 2024
A witch and a nonmagical mortal are stuck in a loop of break-up and make-up when a memory spell goes wrong.
(e-book, audio available)

Browne, Mahogany L.
A Bird in the Air Means We Can Still Breathe
Crown Publishing, 2025
Teens in NYC cope with the sense of loss that comes with the COVID-19 pandemic, in this collection of poems written with a sense of hope and love.
(e-book, audio available)

Burton, Gabi
Drown Me with Dreams (#2 Sing Me to Sleep)
Bloomsbury, 2024
Saoirse uncovers things that make her wonder if Prince Hayse is best for the kingdom.
(e-book, audio available)

Casomar, Jordan K.
How to Lose a Best Friend
MTV Books, 2024
Things get messy when 16-year-old Gen's best friend confesses his love for her, and she doesn't feel the same.
(e-book, audio available)



Diana Anyakwo
My Life as a Chameleon

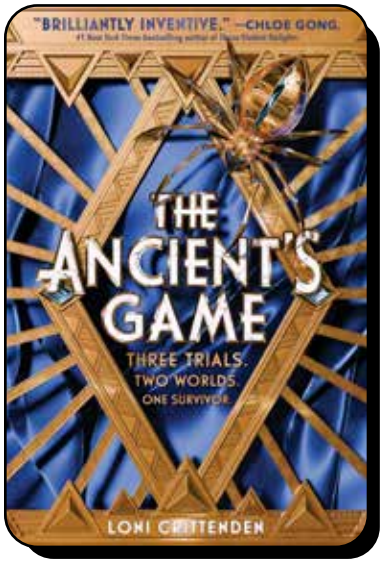
Cast, Kristin and P.C. Cast
Give Up the Night
Wednesday Books, 2025
A riveting tale of magic, deception, danger, murder, and finding a grain of truth in a mountain of lies.
(e-book, audio available)

Chambers, Veronica
Ida, in Love and in Trouble
Little, Brown, 2024
A passionate historical fiction following Ida B. Wells and her work as an investigative journalist while also exploring her love life.
(e-book, audio available)

Cole, Kamilah
This Ends in Embers (#2 in The Divine Traitors Duology)
Little, Brown Books, Feb 2025
Sisters Faron and Elara must fight to save each other and their world.
(e-book, audio available)

Comerford, Helen
The Love Interest
Bloomsbury YA, 2024
Superhero tropes take over Jenna's life as she fights for both control and answers.
(e-book, audio available)

Crittenden, Loni
The Ancient's Game
HarperCollins, 2024
An historical fiction novel inspired by African diaspora folklore.
(e-book, audio available)



Loni Crittenden
The Ancient's Game

Davis, DeAndra
All the Noise at Once
Simon and Schuster, 2025
Brandon is wrongfully arrested while defending his autistic brother Aiden. It's up to Aiden to prove Brandon's innocence.
(e-book available)

Deone, Tracy
Oathbound
(#3 in the Legendborn Cycle)
Simon and Schuster, 2025
Bree Matthews finds herself alone, cut off from her ancestors, powers, and friends, and caught in an unbreakable bargain with the Shadow King.
(e-book, audio available)

Desamours, Channelle
Needy Little Things
St. Martin's Press, 2025
Sariyah has a unique ability to find things and when her friend goes missing, she isn't sure if that ability is a gift anymore.
(e-book, audio available)

Fears, Mina
The Scorpion Queen
Flatiron Books, 2025
A banished teen forced to work as a handmaid discovers a secret society of sorcerers in this dark fantasy.
(e-book, audio available)

Flake, Sharon
The Family I'm In
Scholastic, 2025
Highly anticipated follow-up novels to the *Skin I'm In* and *The Life I'm In*.

Giles, Lamar
Ruin Road
Scholastic Press, 2024
When Cade makes a wish that comes true, he inadvertently releases chaos. Find out what happens when people are no longer afraid... of anything.
(ebook, audio available)

Girma, Tigest
Immortal Dark
Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2024
Vampires, romance, and dark fantasy combine to make up this amazing mystery.
(e-book, audio available)

Howard, Amalie
Lady Knight
(#2 in The Diamonds)
Random House Children's, 2025
The world of *Queen Bee* is visited again as Zia, the daughter of a duke, tackles the complexities of high society, and perhaps, love?

Hunter, H. D.
Something Like Right
Farrar, 2024
After being expelled at the start of his junior year, Zay must move in with his aunt and go to a new school as a fresh start.
(e-book, audio available)

Jamal, Zakiya N.
If We Were a Movie
HarperCollins, 2025
When Rochelle gets a job at her local Black-owned cinema, she is disheartened to learn her boss is also her arch nemesis.
(e-book, audio available)

Lewis, Kayvion
Heist Royale
(#2 in Thieves' Gambit)
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2024
An action-packed sequel to *Thieves' Gambit*.
(e-book, audio available)

Marquis, Krystal
More Than This
(#2 of The Davenports)
Disney Publishing Worldwide, 2024
The Davenport family story continues as four daughters navigate both love and their pursuits of personal dreams.
(e-book, audio available)

Miller, Keith F. Jr.
Togetha (#2 of Pritty)
HarperCollins, 2025
Two boys attempt to take their city back from a dangerous and affluent family.
(e-book, audio available)

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Ogundiran, Tobi
At the Fount of Creation (#2 of Guardians of the Gods)
Tor Publishing Group, 2025
This duology concludes the story of Ashâke's quest to save the Orisha.
(e-book, audio available)

Oyemakinde, Tomi
We Are Hunted
Feiwel & Friends, 2024
Femi's family vacation goes horribly wrong in this Jurassic Park-esque survival story.
(e-book, audio available)

Parker, Danielle
Love on Paper
Joy Revolution, 2025
Romance blossoms when a teen gets a spot at a writer's retreat and is partnered with a hunk. Will their parents' feud throw a wrench in their relationship?
(e-book, audio available)

Peppins, Brianna
Briarcliff Prep: Sophomore Year
Disney Publishing Worldwide, 2024
Avielle feels more alone than ever when she is separated from both her family and her best friends at the start of her sophomore year of prep school.
(e-book available)

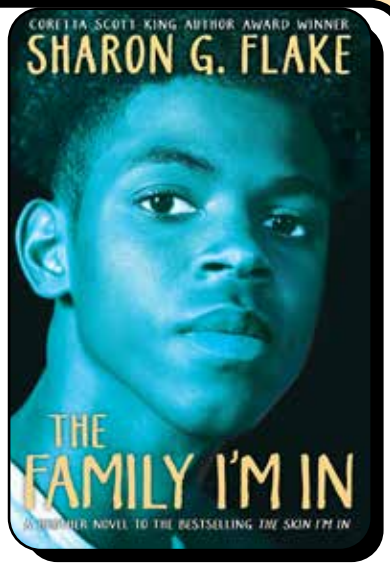
Pinede, Nadine
When the Mapou Sings
Candlewick, 2024
The story of a Haitian girl forced to flee home and work for different families, while searching for her best friend who has vanished.
(e-book, audio available)

Pink, Randi
Under the Heron's Light
Feiwel & Friends, 2024
An intergenerational fantasy set in the Great Dismal Swamp in North Carolina.
(e-book, audio available)

Raughley, Sarah
The Queen's Spade
HarperCollins, 2025
This historical thriller follows a kidnapped princess on her quest for revenge.
(e-book, audio available)

Reynolds, Jason
Twenty-Four Seconds from Now...: a LOVE Story
Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2024
Armed with advice from his parents and his girlfriend's favorite chicken tenders, Neon is about to take the next step with his first love, Aria. If he can calm his nerves and get out of the bathroom, that is.
(e-book, audio available)

Rochon, Farrah
Bemused
Disney Publishing Worldwide, Disney Press 2025
Learn more about the lives of the five muses from the tale of Hercules.



Sharon Flake
The Family I'm In

Shea, Jamison
I Am the Dark That Answers When You Call (#2 in I Feed Her to the Beast)
Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, 2024
Blood and gore take center stage in this terrifying sequel to *I Feed Her to the Beast and the Beast Is Me*.
(e-book, audio available)

Shelly, Page
Brewed with Love
Joy Revolution, 2025
A plant witch and her ex find a spark again when they're working together to save her family's apothecary in this new romantasy.
(e-book, audio available)

Stringfield, Ravynn
Love in 280 Characters or Less
Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2025
Sydney isn't sure if she's ready to face college alone, until she finds the company of a mysterious online prince.
(e-book available)

Tew, Jill
The Dividing Sky
Joy Revolution, 2024
A science fiction tale set in a dystopian future where 18-year-old Liv sells her memories to the highest bidder.
(e-book, audio available)

Thomas, Charlene
Streetlight People
Dutton Children's Books, 2024
Kady has the ability to relive moments from her past, but can she repair the chaos that follows when someone breaks the time travel rules?
(e-book, audio available)

Tobias, Trisha
Honeysuckle and Bone
Zando, 2025
Carina has the opportunity to explore her mother's homeland when nannying for a wealthy family, but mysterious events seem to target her.
(e-book available)

Williams, Kalela
Tangleroot
Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2024
Follow Noni on her quest to uncover the secrets of her family's past and make positive changes in her small town.
(e-book, audio available)

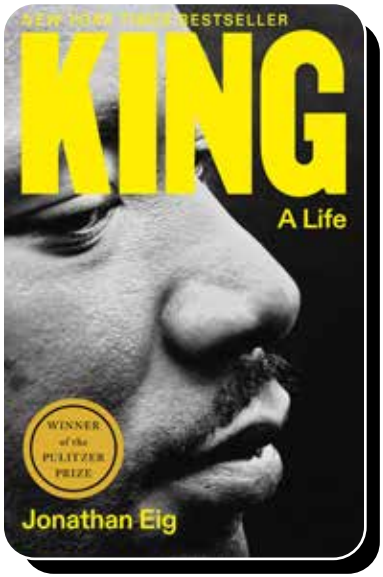
Williams, LaDarrion I
Blood at the Root
Labyrinth Road, 2024
Malik attends an HBCU for the magically inclined where he just might be able to unravel the mystery of his lineage.
(e-book, audio available)

Zoboi, Ibi
(S)Kin
Versify, 2025
Inspired by Caribbean folklore, a young soucouyant shape-shifting vampire and the daughter of a college professor may have a connection.

TEEN BIOGRAPHIES

Eig, Jonathan
King: A Life
(Young Adult Edition)
Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2025
The life story of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., adapted for a young adult audience.
(e-book, audio available)

Nehanda, Walela
Bless the Blood: A Cancer Memoir
Kokila, 2024
The moving story about the author's diagnosis of a rare blood cancer and the self-realization that it led to told through poetry and essays.
(e-book, audio available)



Jonathan Eig
King: A Life

Oluseyi, Hakeem
A Quantum Life (adapted for young adults): My Unlikely Journey from the Street to the Stars
Ember, 2024
Dealing weed and winning science fairs, genius James Plummer enters Stanford with a cocaine addiction, and graduates as Hakeem Oluseyi with PhD in physics.
(e-book, audio available)

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Valby, Karen
The Swans of Harlem (Adapted for Young Adults): Five Black Ballerinas, a Legacy of Sisterhood, and Their Reclamation of a Groundbreaking History
Delacorte Press, 2025
A group biography on the groundbreaking ballerinas of The Dance Theatre of Harlem.
(e-book, audio available)

TEEN GRAPHIC NOVELS

Arnold, David
Luminous Beings
Penguin Random House, 2024
Lifelong friends and film students Ty and Burger set out to make a documentary about humanity's recent attack by a force of undead squirrels.
(e-book available)

Doku, Salomey
Brielle and Bear
Random House Graphic, 2025
College freshman experiences the allure of becoming an adult while enjoying the magical journey of romance and mystery.
(e-book available)

Hirsh, Ananth
Greater Secrets
Penguin Random House, 2024
Maya finds herself on a road trip to a mysterious ghost town and gets closer and closer to the mysterious pillar of light that may have taken her sister.
(e-book, audio available)

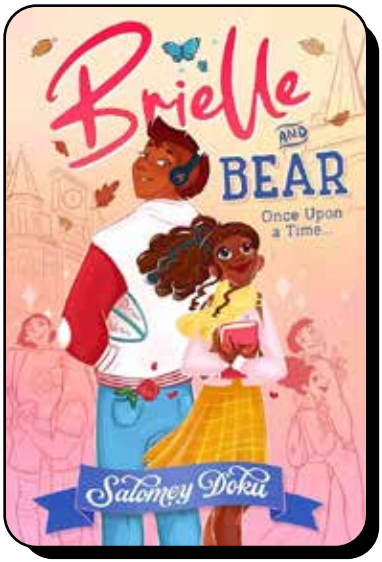
Ondjaki
Our Beautiful Darkness
Unruly/Enchanted Lion, 2024
Two teens ponder the meaning of life against the backdrop of a national power outage, turmoil in their country, and unspoken feelings for each other.
(e-book available)

Snyder, Scott
Dudley Datson and the Forever Machine
Dark Horse, 2024
A teen inventor journeys through space and time when he becomes responsible for an extraordinary watch.

Walker, David and Marcus Kwame Anderson
Big Jim and the White Boy: An American Classic Reimagined
Ten Speed Graphic, 2024
Huckleberry Finn re-imagined from Jim's perspective; a nuanced, panoramic story in blazing graphic novel style.
(e-book available)

PICTURE AND BOARD BOOKS

Abrams, Stacey
Stacey Speaks Up
HarperCollins, 2024
Little Stacey is horrified to learn that some kids in her school can't afford to eat lunch, so she sets out to do something about it.
(e-book, audio available)



Salomey Doku
Brielle and Bear

Ahiyya, Vera and Debby Rahmalia
Getting Ready for First Grade
Random House Children's Books, 2025
Leilani is nervous about starting first grade, but her family helps her gain the confidence she needs to make it a great year!
(e-book available)

Ahmed, Roda and Charnaie Gordon
Etta Extraordinaire Goes to the White House
Harper Collins, 2024
Etta is back with another adventure—this time an exciting school field trip!

Alexander, Kwame
How Sweet the Sound
Little, Brown, 2025
Follow the compelling story of Black music in America.
(audio available)

Atinuke
L is for Love
Candlewick, 2024
We delight in the joy of a family's day in Lagos, Nigeria, expressed through various "L" words.

Baptiste, Kelly
The Band in Our Basement
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2024
Sleep eludes a brother and sister because of the sweet sounds pulling them towards the music.
(e-book, audio available)

Bernstrom, Daniel, Margaret McNamara and Brian G. Karas
The Cookie Vote
Random House Studio, 2025
A classroom of children gets a lesson in civics by making a case for an official state cookie while visiting the nation's capital.
(e-book available)

Bingham, Winsome
Missing Momma
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2024
This tender book gently explores PTSD in military families.
(e-book available)

Bingham, Winsome
The Table
Neal Porter Books, 2024
The life of a dining table illustrates the love that makes families similar despite their differences.

Boyd, Aaron
Giving Good
Albert Whitman & Company, 2024
A beautiful exploration of a father's love for his son, even when they may not live in the same house.
(e-book available)

Brown-Wood, JaNay
On Our Way! What a Day
Penguin Random House, 2025
A lyrical tale of siblings making their way to celebrate their Gram's birthday.
(e-book available)

Cline-Ransome, Lesa
They Call Me Teach: Lessons in Freedom
Candlewick, 2024
An enslaved man spreads the gift of knowledge by teaching others to read.

Collins, Jordan
Where?
Candlewick, 2024
A mixed-race boy is often asked where he is from and gives an inspiring response.

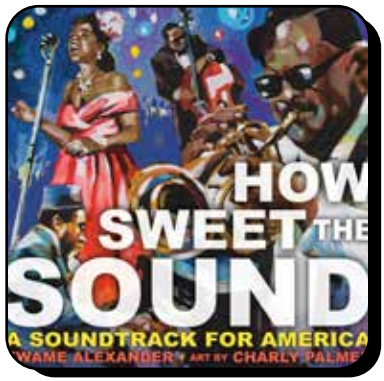
Daniel-Ayoade, Yewade
The Little Regent
Owlkids Books, 2024
Following the death of her father without a male heir, a young girl is named regent. Can she become king?
(e-book available)

Davis, Gabriele
Our Joyful Noise
Atheneum, 2024
This book is a song of Black joy inspired by spirituals.
(e-book available)

Duncan, Alice Faye
I Gotta Sing!
WaterBrook, 2024
Big Baby sings and dances his way through the morning with his doting grandparents and protective farm animal friends.
(e-book available)

Duncan, Monique
Freedom Braids
Lantana Publishing, 2024
On a Columbian sugar plantation, a young, enslaved girl joins a group of secret hair braiders whose braids signal the time and routes to freedom.
(e-book available)

Forté, Matt
My Hair Can
Tyndale Kids, 2025
A book of rhymes all about celebrating natural hair and reminding kids to love themselves, their hair, and the differences that make them unique.
(e-book available)



Kwame Alexander
How Sweet the Sound

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Gorman, Amanda
Girls on the Rise
Viking Children's Books, 2025
A celebration of girls and girlhood from the presidential inaugural poet.

Hammond, Julia Pierre
Soulful Struttin'
Free Spirit Publishing, 2024
A New Orleans family makes a day of chores fun with music, good food and more!
(e-book available)

Jones, Joy
The Sky is Not Blue
Free Spirit Publishing, 2024
Can a student become the teacher by offering a different perspective?
(e-book available)

Kaepernick, Colin and Nessa Diab
We Are Free, You and Me
Scholastic, 2024
An informative guide for families to help youngsters find their power.
(e-book available)

Laymon, Kiese and Alexis Franklin
City Summer, Country Summer
Kokila, 2025
Three city boys get to experience a country summer down South and forge a deep connection in the process.

Mensah, Bernard and Annalise Barber-Opp
Jollof Day
Dial Books for Young Readers, 2025
A celebration of joy and culture through the food we prepare.
(e-book available)

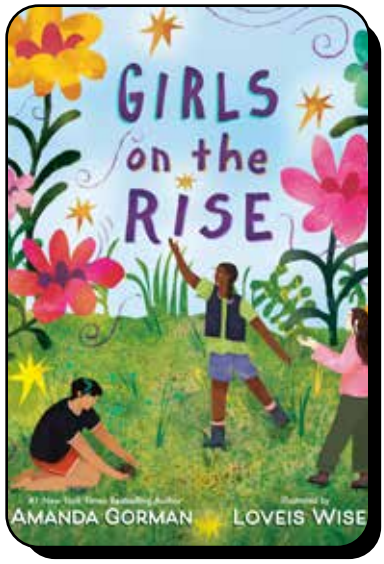
Mikai, Monica
Wash Day with Mama
Penguin Random House, 2025
Wash days are always special for this little girl and her mother.
(e-book available)

Moses, Shelia P. and Keith Mallett
Sharing the Dream
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2025
A look at the March on Washington through the eyes of a little girl on her father's shoulders.

Noel, Melvina
Mama's Library Summers
Harry N. Abrams, 2024
An ode to a Black child's library experience.
(e-book available)

Oso, Maisha
My Hair is a Book
Harper/HarperCollins, 2024
An unapologetic celebration of all things Black hair.

Questlove
The Idea in You
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2024
Questlove's debut picture book is all about creativity and where it comes from.
(e-book available)



Amanda Gorman
Girls on the Rise

Seales, Stephanie
My Daddy Is a Cowboy
Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2024
A girl spends "just us" early morning time with her father and the urban horse-riding community.
(e-book, audio available)

Smith, Nikki Shannon and Ashley Evans
Easter Fun
Crown Publishing, 2025
A Brown Baby Parade board book all about Easter.
(e-book available)

Tourmaline and Charlot Kristensen
One Day in June: A Story Inspired by the Life and Activism of Marsha P. Johnson
Putnam Publishing Group, 2025
A celebration of Johnson's legacy with a fictional story inspired by her life.
(e-book, audio available)

Watson, Renee
Summer is Here
Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2024
All the things we love about childhood and summer.
(e-book, audio available)

Weatherford, Carole Boston
Crowning Glory: A Celebration of Black Hair
Candlewick, 2024
Poetic text and beautiful illustrations from Coretta Scott King Award winners.
(e-book available)

Weatherford, Carole Boston
Hair Like Obama's, Hands Like Lebron's
Abrams Appleseed, 2024
A picture book inspired by a photo of a young boy touching President Obama's hair.
(e-book, audio available)

Weatherford, Carole Boston
Rap It Up
Henry Holt & Company, 2025
The young narrator takes us through the joy of creating rap.

Wedlick, Seina
The Night Market
Random House Studio, 2024
A young girl experiences the charm and unique adventures of a night market in Nigeria.
(e-book available)

Wedlick, Seina
Space for Everyone
Random House Studio, 2025
A Nigerian girl is nervous about her family moving but realizes they can still find community at the table.
(e-book available)

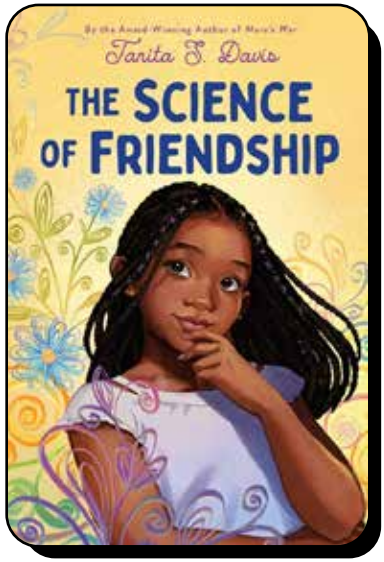
Wells, Allen
Danté Plays His Blues
Harper/HarperCollins, 2024
A boy learns to play the saxophone and finds it helps him express his emotions about things happening in life.

Wiley, DeAnn
Homegrown
Henry Holt & Company, 2024
A native Detroiter writes and illustrates this ode to the beauty of the Black family.
(e-book, audio available)

JUVENILE FICTION

Alexander, Kwame
Black Star
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2024
Charley dreams of becoming the first professional Black female baseball pitcher during the Jim Crow era.
(e-book available)

Alston, B.B.
Amari and the Despicable Wonders (#3 of Supernatural Investigations)
Balzer + Bray/HarperCollins, 2024
Amari is back for the third installment of the Supernatural Investigations series, and this time she has lost all her magical powers.
(e-book audio available)



Tanita S. Davis
The Science of Friendship

Baptiste, Tracey
Moko Magic: Carnival Chaos
Freedom Fire/Disney, 2024
Learn about the exciting tradition of Carnival and all the Afro-Caribbean heritage that comes with it in this magical tale.
(e-book available)

Brooks, Nick
Everything Interesting Keeps Happening to Ethan Fairmont (#3 Ethan Fairmont)
Union Square Kids, 2024
Can Ethan and his friends stop the end of the world in this final book of the trilogy?
(e-book available)

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Davis, Tanita S.
The Science of Friendship
HarperCollins, 2024
Rylee starts middle school with no friends, but that soon changes when she is paired with DeNia in her journalism class.
(e-book, audio available)

Farmer, Craig Kofi
Kwame Crashes the Underworld
Roaring Book Press, 2024
Kwame travels back to Ghana to attend his grandmother's funeral and is plunged into an afterlife adventure.
(e-book, audio available)

Gaile, Corinne
Saving Kenny
Charlesbridge, 2024
Kenny dreams of becoming a costume designer while working through his difficult home life.
(e-book available)

Johnson, Leah (ed.)
Black Girl Power: 15 Stories Celebrating Black Girlhood
Disney, 2024
A story collection spanning multiple genres all celebrating the glory of Black Girl Power.

Kendrick, Erika J.
Instafamous
Little, Brown, 2024
Twelve-year-old Lyric wants to get on an American Idol-esque show to find her place in the music world.
(e-book available)

Mbalia, Kwame
Jax Freeman and the Phantom Shriek
Freedom Fire, 2024
After accidentally releasing angry spirits during his "summoning" class, Jax must clean up his mess while also trying to clear his grandfather's name.
(e-book available)

McBride, Amber
Onyx & Beyond
Feiwel & Friends, 2024
When his mother begins to show signs of dementia, Onyx does his best to help her and avoid foster care.
(e-book, audio available)

Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux
Radiant
Dutton Children's Books, 2025
A Black girl in a mostly white school navigates Civil Rights issues in this novel in verse set in the 1960s.

Ramée, Lisa Moore
The Everybody Experiment
HarperCollins, 2024
Kylie decides to do everything her friends do in an effort to "become more mature" before starting seventh grade.
(e-book, audio available)

Richter, Jennifer Ann
Bird Nerd
Holiday House, 2024
Nyla is learning to navigate complicated friendship dynamics while in a bird watching competition.
(e-book available)

Rhuday-Perkovich, Olugbemisola
Operation Sisterhood: Stealing the Show (#2 Operation Sisterhood)
Crown Publishing, 2025
In this sequel, sisters learn a lot about the city they live in, past and present, during a scavenger hunt.
(e-book, audio available)

Rhodes, Jewell Parker
Will's Race for Home
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2025
In the year 1889, danger, challenges, and determination abound as a young boy and his father race from Texas to Oklahoma to secure land to call home.
(e-book, audio available)



Erika J.Kendrick
Instafamous

Smith, Nikki Shannon
Stranded
Scholastic Ink, 2024
A chilling solo survival thriller.

JUVENILE NON-FICTION

Agustini, Alliah
The Juneteenth Cookbook
Becker & Mayer, 2024
A history of Juneteenth with recipes, fun facts, and other interesting notes.
(e-book available)

Bell, Kamal Eugene William and Akeem Bell
Akeem Keeps Bees
Storey Publishing, 2025
Learn about the ins and outs of beekeeping from the real bee farmers at Sankofa Farms.
(e-book available)

Bolden, Tonya
Great Minds of Science (Black Lives #1): A Nonfiction Graphic Novel
Abrams Fanfare, 2024
This book features engineers, biologists, and other Black scientists that made significant contributions to their fields.
(e-book available)

Bushell, Nandi
The Life-Changing Magic of Drumming: A Beginner's Guide by Musician Nandi Bushell
Harry N Abrams Inc, 2024
This drummer and social media celebrity uses illustrations to share her love for drumming and teach its fundamentals.
(e-book available)

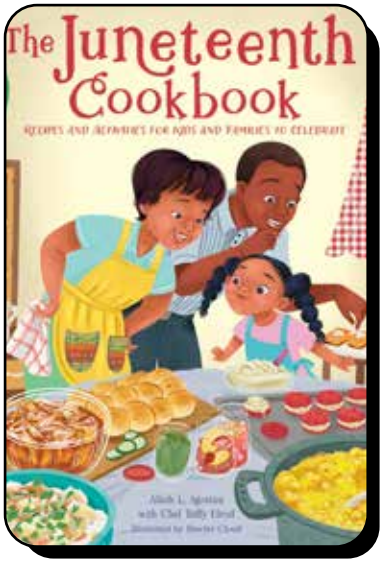
Collins, Ailynn
Exploring Light in Max Axiom's Lab
Capstone Press, 2024
Our favorite scientist is back with cool information all about light.
(e-book available)

Loach, Mikaela
Climate Is Just the Start: How We Can Stop the Climate Crisis and Start Building a Better World for Everyone
Bright Matter Books, 2025
A guide to action based on practical experience.
(e-book, audio available)

Oso, Maisha
Before the Ships
Orchard Books, 2024
This book celebrates Black history prior to the transatlantic slave trade.
(e-book, audio available)

Turner, Maya Faye
Discovering Forces and Motion in Max Axiom's Lab
Capstone Press, 2024
In this new installment of the great graphic science series, we learn all about physics.
(e-book available)

Wallace-McMillian, Takiyah and JaNay Brown-Wood
Brown Girls Do Ballet: Celebrating Diverse Girls Taking Center Stage
Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2024
A celebration of Brown girls taking their place in the world of ballet.



Alliah Agustini
The Juneteenth Cookbook

Weatherford, Carole Boston
The Doll Test: Choosing Equality
Carolrhoda Books, 2024
The infamous 1939 experiment is told from the point of view of the two dolls in this child-accessible version of the event.
(e-book available)

JUVENILE GRAPHIC NOVELS

Bycel, Josh
Stephen Curry: The Official Graphic Novel (Sports Heroes #1)
Penguin Workshop, 2024
Two youngsters are tasked to help a secret society of athletes find the next sports superhero.

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Christmas, Johnnie
Gamerville
HaperAlley, 2024
Max finally qualifies for a videogame competition, but his parents have other ideas when they send him to Camp Reset where screen time is banned.
(e-book available)

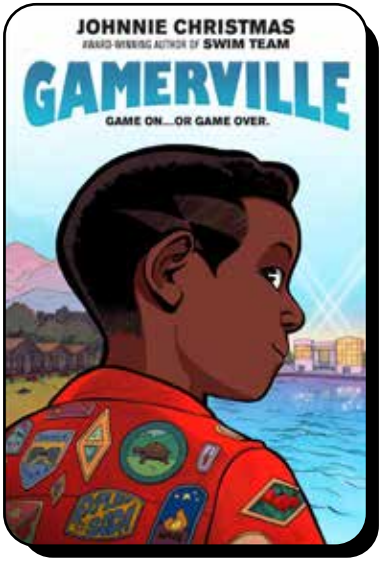
Liu, Marjorie
Wingborn (#2 in The Wingbearer Saga)
Quill Tree Books, 2024
Zuli escapes from an airship and sets out to solve mysteries around animal spirits and her identity.
(e-book available)

Lucey, Rory
Scram: Society of Creatures Real and Magical
First Second, 2024
A group of friends form a society dedicated to discovering and studying magical creatures, embarking on their first mission to seek out trolls.
(e-book available)

Patterson, James
Ali Cross: The Graphic Novel
Patterson Books/Little, Brown and Company, 2024
The son of master detective Alex Cross, takes on the challenge of uncovering the mystery behind his best friend's disappearance.
(e-book available)

Pierre, Elle
Evelyn and Avery: The Art of Friendship
Clarion/HarperCollins, 2024
This tale of big emotions and problems that arise in any friendship as three friends decide to enter an art contest together.
(e-book available)

Sorria, Gabe
Jimmy Olsen's Supercyclopedia
Penguin Random House, 2025
When he is handed the Supercyclopedia, it is Jimmy's turn to defend the dimensions from the Mischief League.



Johnnie Christmas
Gamerville

Weaver, Tony Jr.
Weirdo
First Second, 2024
This memoir shares the story of the author's awkward middle school years as a lover of comic books, anime, and video games.
(e-book available)

Lindell, Lawrence
Buckle Up
Random House Graphic, 2024
A story that explores the impact of divorce on a young boy as he navigates his own journey of self-discovery.
(e-book available)

JUVENILE BIOGRAPHIES

Berries, Frank
Muhammad Ali
Golden Book, 2024
A Little Golden Book all about this late, great boxer and activist.

Bolden, Charles
Star Sailor: My Life as a NASA Astronaut
Candlewick, 2024
Bolden details his journey as a NASA astronaut, covering the preparation, execution, and return from missions in outer space.

Burgess, Matthew
The Purple One: A Story of Prince
Enchanted Lion, 2024
An explosive tribute to the musical giant that highlights a life, from childhood to stardom, of perseverance and hard work.

Chapman, Ty and John Coy
Stokes: The Brief Career of the NBA's First Black Superstar
Millbrook/Lerner, 2024
From his amazing start to his career ending injury, this book highlights a message of hope, perseverance, and friendship.
(e-book available)

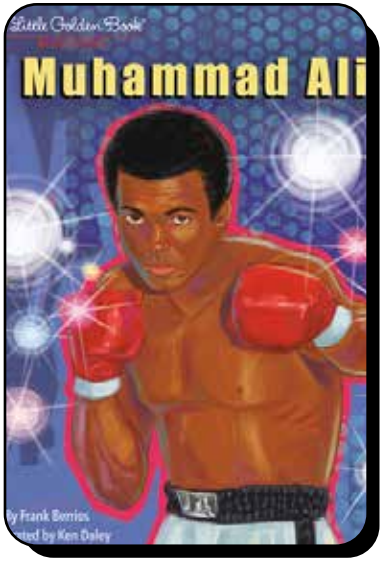
Clauss, Lauren
Zendaya
Golden Book, 2024
A Little Golden Book all about this popular young actress.
(e-book available)

Clinch, Shasta
LeBron James
Golden Book, 2024
A Little Golden Book all about America's top basketball player.

Harris, Quartez
Go Tell It: How James Baldwin Became a Writer
Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2025
As a boy, James fell in love with writing from an early age. Discover his story.

Kendi, Ibram X.
Malcolm Lives
Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2025
A comprehensive record of the life and times of one of America's most fascinating leaders as his beliefs evolve.
(e-book/audiobook available)

King, Shani Mahiri
Finding Rebecca
Tilbury House Publishers, 2024
The story of America's first Black female physician, who got her medical degree in 1864.
(e-book available)



Frank Berries
Muhammad Ali

Miller, Pat Zietlow
Unstoppable John: How John Lewis Got His Library Card--and Helped Change History
Viking Children's Books, 2025
This biography highlights how John Lewis' love of books sparked a lifetime of good trouble.
(e-book available)

Mallory, Shadae
The Story of Serena Williams: An Inspiring Biography for Young Readers
Callisto Kids, 2024
The story of the fascinating life of one of the world's most celebrated tennis players. **(e-book available)**

Murphy, Sophia
Sports Superstars from Black History: Inspiring Stories from the Amazing Careers of Serena Williams, Simone Biles, Allyson Felix, LeBron James, and Many More African American Sports Legends
Ulysses Press, 2024
Learn more about some of the most prolific history makers in sports.
(e-book available)

O'Brien, Kamilah
Little Focused Spender: A Tale of Money Wisdom for Young Minds
Tilbury House Publishers, 2024
Growing up in Brooklyn, a young girl learns the importance of saving and spending wisely from her grandmother.
(e-book available)

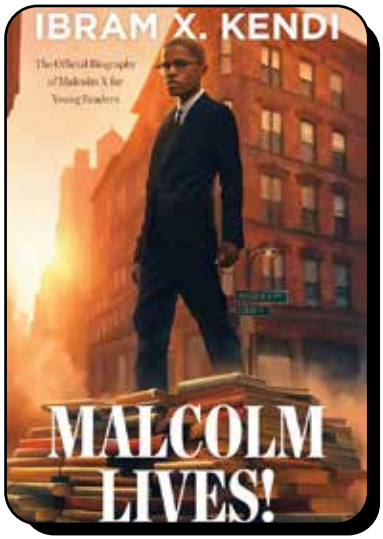
Pinkney, Andrea
And She Was Loved: Toni Morrison's Life in Stories
Little, Brown Publishers, 2025
A strikingly illustrated tribute in verse to the great American icon.
(audio available)

Pryor, Shawn
The Cook Who Defended Pearl Harbor: A Graphic Novel Biography of Doris "Dorie" Miller.
Capstone PR, Inc., 2025
The compelling story of a heroic Navy cook who shot down incoming planes during the attack on Pearl Harbor, saving the lives of his countrymen.
(e-book available)

YOUTH BOOKS (CON'T)

Richards, Ann
The True Story of Vanilla: How Edmond Albius Made History
Orca Book Publishers, 2025
The amazing true story of a young, enslaved boy who developed a new method of pollinating vanilla that bears his name and is still used today.

Salomon, Nadia
A Voice of Hope: The Myrlie Evers-Williams Story
Philomel, 2024
The story of activist Evers-Williams, from her childhood confronting white bullies, to her lifelong fight for racial justice.
(e-book available)



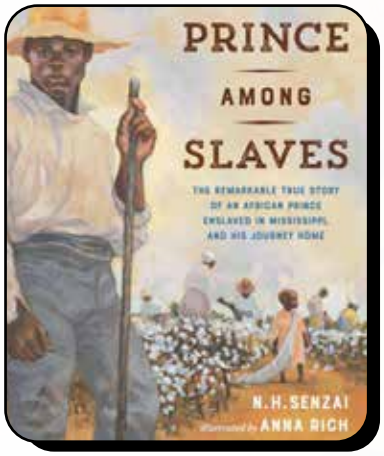
Ibram X. Kendi
Malcolm Lives

Senzai, N. H.
Prince Among Slaves
Nancy Paulsen Books, 2025
An in-depth look at Prince Abdulrahman Sori's journey through slavery to find freedom on the other side.
(e-book, audio available)

Smith, Elliot
Mailing Himself to Freedom: The Graphic Novel Biography of Henry "Box" Brown
Capstone Pr. Inc., 2025
The poignant story of an enslaved man who gained his freedom by mailing himself in a wooden crate from Virginia to Pennsylvania.
(e-book available)

Staples, Mavis
Bridges Instead of Walls: The Story of Mavis Staples
Rocky Pond Books, 2024
Mavis Staples shares her story of harnessing the transformative power of music to champion civil rights and connect with younger generations.
(e-book, audio available)

Swanson, Jennifer
Up Periscope!: How Engineer Raye Montague Revolutionized Shipbuilding
Little Brown & Co, 2024
Despite facing racism and sexism, Montague triumphs and becomes a distinguished engineer for the U.S. Navy.



N. H. Senzai
Prince Among Slaves

Turner, Myra Faye
Hitting Her Way to the Negro Leagues
Capstone, 2025
The epic 1950s story of Toni Stone, the first Black woman to play professional baseball.
(e-book available)

Watson, Renée
Cicely Tyson
HarperCollins, 2024
A beautifully crafted picture book that celebrates the extraordinary life of Cicely Tyson.

Wynter, Anne
Maya Angelou
Golden Books, 2025
A Little Golden Book celebrating the life and work of Maya Angelou.

Wynter, Anne
Willie Mays
Golden Books, 2024
A Little Golden Book about the amazing 24-time All-Star baseball player.

2025 CALENDAR

JANUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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31						

SEPTEMBER

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OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

BEST OF FICTION



BEST OF 2024

Campbell, Cebo
Sky Full of Elephants
Simon & Schuster, 2024
In a world where race no longer matters, a father and daughter work on building a new understanding of each other.
(e-book, audio available)

Locke, Attica
Guide Me Home
Mulholland Books, 2024
Texas Ranger Darren Mathews investigates the disappearance of a Black girl in an all-white sorority.
(e-book, audio available)

Morris, Wanda M.
What You Leave Behind
William Morrow, 2024
Lawyer Deena Wood returns to her hometown and finds herself in the middle of a century long conspiracy involving illegal land grabs, redevelopment, and missing locals.
(e-book, audio available)

Mosley, Walter
Been Wrong So Long It Feels Like Right
Mulholland Books, 2025
A private investigator must find a long lost relative while searching for the wife of a billionaire who has a hidden agenda.
(e-book, audio available)

Okorafor, Nnedi
Death of the Author
William Morrow, 2025
Reality and fantasy merge when Zelu, a disabled Nigerian American writer, publishes a sci-fi book so popular it begins to shape humanity's future.
(e-book, audio available)

Achebe, Chinedu
When It All Falls Down
Independently Published, 2024
Explores the intricate dynamics of a Nigerian couple in America during the height of COVID-19.

Alderson, Kaia
In a League of Her Own
William Morrow Paperbacks, 2024
The fictionalized story of Effa Manley, who was part owner and the business manager of the Negro League baseball team the Newark Eagles, and the only woman inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.
(e-book, audio available)

Alers, Rochelle
Home and Away
Dafina Books, 2024
Harper Flemings writes a powerful tribute to her great-grandfather's legacy, capturing the resilience and triumphs of playing baseball in the Negro Leagues.
(e-book available)

Allen, Jayne
The Most Wonderful Time
HarperCollins, 2024
Two strangers from different backgrounds agree to exchange homes during the holidays, each trying to escape chaotic circumstances.
(e-book, audio available)

Ashing-Giwa, Kemi
The World is Not Yours
Tor Trade, 2024
Amara, Vinh, and Jesse have been assigned to colonize a new planet threatened by a dangerous entity.
(e-book available)

Askaripour, Mateo
This Great Hemisphere
Penguin Group USA, 2024
In a future society, Sweetmint is desperate to find her brother who disappeared and is wanted for murder.
(e-book, audio available)

Battle-Felton, Yvonne
Curdle Creek
Macmillan Publishers, 2024
A haunting tale that blends folklore and history while exploring trauma and resilience within a well-to-do Black community.
(e-book, audio available)

Black, Anna
Love Delayed
Black Odyssey Media, 2024
Nothing is better than romance but a second chance to rekindle a love once lost.
(e-book, audio available)

Black, Daniel
Isaac's Song
Hanover Square Press, 2024
Traumatic events in a young man's life lead to healing and forgiveness.
(e-book, audio available)

FICTION (CON'T)

Bryant, Elise
It's Elementary
Berkley, 2024
An overbearing PTA president appears to be involved in the disappearance of Knoll Elementary school principal, Thomas Smith.
(e-book, audio available)

Bryce, Denny S.
The Trial of Mrs. Rhinelander
Kensington, 2024
A reporter in 1920s Harlem investigates a scandalous interracial marriage.
(e-book, audio available)

Campbell, Cebo
Sky Full of Elephants
Simon & Schuster, 2024
In a world where race no longer matters, a father and daughter work on building a new understanding of each other.
(e-book, audio available)

Chambers, Essie
Swift River
Simon & Schuster, 2024
Diamond Newberry receives a letter that helps her receive clarity about her family history.
(e-book, audio available)

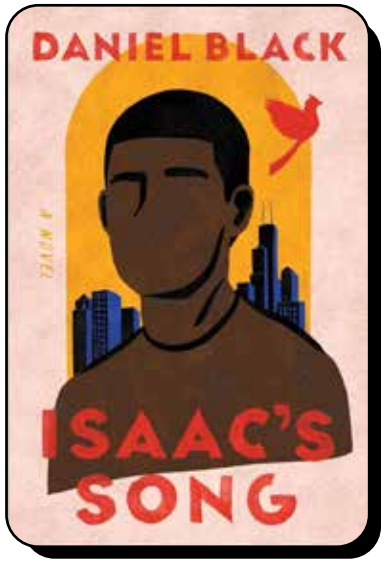
Chenault-Kilgore, Monica
The Jewel of the Blues
Harper Collins, 2024
An historical fiction novel that transports you back to the Jazz Age of glamour and entertainment, amid a dark family secret.
(e-book, audio available)

Compton, Johnny
Devils Kill Devils
Macmillan Publishers, 2024
Faith, horror and humanity's deepest fears are exposed when guardian angels may become deadlier than devils.
(e-book, audio available)

Davis, Milton J.
A Palmetto Christmas
Mvmedia, LLC, 2024
Family and African American traditions are highlighted during the post-Civil War South.

Forest, Kristina
The Love Lyric
Penguin Random House, 2025
Two young artists experience a heartfelt romance as they navigate love, ambition, and self-discovery in the vibrant world of music.
(e-book, audio available)

Glover, Nicole
The Improvisors: A Murder and Magic Novel
Harper Voyager, 2024
Velma, a pilot and bootlegger of magical oddities, propels herself through Prohibition Era America in search of answers about a pocket watch with a cursed history.



Daniel Black
Isaac's Song

Gray, Erick S.
Carl Weber's Kingpins: Queens 3
Kensington Publishing Corp, 2024
A power struggle in the streets of Queens, NY threatens to tear apart the lives of those involved.
(e-book available)

Guillory, Jasmine
Flirting Lessons
Berkley, 2025
Taylor tries to take a break from dating by teaching Avery how to loosen up and have fun.
(e-book, audio available)

Hall, Rachel Howzell
The Last One
Entangled Red Tower Books, 2024
Kai struggles with amnesia while being hunted by an evil goddess.
(e-book, audio available)

Hopson, Carole
A Pair of Wings
Macmillian Publishers, 2024
The first Black American woman to earn her pilot's license realizes that her fear of flying has nothing to do with a fear of heights, but more about challenging racial and gender barriers.
(e-book, audio available)

Hunt, La Jill
Catching Feelings
Urban Renaissance, 2024
Three siblings learn to evaluate and navigate the complexities of finding true love.
(e-book, audio available)

Jackson-Brown, Angela
Untethered
Harper Muse, 2024
Katia is struggling with loss, family trauma, and the burden of caring for others as she faces health challenges of her own.
(e-book, audio available)

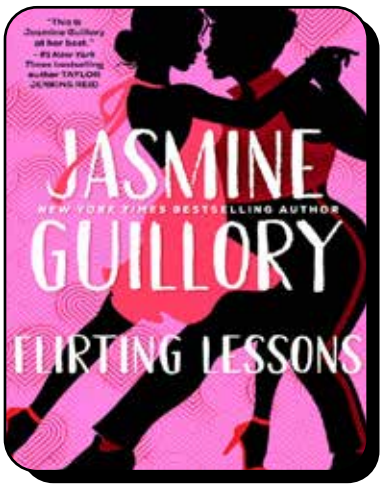
Jones, Gayl
The Unicorn Woman
Beacon Press, 2024
WWII veteran Bubby Ray Guy embarks on a quest to find a mythical creature in the Jim Crow South.
(e-book, audio available)

Josaphat, Fabienne
Kingdom of No Tomorrow
Algonquin Books, 2024
Nettie finds love and heartbreak after joining the Black Panther Party in 1968 Oakland.
(e-book, audio available)

King, Joy Deja
Bitch: The Story of Precious Cummings
King Productions, 2024
A once vulnerable girl becomes vicious to acquire and maintain the life that she's always dreamt of having.

K'Wan
Black Godfather: The Black Death
Urban Books, 2024
After being discharged from the Marines, Grimm wants to save his neighborhood; however, he finds himself fighting a different war.
(e-book available)

Lee, Karmen
The Relationship Mechanic
Harlequin Enterprise, 2025
Jessica is only in town for six weeks, but her feelings for Vini may lead to a permanent move.
(e-book available)



Jasmine Guillory
Flirting Lessons

Lemming, Kimberly
I Got Abducted by Aliens and Now I'm Trapped in a Rom-Com
Orbit, 2025
During an attack by a lion, a wildlife biologist is abducted by aliens—but that is not the craziest part.
(e-book, audio available)

Locke, Attica
Guide Me Home
Mulholland Books, 2024
Texas Ranger Darren Mathews investigates the disappearance of a Black girl in an all-white sorority.
(e-book, audio available)

McGill-Vargas, Michelle
American Ghoul
Blackstone Publishing, Inc., 2024
A former enslaved woman leaves post-Civil War Georgia for the North with her new friend, Simone. The only catch: Simone is a long-dead vampire.
(e-book, audio available)

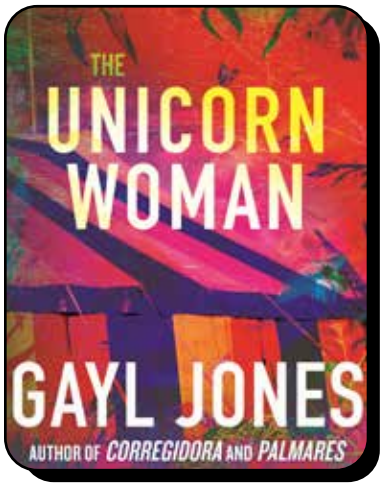
Moon, Shara
Let Us March On: A Novel
William Morrow Paperbacks, 2025
After her husband is hired as President Roosevelt's personal valet, Lizzie McDuffie is also hired as a maid to the Roosevelt family. She soon begins using her close access to advocate for her community.

Morris, Sidney
Frederick Douglass
Hawthorne Books, 2024
A fictionalized biography of the prominent abolitionist and orator, with special attention paid to the women closest to him.
(e-book available)

Fiction (con't)

Morris, Wanda M.
What You Leave Behind
William Morrow, 2024
Lawyer Deena Wood returns to her hometown and finds herself in the middle of a century-long conspiracy involving illegal land grabs, redevelopment, and missing locals.
(e-book, audio available)

Mosley, Walter
Been Wrong So Long It Feels Like Right
Mulholland Books, 2025 TCM
A private investigator must find a long lost relative while searching for the wife of a billionaire who has a hidden agenda.
(e-book, audio available)



Gayl Jones
The Unicorn Woman

Murray, Victoria Christopher
Harlem Rhapsody
Berkley, 2025
Jessie Redmon Fauset's dream comes true when she becomes the literary editor of *The Crisis*.
(e-book, audio available)

Okorafor, Nnedi
Death of the Author
William Morrow, 2025
Reality and fantasy merge when Zelu, a disabled Nigerian American writer, publishes a sci-fi book so popular it begins to shape humanity's future.
(e-book, audio available)

Perkins-Valdez, Dolen
Happy Land
Berkley, 2025
Nikki Berry embarks on a thrilling journey full of mystery and allure as she discovers her regal heritage.
(e-book, audio available)

Pitts, Delia
Trouble in Queenstown
Minotaur Books, 2024
PI Vandy Myrick is hired to take on what turns out to be an atypical divorce surveillance case.
(e-book, audio available)

Prince, V. Efua
Kin: Practically True Stories
Wayne State University Press, 2024
History is explored through stories, plays, and poetry honoring Black women.

Quartey, Kwei
The Whitewashed Tombs
Soho Crime, 2024
A father does not trust the Ghanian Police Service to investigate the murder of his son, who was a vocal LGBTQ activist.
(e-book, audio available)

Richardson, Tati
Losing Sight
Generous Press, 2025
A pair of magical glasses changes the lives of sports reporter Nikki Ryan and her handsome optometrist.
(e-book available)

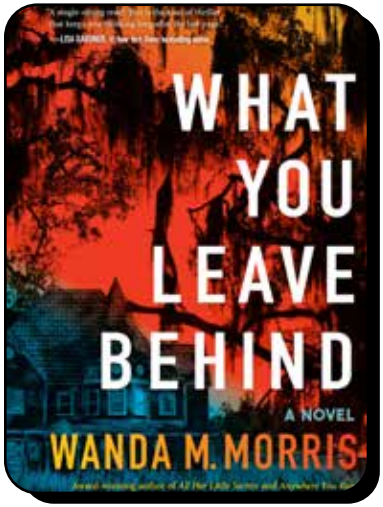
Riley, Vanessa
Murder in Berkeley Square
Kensington Publishing Corp, 2024
Lady Abigail Worthington tries to solve a murder on a snowy night while uncovering secrets among a group of high-society guests.
(e-book, audio available)

Robinson, Shauna
The Townsend Family Recipe for Disaster
Sourcebooks/Landmark, 2024
After the death of her grandmother, Mae finds her family in chaos when she travels to her family reunion.
(e-book, audio available)

Sandeen, Del
This Cursed House
Berkley, 2024
Chicago native Jemma moves to New Orleans to work for the Duchons, quickly discovering the family is cursed, and she holds the key to breaking it.
(e-book, audio available)

Senna, Danzy
Colored Television
Riverhead Books, 2024
Jane is distracted from writing her novel by the siren song of working on a Hollywood script.
(e-book, audio available)

Sherri, Johnni
Heartbreak U: Summer Vacation
Urban Rennaissance, 2024
Four young women experience the realities of adulting after completing their freshman year of college.



Wanda M. Morris
What You Leave Behind

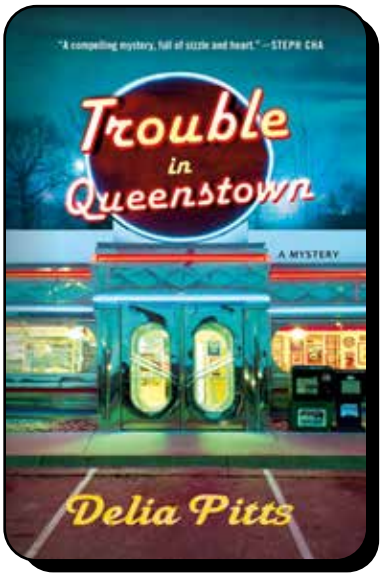
Simone, Naima
Church Girl
Harlequin Enterprises Limited, 2024
Aaliyah flees her hometown and expectations she can't meet, only to face similar circumstances in the name of love.
(e-book available)

Smith, Ian K.
Eagle Rock: An Ashe Cayne Novel
Amistad, 2024
A former police detective is hired to solve the murder of one of Chicago's wealthiest residents.
(e-book, audio available)

St. John, Yahrah
Going Toe to Toe
Harlequin Enterprises Limited, 2024
A vacation fling turns into a complicated situation, leading to unexpected challenges and unresolved feelings.
(e-book available)

Soulja, Sister
Love After Midnight
Atria, 2024
The saga of Winter Santiaga continues as she attempts to reconcile her spiritual journey with her party girl lifestyle.
(e-book, audio available)

Swindle, Renee
Francine's Spectacular Crash and Burn
Tiny Reparations Books, 2024 While mentoring a young man, circumstances lead Francine to reconnect with her high school crush.
(e-book, audio available)



Delia Pitts
Trouble in Queenstown

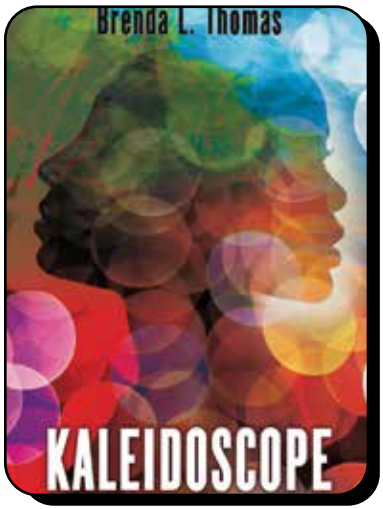
Thomas, Brenda L.
Kaleidoscope
PhillyWriter LLC, 2024
Isabella and Sasha must unravel dangerous mysteries to uncover truths about their deceased husbands.

Thomas, Joseph Earl
God Bless You, Otis Spunkmeyer
Grand Central Publishing, 2024
A soldier in the Iraq war recounts his experiences growing up in Philadelphia amidst hardship, using imagination and humor to escape his current conditions.
(e-book, audio available)

FICTION (CON'T)

Vercher, John
Devil is Fine
Celadon Books, 2024
A biracial writer reconciles both personal and historical traumas after inheriting a former plantation from his white grandfather.
(e-book, audio available)

Warren, Tiffany L.
The Unexpected Diva
William Morrow Paperbacks, 2025
Born into slavery but raised free, Eliza takes a chance on sharing her musical gift after the death of her mother.
(e-book, audio available)



Brenda L. Thomas
Kaleidoscope

Wesley, Jamie
A Legend in Baking
St. Martin's Griffin, 2024
Sweet dreams come true when Sloane takes a job working for her high school crush.
(e-book, audio available)

Wilkerson, Charmaine
Good Dirt
Ballantine Books, 2025
Amid her efforts to flee childhood trauma, Abby discovers that a piece of her family's heirloom remains with her, no matter how far she travels.
(e-book, audio available)

Williams, Preslaysa
A Wedding in the Lowcountry
Avon Books, 2024
Avila returns to Charleston after a tragic loss and is forced to confront complicated feelings from the past.
(e-book, audio available)

Williams, Shanora
Beautiful Broken Love
Amazon Publishing, 2024
To rekindle or not? Two former lovers must decide if love can heal the scars of their turbulent past.

Williams, Synthia
Frenemies with Benefits
HarperCollins, 2025
Former rivals must decide if they can transform their love-hate dynamic into something more.
(e-book, audio available)



John Vercher
Devil is Fine

GRAPHIC NOVELS/COMICS

Ahmed, Saladin
Abbott: 1979
BOOM! Studios, 2024
Detroit-based Black photojournalist Elena Abbott returns with a third installment, forced yet again
to wage war against the supernatural forces set upon destroying her city.
(e-book available)



Marc Bernardin
Star Wars: Mace Windu - The Twilight Run

Ayodele, Murewa and Dotun Akande
Akogun: Brutalizer of Gods
Oni Press, 2025
A dark fantasy journey to the African continent Alkebulan, where Akogun seeks vengeance against those who wronged him.

Bernardin, Marc
Star Wars: Mace Windu - The Twilight Run
Licensed Publishing, 2024
A beloved Jedi Knight is tasked with stepping in after a major scientific breakthrough endangers the galaxy.
(e-book available)

Cass, Caitlin
Suffrage Song: The Haunted History of Gender, Race and Voting Rights in the United States of America
Fantagraphics Books, 2024
An examination of the women's suffrage movement that looks beyond the white activists, and highlights the Black and brown women who also fought tirelessly for voting rights.
(e-book available)

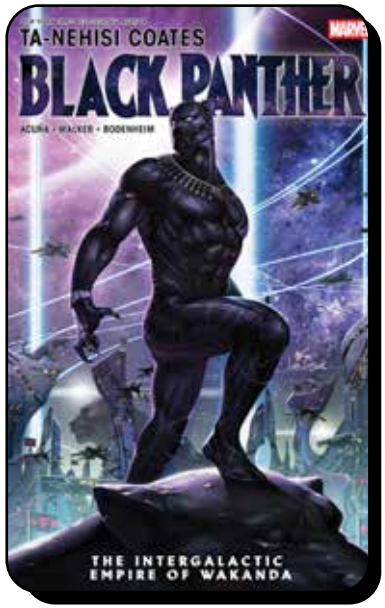
Coates, Ta-Nehisi
Black Panther 1: The Intergalactic Empire of Wakanda
Marvel Universe, 2025
T'Challa leaves his terrestrial kingdom and ends up in the cosmos where new adventures await.

Holland, Jesse J. (Ed.), L. L. McKinney, Sheree Renée Thomas, M. Kyoko and Maurice Broaddus
Captain America: The Shield of Sam Wilson
Titan Books, 2025
A collection of short stories by Black writers pay homage to the newest Captain America.

Hudlin, Reginald, Evan Narcisse, Denys Cowan and Paul Renaud
Captain America/Black Panther: Flags of Our Fathers
Marvel Universe, 2025
In this mash-up, the first Captain America joins forces with T'Challa's grandfather, Azzuri, to battle Nazis during World War II.
(e-book available)

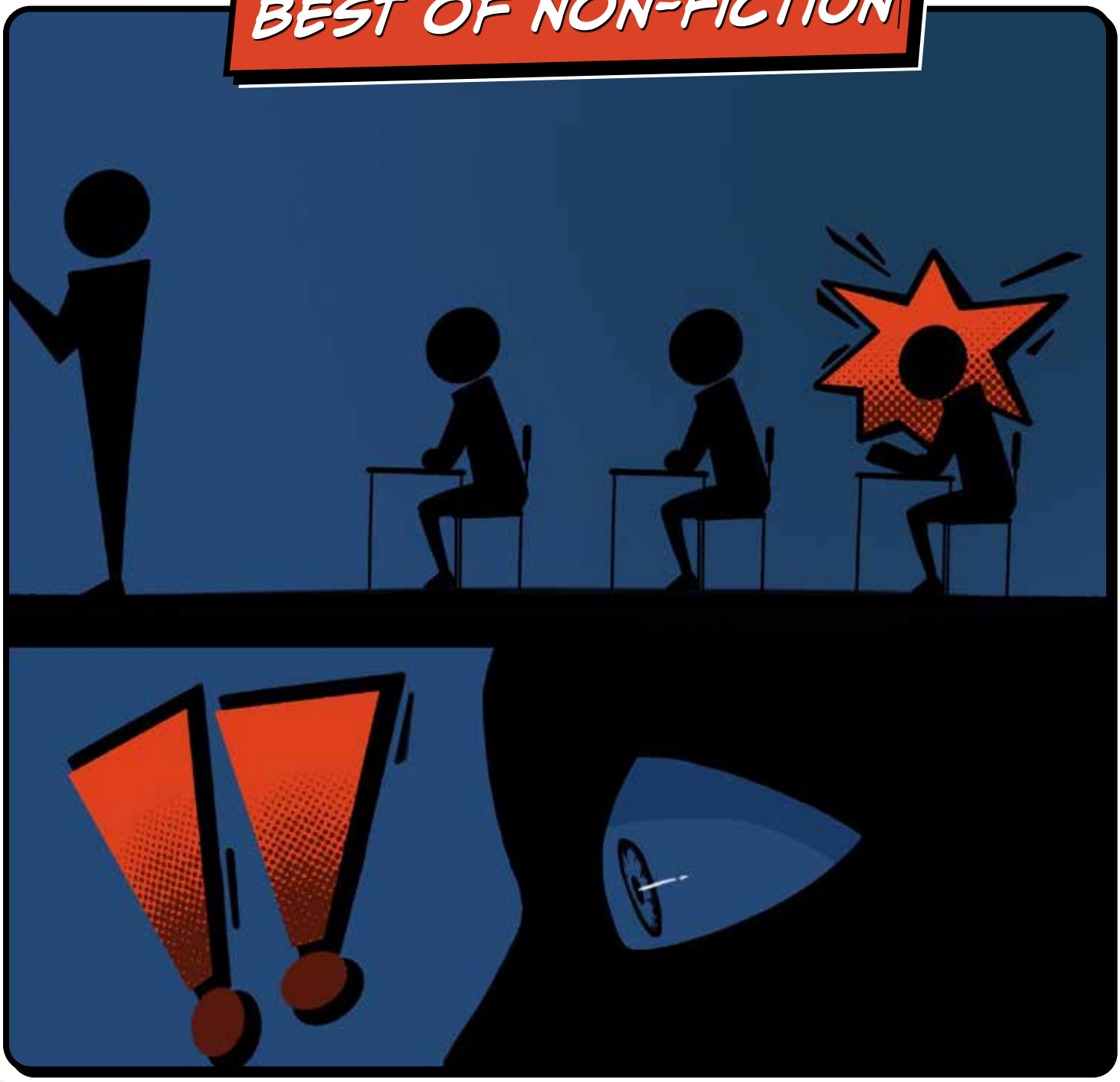
Phang, Loo Hui and Hugues Micol
Erased: An Actor of Color's Journey Through the Heyday of Hollywood
NBM Publishing, 2024
Maximus Wyld—Black, Native American and Chinese—seeks fame and recognition as an actor in Hollywood during the 1940s and 1950s, facing discrimination along the way.
(e-book available)

Ralph, Michael *Before 13th: A Graphic Novel*
Amistad Press, 2025
Delves into the unique friendship between 19th Century icons Frederick Douglass and Ida B. Wells, who often clashed ideologically about how best to fight racial injustice.
(e-book, audio available)



Ta-Nehisi Coates
Black Panther 1: The Intergalactic Empire of Wakanda

BEST OF NON-FICTION



BEST OF 2024

Coates, Ta-Nehisi
The Message
One World, 2024
MacArthur Fellow and best-selling author discusses his search for truth over harmful myths destroying the world and our souls.
(e-book, audio available)

Curtin, Mary Ellen
She Changed the Nation: Barbara Jordan's Life and Legacy in Black Politics
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024
Explores the ambitious and courageous political career of the congresswoman who achieved fame during the Watergate impeachment hearings.
(e-book available)

Lanier, Tamara
From These Roots: My Fight with Harvard to Reclaim My Legacy
Crown Publishing, 2025
The remarkable story of one woman's fight to prove and recoup her family's ancestry from a powerful institution.
(e-book, audio available)

Robertson, Aaron
The Black Utopians: Searching for Paradise and the Promised Land in America
Farrar Strauss & Giroux, 2024
Explores the efforts of Black Americans to forge a path toward liberation and independence.
(e-book, audio available)

Williams, Juan
New Prize for These Eyes: The Rise of America's Second Civil Rights Movement
Simon & Schuster, 2025
A survey of the modern Civil Rights Movement that examines the systematic racism, police brutality, and other fervid issues.
(e-book available)

ART, MUSIC, POETRY

Asare, Masi
Blues Mamas and Broadway Belters: Black Women, Voice, and the Musical Stage
Duke University Press, 2024
Pays tribute to the voices that shaped musical theater in America from 1900 to 1970, from "Ma" Rainey to Eartha Kitt to Leslie Uggams.
(e-book available)

Awake, Robell
A Short History of Black Craft in Ten Objects
Chronicle Books LLC, 2025
Black American artists and designers are showcased through appraisals of their most iconic creations.
(e-book available)

Brown, Carolynne Hitter
Singing Through Struggle: Music, Worship and Identity in Post Emancipation Black Churches
University Press of Mississippi, 2025
Historian provides critical assessment of spiritual music in 19th Century African American life.

Bryant, Aaron, Bisa Butler, Michelle D. Commander, Tuliza Fleming and Amy Sherald
Reckoning: Protest. Defiance. Resilience.
Rizzoli Electa, 2024
The artworks emphasize the spirit of radical dissent in the wake of two major events: COVID-19 and the summer of racial protests in 2020.

Cortez, Jayne
Firespitter: The Collected Poems
Nightboat Books, 2025
A long overdue posthumous collection from the poet and multidisciplinary artist known for her political activism and singular creative voice.

Ege, Samantha
South Side Impresarios: How Race Women Transformed Chicago's Classical Music Scene
University of Illinois Press, 2024
Dives into the lives and careers of the Black female composers who contributed to Chicago's flourishing classical music scene between the world wars.
(e-book available)

NON-FICTION (CON'T)

Everett, Percival
Sonnets for a Missing Key: And Some Others
Red Hen Press, 2024
The 2024 National Book Award winner draws inspiration from music, specifically Frédéric Chopin and Art Tatum, in this connected series of sonnets.
(e-book available)

Fernando, S. H., Jr.
The Chronicles of Doom: Unraveling Rap's Masked Iconoclast
Astra House, 2024
The comprehensive biography of one of hip-hop's most treasured performers, MF Doom, known for his masked on-stage supervillain persona and groundbreaking rapping techniques.
(e-book, audio available)

Harrold, Marguerite L.
Chicago House Music: Culture and Community
Belt Publishing, 2024
Honors the Black, Queer originators of the world-renowned electronic house music genre that came out of Chicago in the late 1970s.
(e-book available)

Hughes, Langston
Blues in Stereo: The Early Works of Langston Hughes
Legacy Lit, 2024
A collection, curated by National Book Award finalist Danez Smith, of the quintessential Harlem Renaissance poet's earliest works—spanning from 1921 to 1927.
(e-book, audio available)

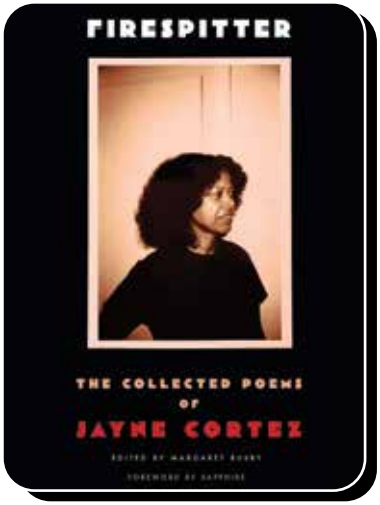
Kennedy, Jr., Amos Paul
Citizen Printer
Letterform Archive, 2024
A visually stunning tribute to the Detroit-based letterpress printer and community justice advocate.

Lauterbach, Preston
Before Elvis: The African American Musicians Who Made the King
Hachette Books, 2025
A thorough assessment of the musical influences that created Presley's sound and style.
(e-book, audio available)

Neal, Shirley
Afrocentric Style: A Celebration of Blackness & Identity in Pop Culture
Amistad Press, 2024
A salute to the indelible influences on culture, art, fashion and the media in America and around the globe.

Rogers, Brittany
Good Dress: Poems
Tin House, 2024
A debut collection from a poet to watch about growing up in Detroit.
(e-book available)

Scruggs, Dalila (ed.)
Elizabeth Catlett: A Black Revolutionary Artist and All That It Implies
University of Chicago Press, 2024
A collection of essays about the artist-activist whose sculptures and prints emblazon Black lives.



Jayne Cortez
Firespitter: The Collected Poems

Smith, Danez
Bluff: Poems
Graywolf Press, 2024
Smith's first book of poems since the COVID-19 pandemic is an emotional and evocative exploration of art during apocalyptic times.

Stewart, Ebony
Wash
Button Poetry, 2025
A riveting literary illustration of survival through verse.

Weathersby, Irvin
In Open Contempt: Confronting White Supremacy in Art and Public Space
Viking Press, 2025
A study of historical statues, monuments and spaces that contribute to the denial of the truth about America's past.
(e-book, audio available)

BIOGRAPHY/MEMOIRS

Baker, Josephine
Fearless and Free: A Memoir
Tiny Reparations Books, 2025
Originally published in 1949 in France, the famed performer recounts her life and career from the 1920s to the 1960s Civil Rights Movement.
(e-book, audio available)

Charity, Lynette
Escape Plan: Dreaming My Way Out of the Projects
She Writes Press, 2024
Charity reflects on her journey and how resilience and determination led her out of poverty.

Curtin, Mary Ellen
She Changed the Nation: Barbara Jordan's Life and Legacy in Black Politics
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024
Explores the ambitious and courageous political career of the congresswoman who achieved fame during the Watergate impeachment hearings.
(e-book available)

da Costa Greene, Belle
Belle da Costa Greene: A Librarian's Legacy
Delmonico Books, 2024
A compilation of essays about the first director of the Morgan Library, a Black librarian who was able to pass as a white woman.

Davis, Bridgett M.
Love, Rita: An American Story of Sisterhood, Joy, Loss, and Legacy
Harper, 2025
A reflection of the acclaimed author's exceptional sister who accomplished so much in her short life.

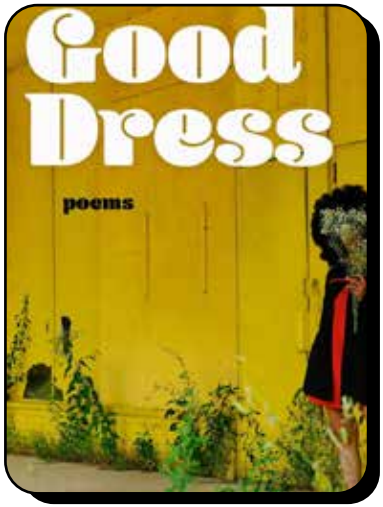
Dukuray, Jaha Marie
I Will Scream to the World: My Story. My Fight. My Hope for Girls Everywhere
Dafina Books, 2024
Dukuray shares her journey of overcoming trauma and adversity to inspire hope and bring about change for young women facing challenges like her own.
(e-book, audio available)

Eve and Kathy Landoli
Who's That Girl: A Memoir
Hanover Square Press, 2024
Rapper Eve takes readers on a journey from her roots in the Philadelphia projects to her rise in the male-dominated rap world.
(e-book, audio available)

Grae, Jean
In My Remaining Years
Flatiron Books, 2025
The artist and former rapper has readers laughing and crying in her debut collection of essays that spans from 1980s New York City to the present.
(e-book, audio available)

Gumbs, Alexis Pauline
Survival Is a Promise: The Eternal Life of Audre Lorde
Macmillan Publishers, 2024
The professor, poet, and activist's rich creative life is explored.
(e-book, audio available)

Hawkins, Lee
I Am Nobody's Slave: How Uncovering My Family's History Set Me Free
HarperCollins, 2025
Part searing memoir and part genealogical inquest, one family's struggles are detailed as they relate to America's original sin: slavery and the violent racial discrimination that followed.
(e-book, audio available)



Brittany Rogers
Good Dress: Poems

Meeks, Jeremy
Model Citizen: The Autobiography of Jeremy Meeks
Kingston Imperial, 2024
From prison to posing, a captivating story of an inmate who redefined his life as a model and actor.
(e-book available)

Moore, Marcus J.
High and Rising: A Book About De La Soul
Dey Streets Books, 2024
A coming-of-age story and biographical sketch of the seminal hip-hop trio and how their trials and perseverance impacted them.
(e-book, audio available)

NON-FICTION (CON'T)

Palmer, Keke
Master of Me: The Secret to Controlling Your Narrative
Flatiron Book, 2024
From alienation to abandonment, newly single mother and mogul reclaims her power.
(e-book, audio available)

Sanders, Chad
How to Sell Out: The (Hidden) Cost of Being a Black Writer
Simon & Schuster, 2025
An African American author lays bare the pitfalls of the American publishing industry.
(e-book, audio available)

Smiley, Rickey
Sideshow: Living with Loss and Moving Forward with Faith
Thomas Nelson, 2024
The popular comedian reveals his dark truths and why his personal life is nothing to laugh about.
(e-book, audio available)

Smith, Tanya
Never Saw Me Coming: How I Outsmarted the FBI and the Entire Banking System--and Pocketed $40 Million
Little Brown & Co., 2024
A captivating account of a young woman who developed a scheme targeting the banking sector, just to prove that she could do it.
(e-book, audio available)

Trina and Sesali Bowen
Da Baddest
Simon & Schuster, 2024
An inspiring narrative of the award-winning hip-hop artist and her iconic evolution to become the *baddest* female rapper.
(e-book, audio available)

White, Jaleel
Growing Up Urkel
Simon & Schuster, 2024
A humorous and insightful look at the early career of one of America's beloved sitcom icons.
(e-book, audio available)



Jean Grae
In My Remaining Years

BUSINESS, FINANCE AND CAREER

Bank, Dana
Get Up and Get on It: A Black Entrepreneur's Lessons on Creating Legacy & Wealth
John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2024
A businesswoman shares insights from her family's successful real estate business, started by her father 70 years ago after leaving Detroit for the Pacific Northwest.
(e-book, audio available)

Bilal, Rashad and Troy Millings
You Deserve to Be Rich: Master the Inner Game of Wealth and Claim Your Future
Crown Currency, 2025
Two entrepreneurs reckon with the economic barriers facing many Black Americans by providing a realistic framework for building generational, sustainable wealth.
(e-book, audio available)

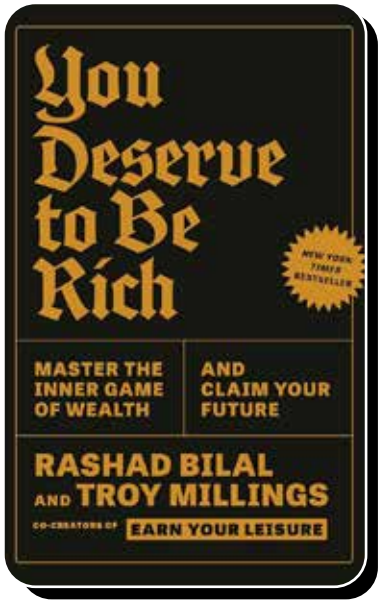
Evans, Aja
Feel-Good Finance: Untangle Your Relationship with Money for Better Mental, Emotional, and Financial Well-Being
Benbella Books, 2024
A licensed financial therapist goes beyond the numbers, taking a more psychological approach to budgeting and wealth management.
(e-book, audio available)

Hallmon, Lakeysha
No One Is Self-Made: Build Your Village to Flourish in Business and Life
Dey Street Books, 2025
Advises new entrepreneurs and struggling business owners to rely on community building for long-term success.
(e-book, audio available)

Kennard, Devon
Real Estate Side Hustle: Four Passive Investing Strategies to Build Wealth Beyond Your Day Job
BiggerPockets, 2024
A retired NFL linebacker gives frank, direct advice for those looking to gain additional income by investing in real estate.
(e-book, audio available)

Kennedy, Dasha
Moving Beyond Broke: The Power of Perseverance in Personal Finance
Simon Element / Simon Acumen, 2025
Designed to help Black women achieve financial security, the founder of the website *The Broke Black Girl* shares her own monetary struggles.
(e-book, audio available)

Keys, William IV
The Stories They Hear: Expecting Greatness as the Key to Success
Ideapress Publishing, 2025
Inspiring stories from a business and entrepreneur mentorship program for Black male college students.



Rashad Bilal and Troy Millings
You Deserve to Be Rich: Master the Inner Game of Wealth and Claim Your Future

Story, Louise and Ebony Reed
Fifteen Cents on the Dollar: How Americans Made the Black-White Wealth Gap
Harper Collins, 2024
A narrative history of Black wealth, economic discrimination, and systemic racism.

COOKING/ENTERTAINMENT

Beatty, Celeste
Harlem Brew Soul: A Beer-Infused Soul Food Cookbook
Rock Point Gift & Stationary, 2024
A unique collection of recipes, history and family lore that focuses on the popular beverage.
(e-book available)

Edmond, Will and Austyn Rich
Vegan Street Eats: The Best Plant-based Versions of Burgers, Wings, Tacos, Gyros and More
Page Street Publishing Co, 2024
A popular chef recreates recipes commonly found in the global night market and food truck scene.
(e-book available)

Hall, Tamron and Lish Steiling
A Confident Cook: Recipes for Joyous, No-Pressure Fun in the Kitchen
Hyperion Avenue, 2024
A collection of easy and stress-free dishes designed to inspire confidence and enjoyment in the kitchen.

Jenkins, Malachi, Roberto Smith, and Kathy Landoli
Trap Kitchen: Wah Gwaan: Jamaican Cookbook
Kingston Imperial, 2024
A vibrant array of authentic dishes that blends traditional flavors with a modern twist.

Louie, Scot
Tastemaker: Cooking with Spice, Style & Soul
Weldon Owen, 2024
Fun and accessible recipes from a celebrity stylist fusing Jamaican flavorings with classic soul food dishes.
(e-book available)

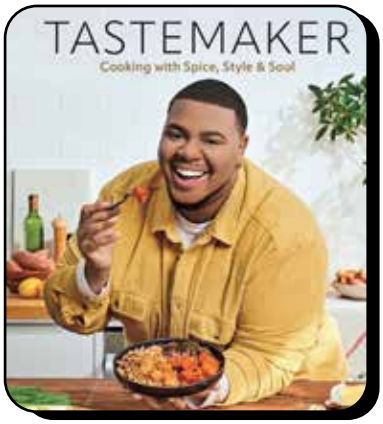
Roker, Al and Courtney Roker Laga
Al Roker's Recipes to Live by: Easy, Memory-Making Family Dishes for Every Occasion
Legacy Lit, 2024
A heartwarming collection of delicious dishes intended to bring families together and create lasting memories around the dinner table.
(e-book available)

NON-FICTION (CON'T)

Shanti, Ashleigh
Our South: Black Food Through My Lens
Union Square and Co, 2024
Takes readers on a culinary journey through the South, from the mountains of Appalachia to the coastal byways of the Lowcountry.
(e-book available)

HEALTH & SCIENCE

Bonhomme, Edna
A History of the World in Six Plagues: How Contagion, Class, and Captivity Shaped Us, from Cholera to Covid-19
Atria/One Signal Publishers, 2025
Explores a myriad of parallels between epidemic diseases and systemic inequalities.
(e-book, audio available)



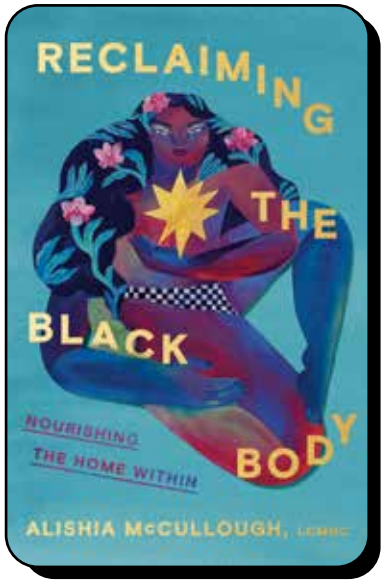
Scot Louie
Tastemaker: Cooking with Spice, Style & Soul

McCullough, Alishia
Reclaiming the Black Body: Nourishing the Home Within
The Dial Press, 2025
Brings an awareness of eating disorders, the negative effects on the body, and the journey to healing.
(e-book, audio available)

Marie, Jasmine
Black Girls Breathing: Heal from Trauma, Combat Chronic Stress, and Find Your Freedom
Balance, 2024
Practical guide demonstrates how using breathing techniques can positively impact the negative forces Black women face.
(e-book, audio available)

Regisford, Malcolm
Tapped in Wellness: Lasting Performance and Health Through Mindful Living and Eating
Mango, 2024
Discover the tools to become more intentional about creating a well-balanced life.

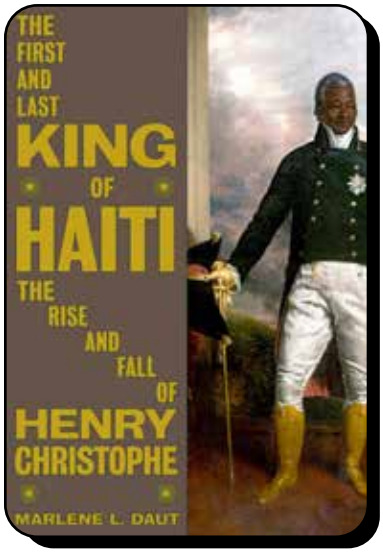
Rolston, Yansie and Patrick Vernon
Black Grief and Healing: Why We Need to Talk About Health Inequality, Trauma and Loss
Jessica Kingsley Publishing, 2024
Inspiring collection provides insight into addressing the common challenges and adversity in the Black community.
(e-book available)



Alishia McCullough
Reclaiming the Black Body: Nourishing the Home Within

Speight, Teresa J.
Black Flora: Inspiring Profiles of Floriculture's New Vanguard
Timber Press, 2024
Author provides over 20 profiles of horticulturalists with photos to inspire the next generation of Black gardeners.
(e-book available)

Turner, Erlanger A., Thema Bryant, and Jeffrey Gardere
Raising Resilient Black Kids: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Cope with Racial Stress, Manage Emotions, and Thrive
New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 2024
Step-by step guide with the tools necessary to build and protect a child's mental health and wellness.
(e-book, audio available)



Marlene Daut
The First and Last King of Haiti: The Rise and Fall of Henry Christophe

Wilson, Wylin D.
Womanist Bioethics: Social Justice, Spirituality, and Black Women's Health
NYU Press, 2025
An in-depth study confronts health disparity outcomes and speaks truth to power in hopes of change.
(e-book available)

HISTORY

Baker, Brea
Rooted: The American Legacy of Land Theft and the Modern Movement for Black Land Ownership
One World, 2024
An historical analysis of attacks on both Indigenous and African American property owners.
(e-book, audio available)

Berry, Mary Frances
Slavery After Slavery: Revealing the Legacy of Forced Child Apprenticeships on Black Families, from Emancipation to the Present
Beacon Press, 2025
Explores the ways Black children were subjugated into a new system of bondage after the Civil War.
(e-book, audio available)

Crim, Ernest
How Black History Can Save Your Life: From the Talk to George Floyd, Everything You Need to Know to Deescalate a Racist Situation
Mango, 2025
An anti-racist educator provides actionable advice for adults who want to challenge racist policies and beliefs in their communities.

Daut, Marlene
The First and Last King of Haiti: The Rise and Fall of Henry Christophe
Knopf Publishing Group, 2025
A riveting story of Haiti's only king highlighting the triumphs and tragedies of this notorious and glorious leader.
(e-book, audio available)

David, Gabrielle, Carolina Fung Feng, Chandra D. L. Waring and Lyah Beth LeFlore
Trailblazers: Black Women Who Helped Make America Great
2-Leaf Press, 2024
An evaluation of the contributions and impact of women shaping American history.

Edwards, Justene Hill
Savings and Trust: The Rise and Betrayal of the Freedman's Bank
Norton, 2024
An historian details the creation and destruction of one of the first financial institutions intended for the formerly enslaved.
(e-book, audio available)

Ellis, Jack D.
Physicians for the People: Black Doctors and the Struggle for Healthcare Equality in Alabama, 1870—1970
University of Alabama Press, 2025
Oral histories of African American physicians who practiced in Alabama during the Jim Crow era.

Giesberg, Judith
Last Seen: The Enduring Search by Formerly Enslaved People to Find Their Lost Families
Simon & Schuster, 2025
Documents the harrowing travails of those who attempted to reconnect with loved ones they were separated from before slavery ended in 1865.

Giggie, John M.
Bloody Tuesday: The Untold Story of the Struggle for Civil Rights in Tuscaloosa
Oxford University Press, 2024
A dramatic account of the violent police attack on parishioners at the First African Baptist Church in 1964.
(e-book, audio available)

NON-FICTION (CON'T)

Gronningsater, Sarah L. H.
The Rising Generation: Gradual Abolition, Black Legal Culture, and the Making of National Freedom
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024
Chronicles quasi-free African American New Yorkers who worked to shape the journey toward emancipation.
(e-book available)

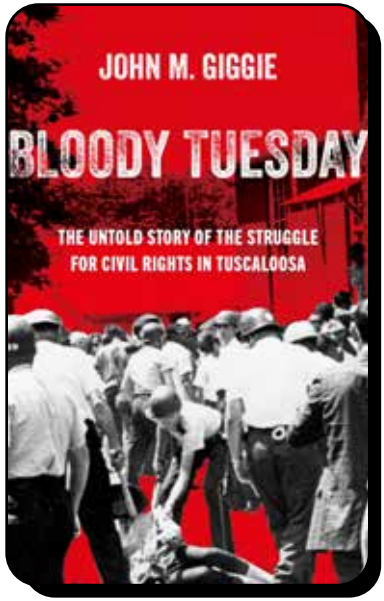
Hughes, Sakina
Music, Muscle, and Masterful Arts: Black and Indigenous Performers of the Circus Age
University of North Carolina Press, 2025
Intriguing narratives of little-known traveling entertainers who performed during the last half of the 19th century through the first half of the 20th century.
(e-book available)

Jackson, Kellie Carter
We Refuse: A Forceful History of Black Resistance
Seal Press, 2024
A detailed look at the use of violence as a form of activism in the fight against white supremacy.
(e-book, audio available)

Jacobs, John Swanson and Jonathan D. S. Schroeder
The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots: A True Story of Slavery; A Rediscovered Narrative
University of Chicago Press, 2024
A first-person narrative by the brother of Harriet Jacobs, an abolitionist and expatriate who originally told his story to an Australian newspaper.
(e-book, audio available)

Klug, Sam
The Internal Colony: Race and the American Politics of Global Decolonization
University of Chicago Press, 2025
Highlights the importance of worldwide independence and how it shaped both American liberalism and the Civil Rights Movement.
(e-book available)

Lanier, Tamara
From These Roots: My Fight with Harvard to Reclaim My Legacy
Crown Publishing, 2025
The remarkable story of one woman's fight to prove and recoup her family's ancestry from a powerful institution.
(e-book, audio available)



John M. Giggie
Bloody Tuesday: The Untold Story of the Struggle for Civil Rights in Tuscaloosa

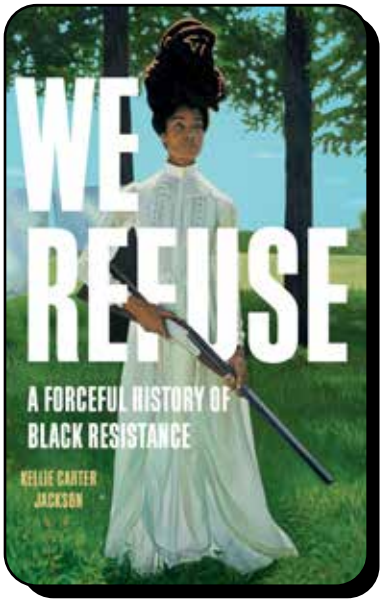
Lewis, David Levering
The Stained-Glass Window: A Family History as the American Story, 1790-1958
Penguin Press, 2025
A professor emeritus revisits his family's legacy, from antebellum slavery to the Civil Rights Movement.
(e-book, audio available)

National Museum of African American History and Culture, Paul Gardullo, Johanna Obenda, Anthony Bogues, and Lonnie G. Bunch
In Slavery's Wake: Making Black Freedom in the World
Smithsonian Institute Press, 2024
A series of essays providing a thorough review of the modern-day impact of slavery and colonialism.

Omokha, Rita
Resist: How a Century of Young Black Activists Shaped America
Macmillan, 2024
A Nigerian immigrant details the ways a youthful generation helped create the Civil Rights Movement.

Perry, Imani
Black In Blues: How a Color Tells the Story of My People
Ecco, 2025
An American scholar investigates the cultural and sociological conceptualization of Blackness.
(e-book, audio available)

Robertson, Aaron
The Black Utopians: Searching for Paradise and the Promised Land in America
Farrar Strauss & Giroux, 2024
Explores the efforts of Black Americans to forge a path toward liberation and independence.
(e-book, audio available)



Kellie Carter Jackson
We Refuse: A Forceful History of Black Resistance

Shetterly, Aran
Morningside: The 1979 Greensboro Massacre and the Struggle for an American City's Soul
Amistad Press, 2024
A retelling of the racial tensions leading to a deadly confrontation in a North Carolina neighborhood.

Thompson, Wright
The Barn: The Secret History of a Murder in Mississippi
Penguin Press, 2024
A new and chilling account of the land, the people, and the circumstances surrounding the murder of Emmett Till.
(e-book, audio available)

Trotter, Jr., Joe William
Building the Black City: The Transformation of American Life
University of California Press, 2024
A discussion of the history and the ways the progress of African Americans altered major cities.
(e-book available)

Weaver, Fawn
Love & Whiskey: The Remarkable True Story of Jack Daniel, His Master Distiller Nearest Green, and the Improbable Rise of Uncle Nearest
Two Rivers Distribution, 2024
A combination of historical facts and good story telling recounts the life and contributions of the creator of the famed brand.
(e-book available)

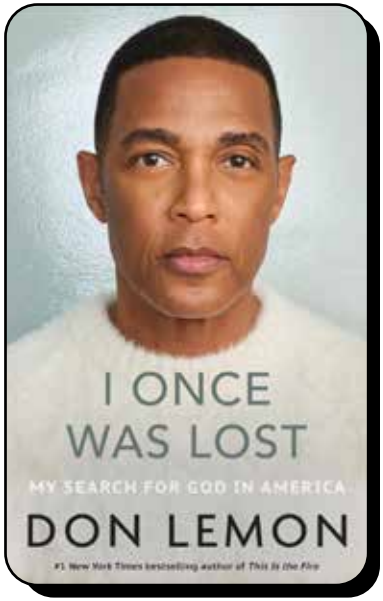
Willis, Deborah and Kevin Merida
Kamala: Her Historic, Joyful and Auspicious Sprint to the White House
37 Ink, 2024
A celebration of the momentous 2024 presidential campaign described with insightful essays and over 100 photographs.
(e-book available)

INSPIRATIONAL/ RELIGION/ SELF-HELP

Adams, Khristi Lauren
Womanish Theology: Discovering God Through the Lens of Black Girlhood
Baker Publishing Group, 2024
A sojourn through a spiritual journey as the author grows into adulthood.
(e-book, audio available)

NON-FICTION (CON'T)

Berry, Rasool, Maliek Blade and Jerome Gay
The Whole Man: 40 Spiritual Reflections from Black Men on the Head, Heart, Hands, and Soul
Our Daily Bread Publishing, 2024
A powerful collection imparts scriptural wisdom to explore the connection of thoughts, emotions, and actions needed to grow closer to God.



Don Lemon
I Once Was Lost: My Search for God in America

Coles, Donyae
Hoodoo: A Little Introduction
Running Press, 2024
Illustrated guidebook pays homage to the historical, spiritual and cultural traditions practiced by many in African and Black communities.

Hersey, Tricia
We Will Rest! The Art of Escape
Little, Brown Spark, 2024
The founder of *The Nap Ministry* combines poems, images, and meditations to create a guide for those in search of respite and relaxation.
(e-book, audio available)

Johnson, Manuel V.
Know Thy Man: Learn What Your Man is Thinking - Secrets Men Do Not Want You to Know
Manuel Johnson, 2024
Ten years of research yields practical advice and strategies to better understand your partner.

Jones Quarles, Melanie
Up Against a Crooked Gospel: Black Women's Bodies and the Politics of Redemption
Orbis Books, 2024
An unblemished critique of the harmful narratives surrounding the personal struggles of Black women.

King, Jeanne Porter
Caring Well: 90 Self-Care Devotions for the African American Caregiver
Our Daily Bread Publishing, 2024
Using a spiritual lens, the author encourages self-care and renewal by offering guidance to navigate the challenges of caring for others.

Lemon, Don
I Once Was Lost: My Search for God in America
Little Brown and Company, 2024
A deeply personal journey of faith that dissects spirituality, identity, and a belief in modern America.
(e-book, audio available)

Marie, Shelah
Unruly: A Guide to Reclaiming Your True Self
Sounds True, 2024
An empowering guide for embracing authenticity, overcoming societal pressures, and reconnecting with your true self.
(e-book, audio available)

Roberts, Sarah Jakes
Power Moves Study Guide: What the Bible Says About How You Can Reclaim and Redefine Your God-Given Power
Harperchristian Resources, 2024
Popular motivational speaker provides a practical guide to understanding and embracing the spiritual strengths and power attained through faith.
(e-book available)

Shelton, Jason E.
The Contemporary Black Church: The New Dynamics of African American Religion
New York University Press, 2024
An analysis of the demographics and religious affiliations that have had a consequential effect within American politics.
(e-book available)

Thomas, Danyelle
The Day God Saw Me as Black
Row House, 2024
A theologian emphasizes the importance of embracing one's racial identity in the context of spirituality and divine purpose.
(e-book, audio available)

POLITICAL/ SOCIAL SCIENCES/ EDUCATION

Adams, Michelle
The Containment: Detroit, the Supreme Court, and the Battle for Racial Justice in the North
Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2025
An engrossing portrait of school desegregation following the Supreme Court's monumental 1974 decision.
(e-book available)

Atuahene, Bernadette
Plundered: How Racist Policies Undermine Black Homeownership in America
Little, Brown and Company, 2025
A property law scholar describes how two men, one Black and one White, moved to Detroit at the same time and were affected by government housing practices.

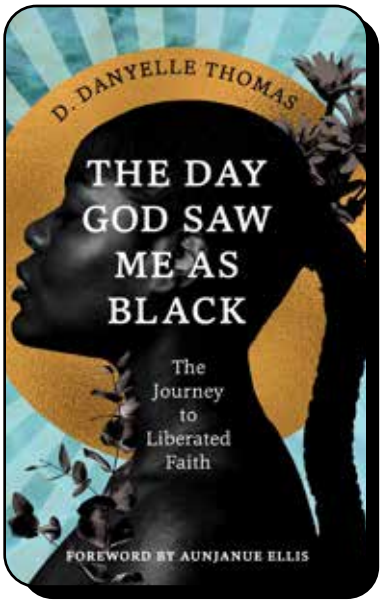
brown, adrienne maree
Loving Corrections
AK Press, 2024
Best-selling author and activist compels readers to embrace mistakes while continuing to advocate for positive change in the world.
(e-book, audio available)

Coates, Ta-Nehisi
The Message
One World, 2024
MacArthur Fellow and best-selling author discusses his search for truth shrouded by harmful myths destroying the world and our souls.
(e-book, audio available)

Garvey, Julius
Justice For Marcus Garvey
Broadleaf Books, 2024
A brilliant collection of essays and stories about the notorious and pivotal trailblazer that forever changed American history.
(e-book available)

Hagopian, Jesse
Teach Truth: The Struggle for Antiracist Education
Haymarket Books, 2025
A challenging account of educators willing to tell American history as it really happened—despite opposition.
(e-book available)

Johnson, Chelsea Mary Elise
Natural: Black Beauty and the Politics of Hair
New York University Press, 2024
Presents the premise that hair is about more than aesthetics for Black women, often reflecting personal expression, spirituality and cultural beliefs.
(e-book available)

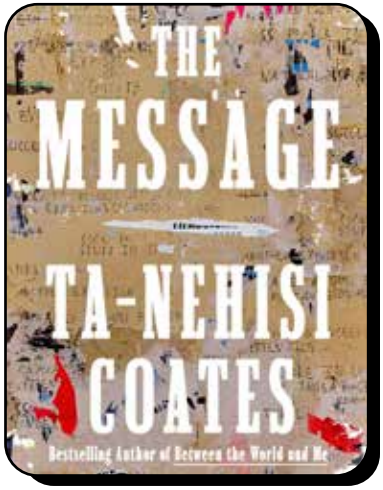


Danyelle Thomas
The Day God Saw Me as Black

Johnston, Amber O'Neal
Soul School: Taking Kids on a Joy-filled Journey Through the Heart of Black American Culture
TarcherPerigee, 2025
A homeschooling blogger and mother promotes diverse voices in traditional educational curriculum with 100+ must-read youth titles from Black authors.
(e-book available)

Landau, Deb Miller
A Devil Went Down to Georgia: Race, Power, Privilege and the Murder of Lita McClinton
Pegasus Books, 2024
A compelling narrative combines a family's fight for justice with a stinging indictment of the justice system.
(e-book available)

NON-FICTION (CON'T)



Ta-Nehisi Coates
The Message

Lubimbi, Thandi
Race and Entertainment: Reflections on Racism in Film, TV and the Media
Kamera Books, 2025
An analysis of the African American experience in the communications and entertainment industries.
(e-book available)

Mosley, Laci
Scam Goddess: Lessons from a Life of Cons, Grifts, and Schemes
Running Press, 2024
A master manipulator discusses how she uses her skills to overcome obstacles in her life.
(e-book, audio available)

Neal, Shirley
Afrocentric Style: A Celebration of Blackness & Identity in Pop Culture
Amistad Press, 2024
A salute to the indelible influences on culture, art, fashion and the media.

Neely, Cheryl
No Human Involved: The Serial Murder of Black Women and Girls and the Deadly Cost of Police Indifference
Beacon Press, 2025
An examination of the lack of police and media interest in murder cases involving Black women and girls.
(e-book, audio available)

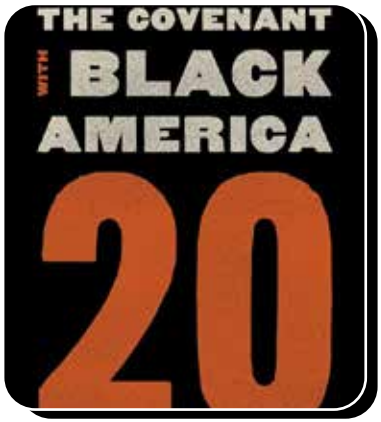
Smiley, Tavis
The Covenant with Black America Twenty Years Later
Hay House Inc., 2024
Revisiting his groundbreaking publication, Smiley returns with new insights on the critical issues facing the African American community.
(e-book available)

Williams, Juan
New Prize for These Eyes: The Rise of America's Second Civil Rights Movement
Simon & Schuster, 2025
A survey of the modern Civil Rights Movement that examines the systematic racism, police brutality, and other fervid issues.
(e-book available)

SPORTS & RECREATION

Barnes, Matt and Stephen Jackson
All the Smoke: All the Stars, All the Stories, No Apologies
Black Privilege Publishing, 2024
An homage to the award-winning podcast hosts features highlights of their careers, photographs and a recap of some of their most popular interviews.
(e-book available)

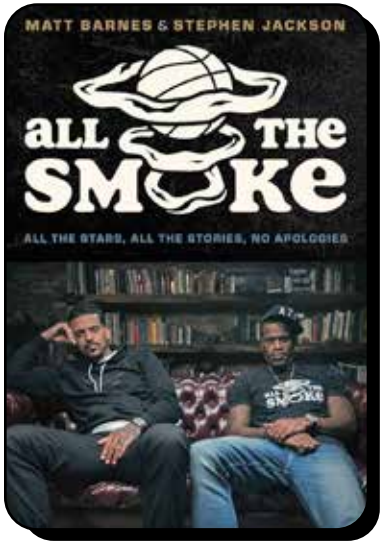
Brown, Letisha Engracia Cardoso
Say Her Name: Centering Black Feminism and Black Women in Sport
Rutgers University Press, 2025
A thoughtful consideration of the issues girls and women face in competitive games, through a feminist lens.



Tavis Smiley
The Covenant with Black America Twenty Years Later

Canada, Tracie
Tackling the Everyday: Race and Nation in Big-Time College Football
University of California Press, 2025
A sociological study of college athletes as they grapple with classes, competition and frequent injuries.

Cook, Kevin
The Tiger Slam: The Inside Story of the Greatest Golf Ever Played (Tiger Woods in 2000–2001)
Avid Reader Press, 2024
An intricate look at the world's most famous linksman at the height of his illustrious career.
(e-book, audio available)



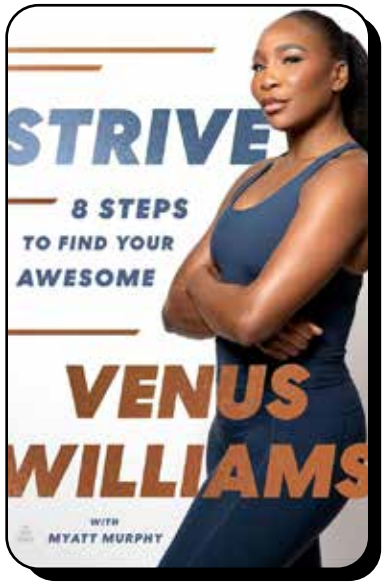
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