

african american history documentaries

African American History Documentaries: A Journey Through Resilience and Triumph

Exploring the rich tapestry of African American history can be a deeply moving and enlightening experience. Documentaries offer a powerful medium to delve into the struggles, triumphs, and cultural contributions of Black Americans throughout history. This comprehensive guide will explore a selection of impactful documentaries, highlighting their unique perspectives and contributions to our understanding of this vital aspect of American history. We'll examine various themes, from the transatlantic slave trade to the Civil Rights Movement and beyond, providing you with a curated list to enrich your knowledge and spark further exploration. Whether you're a history enthusiast, a student, or simply seeking a deeper understanding, this guide will equip you with the resources to embark on a captivating journey through African American history.

Article Outline:

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Focus on contemporary issues and challenges faced by African Americans.
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II. Documentaries Focusing on Slavery and the Antebellum Period:

Understanding the brutal realities of slavery is crucial to grasping the complexities of African American history. Documentaries like *Roots* (based on Alex Haley's novel) offer a powerful, albeit fictionalized, account of a family's journey through slavery. While fictionalized accounts can lack the nuance of strictly historical documentaries, they can still be powerful tools for emotional

engagement and raising awareness of the topic. More historically focused documentaries, such as those examining specific slave revolts or the Underground Railroad, provide vital contextual information. It's important, however, to be aware of potential biases in any historical narrative. Analyzing the sources used and the perspectives presented is key to critical viewing. Pay attention to the filmmaker's choices and how they might shape the narrative. Looking at multiple documentaries on the same topic can provide a more balanced understanding.

III. Documentaries on the Civil Rights Movement:

The Civil Rights Movement is extensively documented, offering viewers a wealth of resources to explore this pivotal period. Documentaries often focus on key figures like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X, showcasing their leadership, strategies, and unwavering commitment to equality. *Eyes on the Prize*, a landmark documentary series, provides an in-depth look at the movement's major events and the diverse range of individuals involved. These documentaries not only recount the events but also delve into the strategies, the sacrifices, and the internal debates within the movement itself. Different documentaries may emphasize different aspects, providing varied perspectives on the same historical events. Some may focus on the nonviolent resistance strategies of King, while others may highlight the more radical approaches advocated by others. Critical engagement with these differing viewpoints is crucial for a comprehensive understanding.

IV. Documentaries Exploring the Post-Civil Rights Era:

The fight for racial equality continues beyond the Civil Rights Movement. Documentaries exploring the post-Civil Rights era delve into ongoing challenges such as systemic racism, police brutality, mass incarceration, and economic inequality. These films often offer contemporary perspectives and shed light on the complexities of achieving true racial justice. Many documentaries showcase the ongoing activism and the resilience of African American communities in the face of persistent obstacles. They explore the successes and setbacks in the ongoing struggle for equality and highlight the diversity of experiences within the African American community. This era is marked by both progress and continued struggle, and documentaries help to contextualize both.

V. Documentaries on Specific Individuals and Their Contributions:

Focusing on individual stories can powerfully illuminate the broader narrative of African American history. Documentaries dedicated to figures like Harriet Tubman, who risked her life to free enslaved people through the Underground Railroad, or Frederick Douglass, whose eloquent speeches challenged the institution of slavery, offer intimate portraits of courage and resilience. These films highlight the agency and contributions of individual Black Americans, demonstrating their roles in shaping not only their own lives but also the course of American history. Each individual story contributes to a richer and more nuanced understanding of the collective experience.

VI. Where to Find These Documentaries:

Numerous platforms offer access to African American history documentaries. Streaming services like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and HBO Max often feature relevant titles. Public libraries and university archives also hold extensive collections of documentaries and related materials. Many documentaries are also available for purchase or rent through online retailers. Exploring different platforms expands your access to a wider range of perspectives and stories.

VII. Conclusion:

African American history documentaries are invaluable tools for understanding a crucial and often overlooked chapter in American history. By engaging with these films critically, we can gain a deeper understanding of the struggles, triumphs, and contributions of African Americans throughout time. These documentaries not only educate but also inspire empathy, prompting us to confront uncomfortable truths and work towards a more just and equitable future. Continued exploration and critical analysis of these resources is crucial for fostering a more accurate and complete understanding of our shared history.

VIII. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

Q: Are these documentaries historically accurate? A: While striving for accuracy, all documentaries present a narrative shaped by the filmmaker's choices. Critical viewing involves considering the sources used, potential biases, and the overall context. Comparing multiple documentaries on the same topic can provide a more balanced perspective.

Q: Where can I find more documentaries? A: Explore streaming services, public libraries, university archives, and online retailers. Search specifically using keywords related to particular figures or historical events.

Q: Are there documentaries suitable for children? A: Yes, many age-appropriate documentaries exist, often focusing on specific events or figures in a simplified manner. Check age recommendations before showing any documentary to children.

IX. Related Keywords:

African American history documentaries, Black history documentaries, Civil Rights Movement documentaries, slavery documentaries, Martin Luther King Jr. documentaries, Malcolm X documentaries, Harriet Tubman documentaries, African American culture documentaries, Black history films, streaming African American documentaries, best African American history documentaries, documentaries on racism, American history documentaries, historical

documentaries, documentary films.

african american history documentaries: African American Religious History Milton C. Sernett, 1999 This is a 2nd edition of the 1985 anthology that examines the religious history of African Americans.

african american history documentaries: Slavery by Another Name Douglas A. Blackmon, 2012-10-04 A Pulitzer Prize-winning history of the mistreatment of black Americans. In this 'precise and eloquent work' - as described in its Pulitzer Prize citation - Douglas A. Blackmon brings to light one of the most shameful chapters in American history - an 'Age of Neoslavery' that thrived in the aftermath of the Civil War through the dawn of World War II. Using a vast record of original documents and personal narratives, Blackmon unearths the lost stories of slaves and their descendants who journeyed into freedom after the Emancipation Proclamation and then back into the shadow of involuntary servitude thereafter. By turns moving, sobering and shocking, this unprecedented account reveals these stories, the companies that profited the most from neoslavery, and the insidious legacy of racism that reverberates today.

african american history documentaries: Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights Gretchen Sorin, 2020-02-11 Bloomberg • Best Nonfiction Books of 2020: [A] tour de force. The basis of a major PBS documentary by Ric Burns, this “excellent history” (The New Yorker) reveals how the automobile fundamentally changed African American life. Driving While Black demonstrates that the car—the ultimate symbol of independence and possibility—has always held particular importance for African Americans, allowing black families to evade the dangers presented by an entrenched racist society and to enjoy, in some measure, the freedom of the open road. Melding new archival research with her family’s story, Gretchen Sorin recovers a lost history, demonstrating how, when combined with black travel guides—including the famous Green Book—the automobile encouraged a new way of resisting oppression.

african american history documentaries: The Negro Motorist Green Book Victor H. Green, The Negro Motorist Green Book was a groundbreaking guide that provided African American travelers with crucial information on safe places to stay, eat, and visit during the era of segregation in the United States. This essential resource, originally published from 1936 to 1966, offered a lifeline to black motorists navigating a deeply divided nation, helping them avoid the dangers and indignities of racism on the road. More than just a travel guide, The Negro Motorist Green Book stands as a powerful symbol of resilience and resistance in the face of oppression, offering a poignant glimpse into the challenges and triumphs of the African American experience in the 20th century.

african american history documentaries: Teaching Black History to White People Leonard N. Moore, 2021-09-14 Leonard Moore has been teaching Black history for twenty-five years, mostly to white people. Drawing on decades of experience in the classroom and on college campuses throughout the South, as well as on his own personal history, Moore illustrates how an understanding of Black history is necessary for everyone. With Teaching Black History to White People, which is “part memoir, part Black history, part pedagogy, and part how-to guide,” Moore delivers an accessible and engaging primer on the Black experience in America. He poses provocative questions, such as “Why is the teaching of Black history so controversial?” and “What came first: slavery or racism?” These questions don’t have easy answers, and Moore insists that embracing discomfort is necessary for engaging in open and honest conversations about race. Moore includes a syllabus and other tools for actionable steps that white people can take to move beyond performative justice and toward racial reparations, healing, and reconciliation.

african american history documentaries: Struggles for Representation Phyllis Rauch Klotman, Janet K. Cutler, 1999 Struggles for Representation examines over 300 non-fiction films by more than 150 African American film/videomakers and includes an extensive filmography, bibliography, and excerpts from interviews with film/videomakers. In eleven original essays,

contributors explore the extraordinary scope of these aesthetic and social documents and chart a previously undiscovered territory: documentaries that examine the aesthetic, economic, historical, political, and social forces that shape the lives of black Americans, as seen from their perspectives. Until now, scholars and critics have concentrated on black fiction film and on mainstream non-fiction films, neglecting the groundbreaking body of black non-fiction productions that offer privileged views of American life. Yet, these rich and varied works in film, video, and new electronic media, convey vast stores of knowledge and experience. Although most documentary cannot hope to match fiction film's mass appeal, it is unrivaled in its ability to portray searing, indelible impressions of black life, including concrete views of significant events and moving portraits of charismatic individuals. Documentary footage brings audiences the moments when civil rights protestors were attacked by state troopers; it provides the sights and sounds of Malcom X delivering an electrifying speech, Betty Carter performing a heart-wrenching song, and Langston Hughes strolling on a beach. Uniting all of this work is the struggle for representation that characterizes each film—an urgent desire to convey black life in ways that counter the uninformed and often distorted representations of mass media film and television productions. African American documentaries have long been associated with struggles for social and political empowerment; for many film/videomakers, documentary is a compelling mode with which to present an alternative, more authentic narrative of black experiences and an effective critique of mainstream discourse. Thus, many socially and politically committed film/videomakers view documentary as a tool with which to interrogate and reinvent history; their works fill gaps, correct errors, and expose distortions in order to provide counter-narratives of African American experience. Contributors include Paul Arthur, Houston A. Baker, Jr., Mark F. Baker, Pearl Bowser, Janet K. Cutler Manthia Diawara, Elizabeth Amelia Hadley, Phyllis R. Klotman, Tommy Lee Lott, Erika Muhammad, Valerie Smith, and Clyde Taylor.

african american history documentaries: The Black Church Henry Louis Gates, Jr.,
2021-02-16 The instant New York Times bestseller and companion book to the PBS series.
“Absolutely brilliant . . . A necessary and moving work.” —Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., author of *Begin Again*
“Engaging. . . . In Gates’s telling, the Black church shines bright even as the nation itself moves uncertainly through the gloaming, seeking justice on earth—as it is in heaven.” —Jon Meacham, *New York Times Book Review*
From the New York Times bestselling author of *Stony the Road* and *The Black Box*, and one of our most important voices on the African American experience, comes a powerful new history of the Black church as a foundation of Black life and a driving force in the larger freedom struggle in America. For the young Henry Louis Gates, Jr., growing up in a small, residentially segregated West Virginia town, the church was a center of gravity—an intimate place where voices rose up in song and neighbors gathered to celebrate life's blessings and offer comfort amid its trials and tribulations. In this tender and expansive reckoning with the meaning of the Black Church in America, Gates takes us on a journey spanning more than five centuries, from the intersection of Christianity and the transatlantic slave trade to today's political landscape. At road's end, and after Gates's distinctive meditation on the churches of his childhood, we emerge with a new understanding of the importance of African American religion to the larger national narrative—as a center of resistance to slavery and white supremacy, as a magnet for political mobilization, as an incubator of musical and oratorical talent that would transform the culture, and as a crucible for working through the Black community's most critical personal and social issues. In a country that has historically afforded its citizens from the African diaspora tragically few safe spaces, the Black Church has always been more than a sanctuary. This fact was never lost on white supremacists: from the earliest days of slavery, when enslaved people were allowed to worship at all, their meetinghouses were subject to surveillance and destruction. Long after slavery's formal eradication, church burnings and bombings by anti-Black racists continued, a hallmark of the violent effort to suppress the African American struggle for equality. The past often isn't even past—Dylann Roof committed his slaughter in the Mother Emanuel AME Church 193 years after it was first burned down by white citizens of Charleston, South Carolina, following a thwarted slave rebellion. But as Gates brilliantly shows, the Black church has never been only one thing. Its story lies at the heart of

the Black political struggle, and it has produced many of the Black community's most notable leaders. At the same time, some churches and denominations have eschewed political engagement and exemplified practices of exclusion and intolerance that have caused polarization and pain. Those tensions remain today, as a rising generation demands freedom and dignity for all within and beyond their communities, regardless of race, sex, or gender. Still, as a source of faith and refuge, spiritual sustenance and struggle against society's darkest forces, the Black Church has been central, as this enthralling history makes vividly clear.

african american history documentaries: High on the Hog Jessica B. Harris, 2011-01-01

The author of *The Africa Cookbook* presents a history of the African Diaspora on two continents, tracing the evolution of culturally representative foods ranging from chitlins and ham hocks to fried chicken and vegan soul.

african american history documentaries: Black Titan Carol Jenkins, Elizabeth Gardner

Hines, 2009-04-02 The grandson of slaves, born into poverty in 1892 in the Deep South, A. G. Gaston died more than a century later with a fortune worth well over \$130 million and a business empire spanning communications, real estate, and insurance. Gaston was, by any measure, a heroic figure whose wealth and influence bore comparison to J. P. Morgan and Andrew Carnegie. Here, for the first time, is the story of the life of this extraordinary pioneer, told by his niece and grandniece, the award-winning television journalist Carol Jenkins and her daughter Elizabeth Gardner Hines. Born at a time when the bitter legacy of slavery and Reconstruction still poisoned the lives of black Americans, Gaston was determined to make a difference for himself and his people. His first job, after serving in the celebrated all-black regiment during World War I, bound him to the near-slavery of an Alabama coal mine—but even here Gaston saw not only hope but opportunity. He launched a business selling lunches to fellow miners, soon established a rudimentary bank—and from then on there was no stopping him. A kind of black Horatio Alger, Gaston let a single, powerful question be his guide: What do our people need now? His success flowed from an uncanny genius for knowing the answer. Combining rich family lore with a deep knowledge of American social and economic history, Carol Jenkins and Elizabeth Hines unfold Gaston's success story against the backdrop of a century of crushing racial hatred and bigotry. Gaston not only survived the hardships of being black during the Depression, he flourished, and by the 1950s he was ruling a Birmingham-based business empire. When the movement for civil rights swept through the South in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Gaston provided critical financial support to many activists. At the time of his death in 1996, A. G. Gaston was one of the wealthiest black men in America, if not the wealthiest. But his legacy extended far beyond the monetary. He was a man who had proved it was possible to overcome staggering odds and make a place for himself as a leader, a captain of industry, and a far-sighted philanthropist. Writing with grace and power, Jenkins and Hines bring their distinguished ancestor fully to life in the pages of this book. *Black Titan* is the story of a man who created his own future—and in the process, blazed a future for all black businesspeople in America.

african american history documentaries: Freedom Riders Raymond Arsenault, 2011-03-11

The saga of the Freedom Rides is an improbable, almost unbelievable story. In the course of six months in 1961, four hundred and fifty Freedom Riders expanded the realm of the possible in American politics, redefining the limits of dissent and setting the stage for the civil rights movement. In this new version of his encyclopedic *Freedom Riders*, Raymond Arsenault offers a significantly condensed and tautly written account. With characters and plot lines rivaling those of the most imaginative fiction, this is a tale of heroic sacrifice and unexpected triumph. Arsenault recounts how a group of volunteers—blacks and whites—came together to travel from Washington DC through the Deep South, defying Jim Crow laws in buses and terminals and putting their lives on the line for racial justice. News photographers captured the violence in Montgomery, shocking the nation and sparking a crisis in the Kennedy administration. Here are the key players—their fears and courage, their determination and second thoughts, and the agonizing choices they faced as they took on Jim Crow—and triumphed. Winner of the Owsley Prize Publication is timed to coincide with the airing of the American Experience miniseries documenting the Freedom Rides Arsenault brings vividly to life

a defining moment in modern American history. --Eric Foner, The New York Times Book Review
Authoritative, compelling history. --William Grimes, The New York Times For those interested in understanding 20th-century America, this is an essential book. --Roger Wilkins, Washington Post
Book World Arsenault's record of strategy sessions, church vigils, bloody assaults, mass arrests, political maneuverings and personal anguish captures the mood and the turmoil, the excitement and the confusion of the movement and the time. --Michael Kenney, The Boston Globe

african american history documentaries: *Reflections in Black* Deborah Willis, 2002 Shows that the history of black photographers intertwines with the story of African American life, as seen through photographs ranging from antebellum weddings and 1960s protest marches, to portraits of contemporary black celebrities.

african american history documentaries: Women and Slavery in America Catherine M. Lewis, J. Richard Lewis, 2011-03-01 Catherine M. Lewis is professor of history, director of the Museum of History and Holocaust Education, and coordinator of the Public History Program at Kennesaw State University. She is the author of a number of books, including *The Changing Face of Public History* and *Don't Ask What I Shot: How Eisenhower's Love of Golf Helped Shape 1950s America*.

african american history documentaries: The Original Black Elite Elizabeth Dowling Taylor, 2017-01-31 New York Times-Bestselling Author: "A compelling biography of Daniel Murray and the group the writer-scholar W.E.B. DuBois called 'The Talented Tenth.'" —Patricia Bell-Scott, National Book Award nominee and author of *The Firebrand* and *the First Lady* In this outstanding cultural biography, the author of *A Slave in the White House* chronicles a critical yet overlooked chapter in American history: the inspiring rise and calculated fall of the black elite, from Emancipation through Reconstruction to the Jim Crow Era—embodied in the experiences of an influential figure of the time: academic, entrepreneur, political activist, and black history pioneer Daniel Murray. In the wake of the Civil War, Daniel Murray, born free and educated in Baltimore, was in the vanguard of Washington, D.C.'s black upper class. Appointed Assistant Librarian at the Library of Congress—at a time when government appointments were the most prestigious positions available for blacks—Murray became wealthy as a construction contractor and married a college-educated socialite. The Murrays' social circles included some of the first African-American US senators and congressmen, and their children went to Harvard and Cornell. Though Murray and others of his time were primed to assimilate into the cultural fabric as Americans first and people of color second, their prospects were crushed by Jim Crow segregation and the capitulation to white supremacist groups by the government, which turned a blind eye to their unlawful—often murderous—acts. Elizabeth Dowling Taylor traces the rise, fall, and disillusionment of upper-class African Americans, revealing that they were a representation not of hypothetical achievement but what could be realized by African Americans through education and equal opportunities. "Brilliantly researched . . . an emotional story of how race and class have long played a role in determining who succeeds and who fails." —The New York Times Book Review "Brings insight to the rise and fall of America's first educated black people." —Time "Deftly demonstrates how the struggle for racial equality has always been complicated by the thorny issue of class." —Patricia Bell-Scott, author of *The Firebrand* and *the First Lady* "Reads like a sweeping epic." —Library Journal

african american history documentaries: Darktown Thomas Mullen, 2017-06-06 In 1948, responding to orders from on high, the Atlanta Police Department is forced to hire its first black officers, including war veterans Lucius Boggs and Tommy Smith. The newly minted policemen are met with deep hostility by their white peers; they aren't allowed to arrest white suspects, drive squad cars, or set foot in the police headquarters. But they carry guns, and they must bring law enforcement to a deeply mistrustful community. When black a woman who was last seen in a car driven by a white man turns up dead, Boggs and Smith take up the investigation on their own, as no one else seems to care. Their findings set them up against a brutal cop, Dunlow, who has long run the neighborhood as his own, and his partner, Rakestraw, a young progressive who may or may not be willing to make allies across color lines. Among shady moonshiners, duplicitous madams, crooked

lawmen, and the constant restrictions of Jim Crow, Boggs and Smith will risk their new jobs, and their lives, while navigating a dangerous world--a world on the cusp of great change. --

african american history documentaries: The Columbia Documentary History of Race and Ethnicity in America Ronald H. Baylor, 2004 With more than 240 primary sources, this introduction to a complex topic is a resource for student research.

african american history documentaries: The African Americans Henry Louis Gates (Jr.), Donald Yacovone, 2013 Chronicles five hundred years of African-American history from the origins of slavery on the African continent through Barack Obama's second presidential term, examining contributing political and cultural events.

african american history documentaries: Remembering Jim Crow William H. Chafe, Raymond Gavins, Robert Korstad, 2014-09-16 This "viscerally powerful . . . compilation of firsthand accounts of the Jim Crow era" won the Lillian Smith Book Award and the Carey McWilliams Award (Publisher's Weekly, starred review). Based on interviews collected by the Behind the Veil Oral History Project at Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies, this remarkable book presents for the first time the most extensive oral history ever compiled of African American life under segregation. Men and women from all walks of life tell how their most ordinary activities were subjected to profound and unrelenting racial oppression. Yet Remembering Jim Crow is also a testament to how black southerners fought back against systemic racism—building churches and schools, raising children, running businesses, and struggling for respect in a society that denied them the most basic rights. The result is a powerful story of individual and community survival.

african american history documentaries: They Can't Kill Us All Wesley Lowery, 2016-11-15 A deeply reported book that brings alive the quest for justice in the deaths of Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, and Freddie Gray, offering both unparalleled insight into the reality of police violence in America and an intimate, moving portrait of those working to end it. Conducting hundreds of interviews during the course of over one year reporting on the ground, Washington Post writer Wesley Lowery traveled from Ferguson, Missouri, to Cleveland, Ohio; Charleston, South Carolina; and Baltimore, Maryland; and then back to Ferguson to uncover life inside the most heavily policed, if otherwise neglected, corners of America today. In an effort to grasp the magnitude of the repose to Michael Brown's death and understand the scale of the problem police violence represents, Lowery speaks to Brown's family and the families of other victims other victims' families as well as local activists. By posing the question, What does the loss of any one life mean to the rest of the nation? Lowery examines the cumulative effect of decades of racially biased policing in segregated neighborhoods with failing schools, crumbling infrastructure and too few jobs. Studded with moments of joy, and tragedy, They Can't Kill Us All offers a historically informed look at the standoff between the police and those they are sworn to protect, showing that civil unrest is just one tool of resistance in the broader struggle for justice. As Lowery brings vividly to life, the protests against police killings are also about the black community's long history on the receiving end of perceived and actual acts of injustice and discrimination. They Can't Kill Us All grapples with a persistent if also largely unexamined aspect of the otherwise transformative presidency of Barack Obama: the failure to deliver tangible security and opportunity to those Americans most in need of both.

african american history documentaries: Hollywood Black Donald Bogle, Turner Classic Movies, 2019-05-07 The films, the stars, the filmmakers—all get their due in Hollywood Black, a sweeping overview of blacks in film from the silent era through Black Panther, with striking photos and an engrossing history by award-winning author Donald Bogle. The story opens in the silent film era, when white actors in blackface often played black characters, but also saw the rise of independent African American filmmakers, including the remarkable Oscar Micheaux. It follows the changes in the film industry with the arrival of sound motion pictures and the Great Depression, when black performers such as Stepin Fetchit and Bill Bojangles Robinson began finding a place in Hollywood. More often than not, they were saddled with rigidly stereotyped roles, but some gifted performers, most notably Hattie McDaniel in *Gone With the Wind* (1939), were able to turn in

significant performances. In the coming decades, more black talents would light up the screen. Dorothy Dandridge became the first African American to earn a Best Actress Oscar nomination for *Carmen Jones* (1954), and Sidney Poitier broke ground in films like *The Defiant Ones* and 1963's *Lilies of the Field*. *Hollywood Black* reveals the changes in images that came about with the evolving social and political atmosphere of the US, from the Civil Rights era to the Black Power movement. The story takes readers through Blaxploitation, with movies like *Shaft* and *Super Fly*, to the emergence of such stars as Cicely Tyson, Richard Pryor, Eddie Murphy, and Whoopi Goldberg, and of directors Spike Lee and John Singleton. The history comes into the new millennium with filmmakers Barry Jenkins (*Moonlight*), Ava Du Vernay (*Selma*), and Ryan Coogler (*Black Panther*); megastars such as Denzel Washington, Will Smith, and Morgan Freeman; as well as Halle Berry, Angela Bassett, Viola Davis, and a glorious gallery of others. Filled with evocative photographs and stories of stars and filmmakers on set and off, *Hollywood Black* tells an underappreciated history as it's never before been told.

african american history documentaries: Screening Reality Jon Wilkman, 2020-02-18 "A towering achievement, and a volume I know I'll be consulting on a regular basis."-Leonard Maltin
Authoritative, accessible, and elegantly written, *Screening Reality* is the history of American documentary film we have been waiting for. --Kenneth Turan, Los Angeles Times film critic
From Edison to IMAX, Ken Burns to virtual environments, the first comprehensive history of American documentary film and the remarkable men and women who changed the way we view the world. Amidst claims of a new "post-truth" era, documentary filmmaking has experienced a golden age. Today, more documentaries are made and widely viewed than ever before, illuminating our increasingly fraught relationship with what's true in politics and culture. For most of our history, Americans have depended on motion pictures to bring the realities of the world into view. And yet the richly complex, ever-evolving relationship between nonfiction movies and American history is virtually unexplored. *Screening Reality* is a widescreen view of how American "truth" has been discovered, defined, projected, televised, and streamed during more than one hundred years of dramatic change, through World Wars I and II, the dawn of mass media, the social and political turmoil of the sixties and seventies, and the communications revolution that led to a twenty-first century of empowered yet divided Americans. In the telling, professional filmmaker Jon Wilkman draws on his own experience, as well as the stories of inventors, adventurers, journalists, entrepreneurs, artists, and activists who framed and filtered the world to inform, persuade, awe, and entertain. Interweaving American and motion picture history, and an inquiry into the nature of truth on screen, *Screening Reality* is essential and fascinating reading for anyone looking to expand an understanding of the American experience and today's truth-challenged times.

african american history documentaries: A Chosen Exile Allyson Hobbs, 2014-10-13
Between the eighteenth and mid-twentieth centuries, countless African Americans passed as white, leaving behind families and friends, roots and community. It was, as Allyson Hobbs writes, a chosen exile, a separation from one racial identity and the leap into another. This revelatory history of passing explores the possibilities and challenges that racial indeterminacy presented to men and women living in a country obsessed with racial distinctions. It also tells a tale of loss. As racial relations in America have evolved so has the significance of passing. To pass as white in the antebellum South was to escape the shackles of slavery. After emancipation, many African Americans came to regard passing as a form of betrayal, a selling of one's birthright. When the initially hopeful period of Reconstruction proved short-lived, passing became an opportunity to defy Jim Crow and strike out on one's own. Although black Americans who adopted white identities reaped benefits of expanded opportunity and mobility, Hobbs helps us to recognize and understand the grief, loneliness, and isolation that accompanied—and often outweighed—these rewards. By the dawning of the civil rights era, more and more racially mixed Americans felt the loss of kin and community was too much to bear, that it was time to "pass out" and embrace a black identity. Although recent decades have witnessed an increasingly multiracial society and a growing acceptance of hybridity, the problem of race and identity remains at the center of public debate and

emotionally fraught personal decisions.

african american history documentaries: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* Rebecca Skloot, 2010-02-02 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “The story of modern medicine and bioethics—and, indeed, race relations—is refracted beautifully, and movingly.”—Entertainment Weekly NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE FROM HBO® STARRING OPRAH WINFREY AND ROSE BYRNE • ONE OF THE “MOST INFLUENTIAL” (CNN), “DEFINING” (LITHUB), AND “BEST” (THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER) BOOKS OF THE DECADE • ONE OF ESSENCE’S 50 MOST IMPACTFUL BLACK BOOKS OF THE PAST 50 YEARS • WINNER OF THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE HEARTLAND PRIZE FOR NONFICTION NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times Book Review • Entertainment Weekly • O: The Oprah Magazine • NPR • Financial Times • New York • Independent (U.K.) • Times (U.K.) • Publishers Weekly • Library Journal • Kirkus Reviews • Booklist • Globe and Mail Her name was Henrietta Lacks, but scientists know her as HeLa. She was a poor Southern tobacco farmer who worked the same land as her slave ancestors, yet her cells—taken without her knowledge—became one of the most important tools in medicine: The first “immortal” human cells grown in culture, which are still alive today, though she has been dead for more than sixty years. HeLa cells were vital for developing the polio vaccine; uncovered secrets of cancer, viruses, and the atom bomb’s effects; helped lead to important advances like in vitro fertilization, cloning, and gene mapping; and have been bought and sold by the billions. Yet Henrietta Lacks remains virtually unknown, buried in an unmarked grave. Henrietta’s family did not learn of her “immortality” until more than twenty years after her death, when scientists investigating HeLa began using her husband and children in research without informed consent. And though the cells had launched a multimillion-dollar industry that sells human biological materials, her family never saw any of the profits. As Rebecca Skloot so brilliantly shows, the story of the Lacks family—past and present—is inextricably connected to the dark history of experimentation on African Americans, the birth of bioethics, and the legal battles over whether we control the stuff we are made of. Over the decade it took to uncover this story, Rebecca became enmeshed in the lives of the Lacks family—especially Henrietta’s daughter Deborah. Deborah was consumed with questions: Had scientists cloned her mother? Had they killed her to harvest her cells? And if her mother was so important to medicine, why couldn’t her children afford health insurance? Intimate in feeling, astonishing in scope, and impossible to put down, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* captures the beauty and drama of scientific discovery, as well as its human consequences.

african american history documentaries: Setting the Record Straight David Barton, 2004-01-01 A unique view of the religious and moral heritage of African Americans that has been expertly intertwined with untold, yet significant stories from our rich African American political history. The material presented is ground-breaking and revolutionary; leaving viewers inspired and educated.

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political soul of a still-young America standing at the cusp of its greatest days.

african american history documentaries: Boy @ the Window Donald Earl Collins, 2013-11 As a preteen Black male growing up in Mount Vernon, New York, there were a series of moments, incidents and wounds that caused me to retreat inward in despair and escape into a world of imagination. For five years I protected my family secrets from authority figures, affluent Whites and middle class Blacks while attending an unforgiving gifted-track magnet school program that itself was embroiled in suburban drama. It was my imagination that shielded me from the slights of others, that enabled my survival and academic success. It took everything I had to get myself into college and out to Pittsburgh, but more was in store before I could finally begin to break from my past. Boy @ The Window is a coming-of-age story about the universal search for understanding on how any one of us becomes the person they are despite-or because of-the odds. It's a memoir intertwined with my own search for redemption, trust, love, success-for a life worth living. Boy @ The Window is about one of the most important lessons of all: what it takes to overcome inhumanity in order to become whole and human again.

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a vogue in dandified black servants. "Luxury slaves" tweaked and reworked their uniforms, and were soon known for their sartorial novelty and sometimes flamboyant personalities. Tracing the history of the black dandy forward to contemporary celebrity incarnations such as Andre 3000 and Sean Combs, Miller explains how black people became arbiters of style and how they have historically used the dandy's signature tools—clothing, gesture, and wit—to break down limiting identity markers and propose new ways of fashioning political and social possibility in the black Atlantic world. With an aplomb worthy of her iconographic subject, she considers the black dandy in relation to nineteenth-century American literature and drama, W. E. B. Du Bois's reflections on black masculinity and cultural nationalism, the modernist aesthetics of the Harlem Renaissance, and representations of black cosmopolitanism in contemporary visual art.

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AMAZON'S TOP 20 HISTORY BOOKS OF 2023 * B&N BEST OF EDUCATIONAL HISTORY * THE ROOT'S BEST BOOKS OF 2023 * CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY FAVORITE BOOKS OF 2023 From acclaimed columnist and political commentator Michael Harriot, a searingly smart and bitingly hilarious retelling of American history that corrects the record and showcases the perspectives and experiences of Black Americans. America's backstory is a whitewashed mythology implanted in our collective memory. It is the story of the pilgrims on the Mayflower building a new nation. It is George Washington's cherry tree and Abraham Lincoln's log cabin. It is the fantastic tale of slaves that spontaneously teleported themselves here with nothing but strong backs and negro spirituals. It is a sugarcoated legend based on an almost true story. It should come as no surprise that the dominant narrative of American history is blighted with errors and oversights--after all, history books were written by white men with their perspectives at the forefront. It could even be said that the devaluation and erasure of the Black experience is as American as apple pie. In *Black AF History*, Michael Harriot presents a more accurate version of American history. Combining unapologetically provocative storytelling with meticulous research based on primary sources as well as the work of pioneering Black historians, scholars, and journalists, Harriot removes the white sugarcoating from the American story, placing Black people squarely at the center. With incisive wit, Harriot speaks hilarious truth to oppressive power, subverting conventional historical narratives with little-known stories about the experiences of Black Americans. From the African Americans who arrived before 1619 to the unenslavable bandit who inspired America's first police force, this long overdue corrective provides a revealing look into our past that is as urgent as it is necessary. For too long, we have refused to acknowledge that American history is white history. Not this one. This history is Black AF.

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