

african american political activists

The Enduring Legacy of African American Political Activists: A History of Struggle and Triumph

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Editor: Professor Charles Hamilton, PhD, a renowned expert in African American political thought and the history of the Civil Rights Movement. Professor Hamilton has authored several books on the subject, including the critically acclaimed "The Architects of Black Power," and serves on the editorial board of several prestigious academic journals.

Abstract: This report explores the rich and multifaceted history of African American political activists, examining their strategies, successes, and enduring impact on American society. From the abolitionist movement to contemporary Black Lives Matter activism, African American political activists have persistently challenged systemic racism and fought for social and political equality. The report analyzes key historical moments, examines the diverse range of tactics employed, and discusses the ongoing challenges and triumphs of this vital movement.

1. The Antebellum Era and the Fight for Abolition:

The earliest forms of African American political activism emerged during the antebellum period, even amidst the brutal realities of slavery. Figures like Frederick Douglass, a former slave and powerful orator, challenged the moral foundations of slavery through eloquent speeches and writings. Harriet Tubman, a courageous "conductor" on the Underground Railroad, risked her life to liberate enslaved people, demonstrating a potent form of political action. These early African American political activists laid the groundwork for future struggles for freedom and equality. While lacking formal political power, their actions were foundational in shaping public opinion and laying the groundwork for the Civil War and the

eventual abolition of slavery.

1. Reconstruction and the Rise of Black Political Power:

Following the Civil War, the Reconstruction era witnessed a brief but significant period of Black political empowerment. African Americans held elected office at local, state, and even national levels. However, this progress was short-lived, violently suppressed by white supremacist groups, and ultimately undermined through systematic disenfranchisement. The rise and subsequent fall of Black political power during Reconstruction highlights the persistent fragility of racial progress in America and the constant need for vigilance on the part of African American political activists.

1. The Civil Rights Movement: A Turning Point:

The Civil Rights Movement, spanning roughly from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s, represents a watershed moment in the history of African American political activism. Leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., championed nonviolent resistance, employing strategies of civil disobedience, boycotts, and marches to challenge segregation and fight for voting rights. The movement's successes, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, demonstrated the power of mass mobilization and the effectiveness of strategic nonviolent protest. However, the movement also faced significant backlash and violence, highlighting the inherent risks faced by African American political activists.

1. The Black Power Movement: A Diversification of Tactics:

The Black Power Movement, emerging in the late 1960s and early 1970s, represented a shift in tactics and ideology within the broader struggle for racial equality. Figures like Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and Huey Newton advocated for Black self-determination, Black pride, and more assertive forms of resistance, including armed self-defense. This movement highlighted the internal diversity of thought and strategy among African American political activists. The Black Power Movement challenged the integrationist approach of the Civil Rights Movement, emphasizing the importance of racial pride, community empowerment, and independent political organization.

1. Contemporary African American Political Activism:

Today, African American political activism continues to evolve, encompassing a broad spectrum of strategies and organizations. The Black Lives Matter movement, sparked by police brutality against unarmed Black people, has gained international attention, mobilizing protests and advocating for police reform and social justice. This modern wave of African American political activists utilizes social media and other digital tools to amplify their message and organize protests. Other contemporary efforts focus on addressing issues such as economic inequality, mass incarceration, and voter suppression. The persistent need for African American political activists to address systemic racism remains a critical focus.

1. Data and Research Findings:

Research consistently demonstrates the profound impact of African American political activists on American society. Studies have shown the correlation between increased Black political engagement and improvements in areas like education, employment, and healthcare. Quantitative analyses of voting patterns reveal the significant role African American voters play in shaping election outcomes. Further, qualitative research reveals the persistent struggle faced by African American political activists against systemic racism and the ongoing fight for equitable representation.

Conclusion:

The history of African American political activism is a testament to the enduring power of resilience, determination, and the pursuit of justice. From the courageous abolitionists to the leaders of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, and the contemporary activists fighting for social justice today, African American political activists have consistently shaped the American political landscape. Their contributions are not only essential to understanding the history of race relations in the United States but are also crucial for continuing the fight for a more just and equitable society. The ongoing challenges facing African American communities underscore the importance of continued engagement and the critical role African American political activists play in securing a better future for all.

FAQs:

1. What are some key strategies employed by African American political activists? Strategies have varied throughout history, including nonviolent resistance, civil disobedience, boycotts, marches, legal challenges, community organizing, political advocacy, and armed self-defense.
1. How have African American political activists utilized technology? Contemporary activists leverage social media, digital organizing tools, and online fundraising platforms to amplify their message, mobilize supporters, and coordinate protests.

1. What are some of the major legislative victories achieved through African American political activism? Significant legislative wins include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and ongoing efforts towards police reform and criminal justice reform.

1. What are some of the key challenges faced by African American political activists? Challenges include systemic racism, voter suppression, police brutality, economic inequality, and ongoing resistance to racial justice efforts.

1. Who are some prominent figures in the history of African American political activism? Prominent figures include Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, Huey Newton, and numerous contemporary leaders within Black Lives Matter and other organizations.

1. How has the role of African American women shaped the movement? African American women have played a vital, often unsung role, providing leadership, organizing, and mobilizing communities, often while facing both racial and gender discrimination.

1. How does African American political activism intersect with other social justice movements? There is a strong overlap and collaboration with other social justice movements, including feminist, LGBTQ+, and environmental justice movements.

1. What is the current state of African American political representation? While progress has been made, African American political representation remains unequal to the population's size, reflecting continued challenges in access to political power.

1. How can individuals support African American political activism? Individuals can support through volunteering time, donating to relevant organizations, participating in protests and demonstrations, advocating for policy changes, and educating themselves and others about issues of racial justice.

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african american political activists: *Stokely* Peniel E. Joseph, 2014-03-04 From the author of *The Sword and the Shield*, this definitive biography of the Black Power activist Stokely Carmichael offers an unflinching look at an unflinching man (Daily Beast). Stokely Carmichael, the charismatic and controversial Black activist, stepped onto the pages of history when he called for Black Power during a speech one Mississippi night in 1966. A firebrand who straddled both the American civil rights and Black Power movements, Carmichael would stand for the rest of his life at the center of the storm he had unleashed. In *Stokely*, preeminent civil rights scholar Peniel E. Joseph presents a groundbreaking biography of Carmichael, using his life as a prism through which to view the transformative African American freedom struggles of the twentieth century. A nuanced and authoritative portrait, *Stokely* captures the life of the man whose uncompromising vision defined political radicalism and provoked a national reckoning on race and democracy.

african american political activists: Sisters in the Struggle Bettye Collier-Thomas, V.P. Franklin, 2001-08 Tells the stories and documents the contributions of African American women involved in the struggle for racial and gender equality through the civil rights and black power movements in the United States.

african american political activists: African Or American? Leslie M. Alexander, 2012 The struggle for black identity in antebellum New York

african american political activists: Why We Can't Wait Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 2011-01-11 Dr. King's best-selling account of the civil rights movement in Birmingham during the spring and summer of 1963 On April 16, 1963, as the violent events of the Birmingham campaign unfolded in the city's streets, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., composed a letter from his prison cell in response to local religious leaders' criticism of the campaign. The resulting piece of extraordinary protest writing, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," was widely circulated and published in numerous periodicals. After the conclusion of the campaign and the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, King further developed the ideas introduced in the letter in *Why We Can't Wait*, which tells the story of African American activism in the spring and summer of 1963. During this time, Birmingham, Alabama, was perhaps the most racially segregated city in the United States, but the campaign launched by King, Fred Shuttlesworth, and others demonstrated to the world the

power of nonviolent direct action. Often applauded as King's most incisive and eloquent book, *Why We Can't Wait* recounts the Birmingham campaign in vivid detail, while underscoring why 1963 was such a crucial year for the civil rights movement. Disappointed by the slow pace of school desegregation and civil rights legislation, King observed that by 1963—during which the country celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation—Asia and Africa were “moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence but we still creep at a horse-and-buggy pace.” King examines the history of the civil rights struggle, noting tasks that future generations must accomplish to bring about full equality, and asserts that African Americans have already waited over three centuries for civil rights and that it is time to be proactive: “For years now, I have heard the word ‘Wait!’ It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This ‘Wait’ has almost always meant ‘Never.’ We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that ‘justice too long delayed is justice denied.’”

african american political activists: *100 Greatest African Americans* Molefi Kete Asante, 2010-06-28 Since 1619, when Africans first came ashore in the swampy Chesapeake region of Virginia, there have been many individuals whose achievements or strength of character in the face of monumental hardships have called attention to the genius of the African American people. This book attempts to distill from many wonderful possibilities the 100 most outstanding examples of greatness. Pioneering scholar of African American Studies Molefi Kete Asante has used four criteria in his selection: the individual's significance in the general progress of African Americans toward full equality in the American social and political system; self-sacrifice and the demonstration of risk for the collective good; unusual will and determination in the face of the greatest danger or against the most stubborn odds; and personal achievement that reveals the best qualities of the African American people. In adopting these criteria Professor Asante has sought to steer away from the usual standards of popular culture, which often elevates the most popular, the wealthiest, or the most photogenic to the cult of celebrity. The individuals in this book - examples of lasting greatness as opposed to the ephemeral glare of celebrity fame - come from four centuries of African American history. Each entry includes brief biographical information, relevant dates, an assessment of the individual's place in African American history with particular reference to a historical timeline, and a discussion of his or her unique impact on American society. Numerous pictures and illustrations will accompany the articles. This superb reference work will complement any library and be of special interest to students and scholars of American and African American history.

african american political activists: *Lighting the Fires of Freedom* Janet Dewart Bell, 2018-05-08 Recommended by The New York Times, The Washington Post, Book Riot and Autostraddle Nominated for a 2019 NAACP Image Award, a groundbreaking collection of profiles of African American women leaders in the twentieth-century fight for civil rights During the Civil Rights Movement, African American women did not stand on ceremony; they simply did the work that needed to be done. Yet despite their significant contributions at all levels of the movement, they remain mostly invisible to the larger public. Beyond Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King, most Americans would be hard-pressed to name other leaders at the community, local, and national levels. In *Lighting the Fires of Freedom* Janet Dewart Bell shines a light on women's all-too-often overlooked achievements in the Movement. Through wide-ranging conversations with nine women, several now in their nineties with decades of untold stories, we hear what ignited and fueled their activism, as Bell vividly captures their inspiring voices. *Lighting the Fires of Freedom* offers these deeply personal and intimate accounts of extraordinary struggles for justice that resulted in profound social change, stories that are vital and relevant today. A vital document for understanding the Civil Rights Movement, *Lighting the Fires of Freedom* is an enduring testament to the vitality of women's leadership during one of the most dramatic periods of American history.

african american political activists: *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918* National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1919

african american political activists: *The New Negro* Alain Locke, 1925

african american political activists: *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*,

Second Edition Barbara Ransby, 2024-10-08 One of the most important African American leaders of the twentieth century and perhaps the most influential woman in the civil rights movement, Ella Baker (1903-1986) was an activist whose remarkable career spanned fifty years and touched thousands of lives. A gifted grassroots organizer, Baker shunned the spotlight in favor of vital behind-the-scenes work that helped power the Black freedom struggle. Making her way in predominantly male circles while maintaining relationships with a vibrant group of women, students, and activists, Baker was a national officer and key figure in the NAACP, a founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and a prime mover in the creation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. In this definitive biography, Barbara Ransby chronicles Baker's long and rich career, revealing her complexity, radical democratic worldview, and enduring influence on group-centered, grassroots activism. Beyond documenting an extraordinary life, Ransby paints a vivid picture of the African American fight for justice and its intersections with other progressive struggles worldwide throughout the twentieth century.

african american political activists: *Athlete Activism* Rory Magrath, 2021-11-24 This book examines the phenomenon of athlete activism across all levels of sport, from elite and international sport, to collegiate and semi-pro, and asks what this tells us about the relationship between sport and wider society. With contributions from scholars around the world, the book presents a series of fascinating case studies, including the activism of world-famous athletes such as Serena Williams, Megan Rapinoe and Raheem Sterling. Covering a broad range of sports, from the National Football League (NFL) and Australian Rules, to fencing and the Olympic Games, the book sheds important light on some of the most important themes in the study of sport, including gender, power, racism, intersectionality and the rise of digital media. It also considers the financial impact on athletes when they take a stand and the psychological impact of activism and how that might relate to sports performance. It has never been the case that 'sport and politics don't mix', and now, more than ever, the opposite is true. This is essential reading for anybody with an interest in the politics or sociology of sport, the politics of protest, social movements or media studies.

african american political activists: African American Politicians & Civil Rights Activists Joanne Randolph, 2017-12-15 Through centuries of suffering, slavery, inequality, discrimination, segregation, and racist violence, African Americans have endured, resisted, fought, and, increasingly over time, won many battles. These victories were propelled by a groundswell of grassroots action, but they were also motivated and organized by courageous and inspirational leadership. Journalists, abolitionists, educators, religious leaders, politicians, judges, and even schoolchildren showed the world a better way forward and led the way down the very difficult road to greater equality, freedom, and civil rights. This collection profiles the leading lights in the struggle for freedom and equality, including MLK, Coretta Scott King, Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. DuBois, Harriet Tubman, Ida B. Wells, and Ruby Bridges, among many others.

african american political activists: *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders* Cedric Johnson, The Black Power movement represented a key turning point in American politics. Disenchanted by the hollow progress of federal desegregation during the 1960s, many black citizens and leaders across the United States demanded meaningful self-determination. The popular movement they created was marked by a vigorous artistic renaissance, militant political action, and fierce ideological debate. Exploring the major political and intellectual currents from the Black Power era to the present, Cedric Johnson reveals how black political life gradually conformed to liberal democratic capitalism and how the movement's most radical aims—the rejection of white aesthetic standards, redefinition of black identity, solidarity with the Third World, and anticapitalist revolution—were gradually eclipsed by more moderate aspirations. Although Black Power activists transformed the face of American government, Johnson contends that the evolution of the movement as a form of ethnic politics restricted the struggle for social justice to the world of formal politics. Johnson offers a compelling and theoretically sophisticated critique of the rhetoric and strategies that emerged in this period. Drawing on extensive archival research, he reinterprets the place of key intellectual figures, such as Harold Cruse and Amiri Baraka, and influential organizations, including the African

Liberation Support Committee, the National Black Political Assembly, and the National Black Independent Political Party in postsegregation black politics, while at the same time identifying the contradictions of Black Power radicalism itself. Documenting the historical retreat from radical, democratic struggle, *Revolutionaries to Race Leaders* ultimately calls for the renewal of popular struggle and class-conscious politics. Cedric Johnson is assistant professor of political science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

african american political activists: The Defeat of Black Power Leonard N. Moore, 2018-02-15 For three days in 1972 in Gary, Indiana, eight thousand American civil rights activists and Black Power leaders gathered at the National Black Political Convention, hoping to end a years-long feud that divided black America into two distinct camps: integrationists and separatists. While some form of this rift existed within black politics long before the 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., his death—and the power vacuum it created—heightened tensions between the two groups, and convention leaders sought to merge these competing ideologies into a national, unified call to action. What followed, however, effectively crippled the Black Power movement and fundamentally altered the political strategy of civil rights proponents. An intense and revealing history, Leonard N. Moore's *The Defeat of Black Power* provides the first in-depth evaluation of this critical moment in American history. During the brief but highly charged meeting in March 1972, attendees confronted central questions surrounding black people's involvement in the established political system: reject or accept integration and assimilation; determine the importance or futility of working within the broader white system; and assess the perceived benefits of running for public office. These issues illuminated key differences between integrationists and separatists, yet both sides understood the need to mobilize under a unified platform of black self-determination. At the end of the convention, determined to reach a consensus, officials produced "The National Black Political Agenda," which addressed the black constituency's priorities. While attendees and delegates agreed with nearly every provision, integrationists maintained their rejection of certain planks, namely the call for a U.S. constitutional convention and separatists' demands for reparations. As a result, black activists and legislators withdrew their support less than ten weeks after the convention, dashing the promise of the 1972 assembly and undermining the prerogatives of black nationalists. In *The Defeat of Black Power*, Moore shows how the convention signaled a turning point for the Black Power movement, whose leaders did not hold elective office and were now effectively barred access to the levers of social and political power. Thereafter, their influence within black communities rapidly declined, leaving civil rights activists and elected officials holding the mantle of black political leadership in 1972 and beyond.

african american political activists: The New Jim Crow Michelle Alexander, 2020-01-07 One of the New York Times's Best Books of the 21st Century Named one of the most important nonfiction books of the 21st century by Entertainment Weekly, Slate, Chronicle of Higher Education, Literary Hub, Book Riot, and Zora A tenth-anniversary edition of the iconic bestseller—one of the most influential books of the past 20 years, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education—with a new preface by the author It is in no small part thanks to Alexander's account that civil rights organizations such as Black Lives Matter have focused so much of their energy on the criminal justice system. —Adam Shatz, *London Review of Books* Seldom does a book have the impact of Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*. Since it was first published in 2010, it has been cited in judicial decisions and has been adopted in campus-wide and community-wide reads; it helped inspire the creation of the Marshall Project and the new \$100 million Art for Justice Fund; it has been the winner of numerous prizes, including the prestigious NAACP Image Award; and it has spent nearly 250 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list. Most important of all, it has spawned a whole generation of criminal justice reform activists and organizations motivated by Michelle Alexander's unforgettable argument that we have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it. As the Birmingham News proclaimed, it is undoubtedly the most important book published in this century about the U.S. Now, ten years after it was first published, The New Press is proud to issue a tenth-anniversary edition with a new preface by Michelle Alexander that discusses the impact the

book has had and the state of the criminal justice reform movement today.

african american political activists: *The Politics of Black Empowerment* James Jennings, 2000-01-08 The Politics of Black Empowerment uses the experiences of grassroots activists to develop various conceptualizations and explanations of Black political behavior today. In analyzing Black politics since the late 1960s, James Jennings focuses on both the behavioral aspects, such as individual and group characteristics of voting and nonvoting and elections, as well as more fundamental philosophical and cultural questions regarding Black politics. This study examines how the traditional face of Black politics and electoral activism interacts with a growing progressive face of Black politics. While traditional Black political activists seek access or political incorporation, another group aims for power sharing. The traditional approach is sometimes satisfied with merely replacing white politicians with Blacks, but the progressive constituency focuses on fundamentally changing the whole economic and political pie. Activists desirous of Black empowerment are pursuing a political and economic orientation that goes beyond programs based on access to American institutional arrangements and attempting to change or alter given political arrangements and social relations between Blacks and whites on the basis of changing the social structure and the distribution of wealth and power. Based on interviews with Black and Latino activists in several big cities as well as on a review of the literature and the Black newspapers around the country, The Politics of Black Empowerment describes the characteristics of Black empowerment activism in America.

african american political activists: *Black Power, Jewish Politics* Marc Dollinger, 2024-04-02 Black Power, Jewish Politics expands with this revised edition that includes the controversial new preface, an additional chapter connecting the book's themes to the national reckoning on race, and a foreword by Jews of Color Initiative founder Ilana Kaufman that all reflect on Blacks, Jews, race, white supremacy, and the civil rights movement--

african american political activists: Until Justice Be Done: America's First Civil Rights Movement, from the Revolution to Reconstruction Kate Masur, 2021-03-23 Finalist for the 2022 Pulitzer Prize in History Finalist for the 2022 Lincoln Prize Winner of the 2022 John Nau Book Prize in American Civil War Era History One of NPR's Best Books of 2021 and a New York Times Critics' Top Book of 2021 A groundbreaking history of the movement for equal rights that courageously battled racist laws and institutions, Northern and Southern, in the decades before the Civil War. The half-century before the Civil War was beset with conflict over equality as well as freedom. Beginning in 1803, many free states enacted laws that discouraged free African Americans from settling within their boundaries and restricted their rights to testify in court, move freely from place to place, work, vote, and attend public school. But over time, African American activists and their white allies, often facing mob violence, courageously built a movement to fight these racist laws. They countered the states' insinuations that states were merely trying to maintain the domestic peace with the equal-rights promises they found in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. They were pastors, editors, lawyers, politicians, ship captains, and countless ordinary men and women, and they fought in the press, the courts, the state legislatures, and Congress, through petitioning, lobbying, party politics, and elections. Long stymied by hostile white majorities and unfavorable court decisions, the movement's ideals became increasingly mainstream in the 1850s, particularly among supporters of the new Republican party. When Congress began rebuilding the nation after the Civil War, Republicans installed this vision of racial equality in the 1866 Civil Rights Act and the Fourteenth Amendment. These were the landmark achievements of the first civil rights movement. Kate Masur's magisterial history delivers this pathbreaking movement in vivid detail. Activists such as John Jones, a free Black tailor from North Carolina whose opposition to the Illinois "black laws" helped make the case for racial equality, demonstrate the indispensable role of African Americans in shaping the American ideal of equality before the law. Without enforcement, promises of legal equality were not enough. But the antebellum movement laid the foundation for a racial justice tradition that remains vital to this day.

african american political activists: *We Have No Leaders* Robert Charles Smith, 1996-01-01

This comprehensive study of African American politics since the civil rights era concludes that the black movement has been co-opted, marginalized, and almost wholly incorporated into mainstream institutions.

african american political activists: Locking Up Our Own James Forman, Jr., 2017-04-18
WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR GENERAL NON-FICTION ONE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEWS' 10 BEST BOOKS LONG-LISTED FOR THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST, CURRENT INTEREST CATEGORY, LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK PRIZES *Locking Up Our Own* is an engaging, insightful, and provocative reexamination of over-incarceration in the black community. James Forman Jr. carefully exposes the complexities of crime, criminal justice, and race. What he illuminates should not be ignored. —Bryan Stevenson, author of *Just Mercy* and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative A beautiful book, written so well, that gives us the origins and consequences of where we are . . . I can see why [the Pulitzer prize] was awarded. —Trevor Noah, *The Daily Show* Former public defender James Forman, Jr. is a leading critic of mass incarceration and its disproportionate impact on people of color. In *Locking Up Our Own*, he seeks to understand the war on crime that began in the 1970s and why it was supported by many African American leaders in the nation's urban centers. Forman shows us that the first substantial cohort of black mayors, judges, and police chiefs took office amid a surge in crime and drug addiction. Many prominent black officials, including Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry and federal prosecutor Eric Holder, feared that the gains of the civil rights movement were being undermined by lawlessness—and thus embraced tough-on-crime measures, including longer sentences and aggressive police tactics. In the face of skyrocketing murder rates and the proliferation of open-air drug markets, they believed they had no choice. But the policies they adopted would have devastating consequences for residents of poor black neighborhoods. A former D.C. public defender, Forman tells riveting stories of politicians, community activists, police officers, defendants, and crime victims. He writes with compassion about individuals trapped in terrible dilemmas—from the men and women he represented in court to officials struggling to respond to a public safety emergency. *Locking Up Our Own* enriches our understanding of why our society became so punitive and offers important lessons to anyone concerned about the future of race and the criminal justice system in this country.

african american political activists: To Make the Wounded Whole Dan Royles, 2020-07-21 In the decades since it was identified in 1981, HIV/AIDS has devastated African American communities. Members of those communities mobilized to fight the epidemic and its consequences from the beginning of the AIDS activist movement. They struggled not only to overcome the stigma and denial surrounding a white gay disease in Black America, but also to bring resources to struggling communities that were often dismissed as too hard to reach. *To Make the Wounded Whole* offers the first history of African American AIDS activism in all of its depth and breadth. Dan Royles introduces a diverse constellation of activists, including medical professionals, Black gay intellectuals, church pastors, Nation of Islam leaders, recovering drug users, and Black feminists who pursued a wide array of grassroots approaches to slow the epidemic's spread and address its impacts. Through interlinked stories from Philadelphia and Atlanta to South Africa and back again, Royles documents the diverse, creative, and global work of African American activists in the decades-long battle against HIV/AIDS.

african american political activists: Civil Rights Crossroads Steven F. Lawson, 2014-10-17 Over the past thirty years, Steven F. Lawson has established himself as one of the nation's leading historians of the black struggle for equality. *Civil Rights Crossroads* is an important collection of Lawson's writings about the civil rights movement that is essential reading for anyone concerned about the past, present, and future of race relations in America. Lawson examines the movement from a variety of perspectives—local and national, political and social—to offer penetrating insights into the civil rights movement and its influence on contemporary society. *Civil Rights Crossroads* also illuminates the role of a broad array of civil rights activists, familiar and unfamiliar. Lawson describes the efforts of Martin Luther King Jr. and Lyndon Johnson to shape the direction of the struggle, as well as the extraordinary contributions of ordinary people like Fannie Lou Hamer, Harry

T. Moore, Ruth Perry, Theodore Gibson, and many other unsung heroes of the most important social movement of the twentieth century. Lawson also examines the decades-long battle to achieve and expand the right of African Americans to vote and to implement the ballot as the cornerstone of attempts at political liberation.

african american political activists: Race against Empire Penny M. Von Eschen, 2014-06-14 Marshaling evidence from a wide array of international sources, including the black presses of the time, Penny M. Von Eschen offers a vivid portrayal of the African diaspora in its international heyday, from the 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress to early cooperation with the United Nations. Tracing the relationship between transformations in anti-colonial politics and the history of the United States during its emergence as the dominant world power, she challenges bipolar Cold War paradigms. She documents the efforts of African-American political leaders, intellectuals, and journalists who forcefully promoted anti-colonial politics and critiqued U.S. foreign policy. The eclipse of anti-colonial politics—which Von Eschen traces through African-American responses to the early Cold War, U.S. government prosecution of black American anti-colonial activists, and State Department initiatives in Africa—marked a change in the very meaning of race and racism in America from historical and international issues to psychological and domestic ones. She concludes that the collision of anti-colonialism with Cold War liberalism illuminates conflicts central to the reshaping of America; the definition of political, economic, and civil rights; and the question of who, in America and across the globe, is to have access to these rights.

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