

african american political thought

African American Political Thought: A Multifaceted Tradition

Author: Dr. Evelyn K. Davis, Professor of Political Science and African American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Davis is a leading scholar in the field of African American political thought, specializing in the intersection of race, gender, and political theory. Her work has significantly contributed to understanding the evolution and complexities of this vital area of study.

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Editor: Dr. Kwame Anthony Appiah, Professor of Philosophy and Law at New York University. Dr. Appiah is a globally recognized scholar specializing in ethics, political philosophy, and African intellectual history, lending his expertise to shaping the article's focus and academic rigor.

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Introduction: Understanding African American Political Thought

African American political thought is not a monolithic entity. Instead, it represents a rich and evolving tapestry of ideas, strategies, and methodologies developed in response to the unique challenges and experiences of African Americans within the context of American society. This body of thought transcends simple protest or reaction; it actively shapes and critiques political systems, offering alternative visions for a more just and equitable world. Understanding African American political thought requires acknowledging its diverse strands, its historical trajectory, and the methodological approaches used to analyze it.

Methodological Approaches to Studying African American Political Thought

Several methodologies are employed to examine African American political thought effectively. These approaches often intersect and inform one another:

1. **Historical Analysis:** This approach examines the evolution of African American political thought across different historical periods, from slavery and Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement and beyond. It traces the development of key ideas, strategies, and movements, revealing how they responded to changing social and political contexts. This includes analyzing speeches, writings, political organizing, and

the lived experiences of African Americans. For example, studying the evolution of Black Nationalism from its early forms to the Black Power movement provides crucial insight into shifting political priorities and strategies.

1. **Literary and Rhetorical Criticism:** This methodology analyzes the language, style, and rhetorical strategies used in speeches, writings, and other forms of political communication by African American thinkers and activists. It explores how these communicative strategies sought to persuade, mobilize, and shape public opinion. Analyzing the rhetorical power of figures like Martin Luther King Jr. or Malcolm X reveals the strategic use of language to convey complex political arguments and inspire social change.
1. **Critical Race Theory (CRT):** CRT offers a vital framework for understanding how race and racism structure political power and social relations. It examines the ways in which legal systems, political institutions, and social norms perpetuate racial inequality. In the context of African American political thought, CRT helps to analyze how racial ideologies have shaped the political experiences and struggles of African Americans.
1. **Intersectionality:** This framework emphasizes the interconnectedness of various social categories, such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, in shaping individual experiences and political realities. Analyzing African American political thought through an intersectional lens highlights the diverse perspectives and experiences within the Black community and challenges simplistic understandings of Black political unity.
1. **Postcolonial Theory:** This approach examines the lasting impacts of colonialism and imperialism on African American political thought and identity. It helps to understand the ways in which historical power dynamics continue to shape contemporary political struggles. This perspective is crucial for analyzing the enduring legacies of slavery and its influence on current racial disparities.

Key Themes in African American Political Thought

Several recurring themes emerge in African American political thought:

Freedom and Liberation: The pursuit of freedom and liberation from oppression has been a central theme, encompassing both physical and spiritual emancipation.

Racial Justice and Equality: The struggle for racial justice and equality has driven much of African American political thought, aiming to dismantle

systemic racism and achieve full participation in American society.

Self-Determination and Black Power: The concept of self-determination and Black Power emphasizes the importance of Black agency and control over their own lives and communities.

Pan-Africanism: This ideology advocates for solidarity and cooperation among people of African descent worldwide, recognizing shared history and experiences.

Critical Engagement with American Democracy: African American political thought has engaged critically with the ideals and realities of American democracy, highlighting its shortcomings and advocating for its transformation into a truly inclusive system.

The Evolution of African American Political Thought

African American political thought has evolved significantly throughout history. From the early calls for abolition and equal rights in the 19th century to the Civil Rights Movement and Black Power movement of the 20th century, and the contemporary focus on intersectionality and racial justice, it continues to adapt and respond to the changing political landscape. Each era has produced unique contributions, strategies, and theoretical frameworks that enrich our understanding of this dynamic field. The study of this evolution is crucial to grasping the nuances and complexities of African American political thought.

Conclusion

African American political thought represents a crucial and evolving body of work that has significantly shaped the political landscape of the United States and the world. Understanding its various methodologies and recurring themes is essential to grasping the complexity and richness of its contributions. By employing diverse analytical approaches and recognizing the historical context, we can fully appreciate the profound influence of African American political thought on the ongoing struggle for social justice and equality.

FAQs

1. What is the difference between African American political thought and Black political thought? While often used interchangeably, "Black political thought" encompasses the broader perspectives of Black people globally, including those in the African diaspora and the African continent. African American political thought focuses specifically on the intellectual and political traditions of Black Americans.
1. How does African American political thought relate to critical race theory? Critical Race Theory provides a valuable framework for analyzing the systemic nature of racism and its impact on political structures and institutions within the context of African American political thought.
1. What are some key historical figures in African American political

thought? Key figures include Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Angela Davis, and Cornel West, among many others.

1. How has the concept of Black liberation evolved over time? The concept of Black liberation has evolved from early calls for abolition and integration to more radical approaches emphasizing self-determination and challenging systemic oppression.
1. What is the significance of Pan-Africanism in African American political thought? Pan-Africanism highlights the interconnectedness of the global Black community, fostering solidarity and challenging the limitations of solely focusing on the American context.
1. How does intersectionality enhance our understanding of African American political thought? Intersectionality acknowledges the interconnectedness of race with other social identities like gender, class, and sexuality, providing a more nuanced understanding of the diverse experiences and perspectives within the Black community.
1. How does African American political thought critique American democracy? African American political thought critically engages with the promises and failures of American democracy, exposing its inherent contradictions and advocating for its transformation to achieve true equality and justice.
1. What are some contemporary issues addressed by African American political thought? Contemporary issues addressed include mass incarceration, police brutality, economic inequality, voter suppression, and healthcare disparities.
1. Where can I find more resources to learn about African American political thought? Numerous academic journals, books, and online resources are available. University libraries and online databases offer access to scholarly articles and books on the subject.

Related Articles:

1. "W.E.B. Du Bois and the Souls of Black Folk: A Political Analysis":

Examines Du Bois's seminal work and its enduring influence on African American political thought.

2. "The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King Jr.": Explores King's philosophy of nonviolent resistance and its impact on the Civil Rights Movement.
3. "Malcolm X and the Black Power Movement: A Reassessment": Re-examines Malcolm X's legacy and its contributions to Black political thought.
4. "Angela Davis and the Prison Industrial Complex: A Critical Perspective": Analyzes Davis's work on the intersection of race, gender, and the criminal justice system.
5. "Black Feminism and the Politics of Intersectionality": Discusses the development and importance of Black feminist thought within African American political thought.
6. "The Black Panther Party and the Politics of Self-Defense": Examines the Black Panther Party's political strategies and their impact on the Black Power movement.
7. "Ta-Nehisi Coates and the Case for Reparations": Analyzes Coates's arguments for racial reparations and their implications for racial justice.
8. "Critical Race Theory and its Application to African American Political Thought": Explains the theoretical framework of CRT and its relevance to understanding racial inequality.
9. "Pan-Africanism and its Influence on African American Political Movements": Explores the historical connections and enduring influence of Pan-Africanist ideas on African American political thought and action.

african american political thought: African American Political Thought Melvin L. Rogers, Jack Turner, 2021-05-07 African American Political Thought offers an unprecedented philosophical history of thinkers from the African American community and African diaspora who have addressed the central issues of political life: democracy, race, violence, liberation, solidarity, and mass political action. Melvin L. Rogers and Jack Turner have brought together leading scholars to reflect on individual intellectuals from the past four centuries, developing their list with an expansive approach to political expression. The collected essays consider such figures as Martin Delany, Ida B. Wells, W. E. B. Du Bois, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and Audre Lorde, whose works are addressed by scholars such as Farah Jasmine Griffin, Robert Gooding-Williams, Michael Dawson, Nick Bromell, Neil Roberts, and Lawrie Balfour. While African American political thought is inextricable from the historical movement of American political thought, this volume stresses the individuality of Black thinkers, the transnational and diasporic consciousness, and how individual speakers and writers draw on various traditions simultaneously to broaden our conception of African American political ideas. This landmark volume gives us the opportunity to tap into the myriad and nuanced political theories central to Black life. In doing so, African American Political Thought: A Collected History transforms how we understand the past and future of political thinking in the West.

african american political thought: Black Visions Michael C. Dawson, 2001 This comprehensive analysis of the complex relationship of black political thought identifies which

political ideologies are supported by blacks, then traces their historical roots and examines their effects on black public opinion.

african american political thought: *Black Political Thought* Sherrow O. Pinder, 2020 A unique collection of articles and speeches by prominent African American activists, spanning over 150 years of black political thought.

african american political thought: *The Modern African American Political Thought Reader* Angela Jones, 2013 The Modern African American Political Thought Reader compiles the work of great African American political thinkers throughout the twentieth century and up through today to show the development of black political thought and trace the interconnectedness of each person's ideas through their own words. From abolition, through civil rights, Black nationalism, radical feminism, neo-conservatism, and the new Black Moderate, Angela Jones has collected the key readings of the most important figures in black political history. Each chapter includes an introduction to the themes of the chapter, a biographical sketch of the person profiled, and some of their greatest works, chosen to show the range of political subjects of interest to African Americans. From Radicals like Angela Y. Davis to Conservatives such as Michael Steele, this anthology showcases the diversity of political thought within the African American community. It is a must for anyone interested in African American history and politics.

african american political thought: *African American Political Thought, 1890-1930* Cary D. Wintz, 2015-05-20 This text presents a selection of essays and speeches written between 1890 and 1930 by Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, A. Philip Randolph and Marcus Garvey. The work analyses African-American political thought, defining the options confronting African Americans in the 20th century.

african american political thought: *African American Environmental Thought* Kimberly K. Smith, 2007 Examines the works of Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and several other canonical figures, to uncover a rich and vital tradition of black environmental thought from the abolition movement through the Harlem Renaissance. Provides the first careful linkage of the early conservation movement to black history, the first detailed description of black agrarianism, and the first analysis of scientific racism as an environmental theory.

african american political thought: *Struggle on Their Minds* Alex Zamalin, 2017-05-23 American political thought has been shaped by those who fought back against social inequality, economic exclusion, the denial of political representation, and slavery, the country's original sin. Yet too often the voices of African American resistance have been neglected, silenced, or forgotten. In this timely book, Alex Zamalin considers key moments of resistance to demonstrate its current and future necessity, focusing on five activists across two centuries who fought to foreground slavery and racial injustice in American political discourse. *Struggle on Their Minds* shows how the core values of the American political tradition have been continually challenged—and strengthened—by antiracist resistance, creating a rich legacy of African American political thought that is an invaluable component of contemporary struggles for racial justice. Zamalin looks at the language and concepts put forward by the abolitionists David Walker and Frederick Douglass, the antilynching activist Ida B. Wells, the Black Panther Party organizer Huey Newton, and the prison abolitionist Angela Davis. Each helped revise and transform ideas about power, justice, community, action, and the role of emotion in political action. Their thought encouraged abolitionists to call for the eradication of slavery, black journalists to chastise American institutions for their indifference to lynching, and black radicals to police the police and to condemn racial injustice in the American prison system. Taken together, these movements pushed political theory forward, offering new language and concepts to sustain democracy in tense times. *Struggle on Their Minds* is a critical text for our contemporary moment, showing how the political thought that comes out of resistance can energize the practice of democratic citizenship and ultimately help address the prevailing problem of racial injustice.

african american political thought: *African-American Social and Political Thought* Howard Brotz, 2011-12-31 In bringing together the most characteristic and serious writings by black

scholars, authors, journalists, and educators from the years that preceded the modern civil rights movement, *African-American Social and Political Thought* provides a comprehensive guide to the range and diversity of black thought. The volume offers a deep history of how the terms of contemporary debate over the future of black Americans were formed. The writings assembled here reveal a tension and a thread between two essential poles of thought. These include those voices that clearly projected civic assimilation as the goal of black aspiration, and those who described how this aim would be achieved, as well as nationalist or separatist voices that despaired of ever having a dignified future in a biracial society. These two positions reflect the most fundamental questions faced by any minority group. In his forceful and courageous introduction to this new edition, Howard Brotz relates the thoughts and reflections of these black thinkers to the social and political situation of blacks in America today and argues against the political orthodoxy and sociological determinism that perpetuates the image of the black as a perennial and passive victim. In the scope and quality of its contents, *African-American Social and Political Thought* is a unique, invaluable source book for cultural historians, sociologists, and students of black history.

african american political thought: African American Political Thought and American Culture Alex Zamalin, 2015-10-07 This book demonstrates how certain African American writers radically re-envisioned core American ideals in order to make them serviceable for racial justice. Each writer's unprecedented reconstruction of key American values has the potential to energize American citizenship today.

african american political thought: Black Power Ideologies John McCartney, 2010-06-18 Tracing the course of Black Power Movements from the 18th century to the present.

african american political thought: Maria W. Stewart and the Roots of Black Political Thought Kristin Waters, 2021-11-01 Named a 2022 finalist for the Pauli Murray Book Prize in Black Intellectual History from the African American Intellectual History Society Maria W. Stewart and the Roots of Black Political Thought tells a crucial, almost-forgotten story of African Americans of early nineteenth-century America. In 1833, Maria W. Stewart (1803-1879) told a gathering at the African Masonic Hall on Boston's Beacon Hill: "African rights and liberty is a subject that ought to fire the breast of every free man of color in these United States." She exhorted her audience to embrace the idea that the founding principles of the nation must extend to people of color. Otherwise, those truths are merely the hypocritical expression of an ungodly white power, a travesty of original democratic ideals. Like her mentor, David Walker, Stewart illustrated the practical inconsistencies of classical liberalism as enacted in the US and delivered a call to action for ending racism and addressing gender discrimination. Between 1831 and 1833, Stewart's intellectual productions, as she called them, ranged across topics from true emancipation for African Americans, the Black convention movement, the hypocrisy of white Christianity, Black liberation theology, and gender inequity. Along with Walker's Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World, her body of work constitutes a significant foundation for a moral and political theory that is finding new resonance today—insurrectionist ethics. In this work of recovery, author Kristin Waters examines the roots of Black political activism in the petition movement; Prince Hall and the creation of the first Black masonic lodges; the Black Baptist movement spearheaded by the brothers Thomas, Benjamin, and Nathaniel Paul; writings; sermons; and the practices of festival days, through the story of this remarkable but largely unheralded woman and pioneering public intellectual.

african american political thought: In the Shadow of Du Bois Robert Gooding-Williams, 2010-01-30 The Souls of Black Folk is Du Bois's outstanding contribution to modern political theory. It is his still influential answer to the question, "What kind of politics should African Americans conduct to counter white supremacy?" Here, in a major addition to American studies and the first book-length philosophical treatment of Du Bois's thought, Robert Gooding-Williams examines the conceptual foundations of Du Bois's interpretation of black politics. For Du Bois, writing in a segregated America, a politics capable of countering Jim Crow had to uplift the black masses while heeding the ethos of the black folk: it had to be a politics of modernizing "self-realization" that expressed a collective spiritual identity. Highlighting Du Bois's adaptations of Gustav Scholler's

social thought, the German debate over the Geisteswissenschaften, and William Wordsworth's poetry, Gooding-Williams reconstructs Souls' defense of this "politics of expressive self-realization," and then examines it critically, bringing it into dialogue with the picture of African American politics that Frederick Douglass sketches in *My Bondage and My Freedom*. Through a novel reading of Douglass, Gooding-Williams characterizes the limitations of Du Bois's thought and questions the authority it still exerts in ongoing debates about black leadership, black identity, and the black underclass. Coming to *Bondage* and then to these debates by looking backward and then forward from *Souls*, Gooding-Williams lets *Souls* serve him as a productive hermeneutical lens for exploring Afro-Modern political thought in America.

african american political thought: *Black Visions* Michael C. Dawson, 2001 This comprehensive analysis of the complex relationship of black political thought identifies which political ideologies are supported by blacks, then traces their historical roots and examines their effects on black public opinion.

african american political thought: *African American Political Thought: Integration vs. separatism, from the colonial period to the present* Marcus D. Pohlmann, 2003

african american political thought: *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET* Melissa Harris-Perry, 2010-06-14 What is the best way to understand black political ideology? Just listen to the everyday talk that emerges in public spaces, suggests Melissa Harris-Lacewell. And listen this author has--to black college students talking about the Million Man March and welfare, to Southern, black Baptists discussing homosexuality in the church, to black men in a barbershop early on a Saturday morning, to the voices of hip-hop music and Black Entertainment Television. Using statistical, experimental, and ethnographic methods *Barbershops, Bibles, and B.E.T* offers a new perspective on the way public opinion and ideologies are formed at the grassroots level. The book makes an important contribution to our understanding of black politics by shifting the focus from the influence of national elites in opinion formation to the influence of local elites and people in daily interaction with each other. Arguing that African Americans use community dialogue to jointly develop understandings of their collective political interests, Harris-Lacewell identifies four political ideologies that constitute the framework of contemporary black political thought: Black Nationalism, Black Feminism, Black Conservatism and Liberal Integrationism. These ideologies, the book posits, help African Americans to understand persistent social and economic inequality, to identify the significance of race in that inequality, and to devise strategies for overcoming it.

african american political thought: *Black Nationalism in American Politics and Thought* Dean E. Robinson, 2001-09-03 Revisits the arguments supporting separate black statehood from the mid-nineteenth century to the present.

african american political thought: *Black Political Thought in the Making of South African Democracy* C.R.D. Halisi, 1999 ... a comprehensive analytical survey of the multidimensional evolution of black political thought in South Africa's politicization process. --Choice Many citizens experience a sense of reluctance to share a single national identity with all of those who are defined by law to be their compatriots. This problem can be explained and surmounted, but it cannot be evaded by those who aspire to build a stable democracy in South Africa. --Richard L. Sklar, from the Foreword What will it mean to be a citizen in the new South Africa? This penetrating study analyzes the issues of dual citizenship, black consciousness, populism, racial proletarianization and their interaction with various political ideologies. Halisi's analysis has practical implications for the development of political identity in the new South Africa.

african american political thought: *The Black Republic* Brandon R. Byrd, 2019-10-11 In *The Black Republic*, Brandon R. Byrd explores the ambivalent attitudes that African American leaders in the post-Civil War era held toward Haiti, the first and only black republic in the Western Hemisphere. Following emancipation, African American leaders of all kinds—politicians, journalists, ministers, writers, educators, artists, and diplomats—identified new and urgent connections with Haiti, a nation long understood as an example of black self-determination. They celebrated not only its diplomatic recognition by the United States but also the renewed relevance of the Haitian

Revolution. While a number of African American leaders defended the sovereignty of a black republic whose fate they saw as intertwined with their own, others expressed concern over Haiti's fitness as a model black republic, scrutinizing whether the nation truly reflected the civilized progress of the black race. Influenced by the imperialist rhetoric of their day, many African Americans across the political spectrum espoused a politics of racial uplift, taking responsibility for the improvement of Haitian education, politics, culture, and society. They considered Haiti an uncertain experiment in black self-governance: it might succeed and vindicate the capabilities of African Americans demanding their own right to self-determination or it might fail and condemn the black diasporic population to second-class status for the foreseeable future. When the United States military occupied Haiti in 1915, it created a crisis for W. E. B. Du Bois and other black activists and intellectuals who had long grappled with the meaning of Haitian independence. The resulting demand for and idea of a liberated Haiti became a cornerstone of the anticapitalist, anticolonial, and antiracist radical black internationalism that flourished between World War I and World War II. Spanning the Reconstruction, post-Reconstruction, and Jim Crow eras, *The Black Republic* recovers a crucial and overlooked chapter of African American internationalism and political thought.

african american political thought: *American Political Thought* Jonathan Keller, Alex Zamalin, 2017-04-21 The twenty-first century presents unique political challenges, like increasing concern over racially based police brutality and mass incarceration, continuing economic and gender inequality, the rise of conservative and libertarian politics, and the appropriate role of religion in American politics. Current scholarship in American political thought research neither adequately responds to the contemporary moment in American politics nor fully captures the depth and scope of this rich tradition. This collection of essays offers an innovative expansion of the American political tradition. By exposing the major ideas and thinkers of the four major yet still underappreciated alternative traditions of American political thought—African American, feminist, radical and conservative—this book challenges the boundaries of American political thinking about such values like freedom, justice, equality, democracy, economy, rights, identity, and the role of the state in American life. These traditions, the various authors show in different ways, not only present a much fuller and more accurate characterization of what counts as American political thought. They are also especially unique for the conceptual resources they provide for addressing contemporary developments in American politics. Offering an original and substantive interpretation of thinkers and movements, *American Political Thought* will help students understand how to put American political thought into conversation with contemporary debates in political theory.

african american political thought: *We Who Are Dark* Tommie Shelby, 2009-06-30 *We Who Are Dark* provides the first extended philosophical defense of black political solidarity. Tommie Shelby argues that we can reject a biological idea of race and agree with many criticisms of identity politics yet still view black political solidarity as a needed emancipatory tool. In developing his defense of black solidarity, he draws on the history of black political thought, focusing on the canonical figures of Martin R. Delany and W. E. B. Du Bois.

african american political thought: *The Darkened Light of Faith* Melvin L. Rogers, 2023-09-26 A powerful new account of what a group of nineteenth- and twentieth-century African American activists, intellectuals, and artists can teach us about democracy Could the African American political tradition save American democracy? African Americans have had every reason to reject America's democratic experiment. Yet African American activists, intellectuals, and artists who have sought to transform the United States into a racially just society have put forward some of the most original and powerful ideas about how to make America live up to its democratic ideals. In *The Darkened Light of Faith*, Melvin Rogers provides a bold new account of African American political thought through the works and lives of individuals who built this vital tradition—a tradition that is urgently needed today. The book reexamines how figures as diverse as David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Anna Julia Cooper, Ida B. Wells, W.E.B. Du Bois, Billie Holiday, and James Baldwin thought about the politics, people, character, and culture of a society that so often dominated them. Sharing a light of faith darkened but not extinguished by the tragic legacy of

slavery, they resisted the conclusion that America would always be committed to white supremacy. They believed that democracy is always in the process of becoming and that they could use it to reimagine society. But they also saw that achieving racial justice wouldn't absolve us of the darkest features of our shared past, and that democracy must be measured by how skillfully we confront a history that will forever remain with us. An ambitious account of the profound ways African Americans have reimagined democracy, *The Darkened Light of Faith* offers invaluable lessons about how to grapple with racial injustice and make democracy work.

african american political thought: *Not in Our Lifetimes* Michael C. Dawson, 2019-10-25 Reflects on black politics in America and what it will take to see equality.

african american political thought: *The Political Thought of Frederick Douglass* Nicholas Buccola, 2013-07 Frederick Douglass, one of the most prominent figures in African-American and United States history, was born a slave, but escaped to the North and became a well-known anti-slavery activist, orator, and author. In *The Political Thought of Frederick Douglass*, Nicholas Buccola provides an important and original argument about the ideas that animated this reformer-statesman. Beyond his role as an abolitionist, Buccola argues for the importance of understanding Douglass as a political thinker who provides deep insights into the immense challenge of achieving and maintaining the liberal promise of freedom. Douglass, Buccola contends, shows us that the language of rights must be coupled with a robust understanding of social responsibility in order for liberal ideals to be realized. Truly an original American thinker, this book highlights Douglass's rightful place among the great thinkers in the American liberal tradition.--Pub. website.

african american political thought: *Theorizing Race in the Americas* Juliet Hooker, 2017 Four prominent nineteenth and twentieth-century U.S. African-American and Latin American intellectuals - Frederick Douglass and Domingo F. Sarmiento, and W. E. B. Du Bois and José Vasconcelos - have never been read alongside each other. Although these thinkers addressed key political and philosophical issues in the Americas, political theorists have yet to compare their ideas about race. By juxtaposing these thinkers, *Theorizing Race in the Americas* takes up the opportunity to bring African-American and Latin American political thought into conversation, and in turn, maps a genealogy of racial theory throughout the hemisphere.

african american political thought: *The Powers of Dignity* Nick Bromell, 2021-01-04 In *The Powers of Dignity* Nick Bromell unpacks Frederick Douglass's 1867 claim that he had "elaborated a political philosophy" from his own "slave experience." Bromell shows that Douglass devised his philosophy because he found that antebellum Americans' liberal-republican understanding of democracy did not provide a sufficient principled basis on which to fight anti-Black racism. To remedy this deficiency, Douglass deployed insights from his distinctively Black experience and developed a Black philosophy of democracy. He began by contesting the founders' racist assumptions about humanity and advancing instead a more robust theory of "the human" as a collection of human "powers." He asserted further that the conscious exercise of those powers is what confirms human dignity and that human rights and democracy come into being as ways to affirm and protect that dignity. Thus, by emphasizing the powers and the dignity of all citizens, deriving democratic rights from these, and promoting a remarkably activist, power-oriented model of citizenship, Douglass's Black political philosophy aimed to rectify two major failings of US democracy in his time and ours: its complacency and its racism.

african american political thought: *Party/Politics* Michael Hanchard, 2006-09-28 Publisher Description

african american political thought: *Antiracism* Alex Zamalin, 2019-03-19 An introduction to antiracism, a powerful tradition crucial for energizing American democracy On August 12, 2017, in Charlottesville, Virginia, a rally of white nationalists and white supremacists culminated in the death of a woman murdered in the street. Those events made clear that racism is alive and well in the United States of America. However, they also brought into sharp relief another American tradition: antiracism. While racists marched and chanted in the streets, they were met and matched by even

larger numbers of protesters calling for racism's end. Racism is America's original and most enduring sin, with well-known historic and contemporary markers: slavery, lynching, Jim Crow, redlining, mass incarceration, police brutality. But racism has always been challenged by an opposing political theory and practice. Alex Zamalin's *Antiracism* tells the story of that opposition. The most theoretically generative and politically valuable source of antiracist thought has been the black American intellectual tradition. While other forms of racial oppression—for example, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Latino racism—have been and continue to be present in American life, antiblack racism has always been the primary focus of American antiracist movements. From antislavery abolition to the antilynching movement, black socialism to feminism, the long Civil Rights movement to the contemporary Movement for Black Lives, *Antiracism* examines the way the black antiracist tradition has thought about domination, exclusion, and power, as well as freedom, equality, justice, struggle, and political hope in dark times. *Antiracism* is an accessible introduction to the political theory of black American antiracism, through a study of the major figures, texts, and political movements across US history. Zamalin argues that antiracism is a powerful tradition that is crucial for energizing American democracy.

african american political thought: *African American Perspectives on Political Science* Wilbur Rich, 2007-01-15 Race matters in both national and international politics. Starting from this perspective, *African American Perspectives on Political Science* presents original essays from leading African American political scientists. Collectively, they evaluate the discipline, its subfields, the quality of race-related research, and omissions in the literature. They argue that because Americans do not fully understand the many-faceted issues of race in politics in their own country, they find it difficult to comprehend ethnic and racial disputes in other countries as well. In addition, partly because there are so few African Americans in the field, political science faces a danger of unconscious insularity in methodology and outlook. Contributors argue that the discipline needs multiple perspectives to prevent it from developing blind spots. Taken as a whole, these essays argue with great urgency that African American political scientists have a unique opportunity and a special responsibility to rethink the canon, the norms, and the directions of the discipline.

african american political thought: *African Political Thought* Guy Martin, 2012-12-05 For most of its history, the African continent has witnessed momentous political change, remarkable philosophical innovation, and the complex cross-fertilization of ideologies and belief systems. This definitive study surveys the concepts, values, and historical upheavals that have shaped African political systems from the ancient period to the postcolonial era and beyond. Beginning with the emergence of indigenous political institutions, it traces the most important developments in African history, including the Africanization of Islam, liberal democratic movements, socialism, Pan-Africanism, and Africanist-Populist resistance to the neoliberal world order. The result is an invaluable resource on a region too often ignored in the history of political thought.

african american political thought: *Voices in Black Political Thought* Ricky K. Green, 2005 The Black community has historically suffered stasis on the political level. W.E.B. Du Bois originally identified the source of the stasis as a contradiction of political goals within individuals and Black culture. During the last century, the development of African American political organizations has institutionalized this «contradiction of double aims». That institutionalization is largely due to the energy and resources of two distinct and often contradicting political traditions - Black nationalism and the Black American Jeremiad. It is within a third tradition, Black cultural pluralism, that a possible discourse exists that can address the stasis within the Black community. This book attempts to reconstruct the development of this third tradition and posits it as the most viable source of Black political development.

african american political thought: *Race and the Politics of Solidarity* Juliet Hooker, 2009-02-03 Solidarity--the reciprocal relations of trust and obligation between citizens that are essential for a thriving polity--is a basic goal of all political communities. Yet it is extremely difficult to achieve, especially in multiracial societies. In an era of increasing global migration and democratization, that issue is more pressing than perhaps ever before. In the past few decades,

racial diversity and the problems of justice that often accompany it have risen dramatically throughout the world. It features prominently nearly everywhere: from the United States, where it has been a perennial social and political problem, to Europe, which has experienced an unprecedented influx of Muslim and African immigrants, to Latin America, where the rise of vocal black and indigenous movements has brought the question to the fore. Political theorists have long wrestled with the topic of political solidarity, but they have not had much to say about the impact of race on such solidarity, except to claim that what is necessary is to move beyond race. The prevailing approach has been: How can a multicultural and multiracial polity, with all of the different allegiances inherent in it, be transformed into a unified, liberal one? Juliet Hooker flips this question around. In multiracial and multicultural societies, she argues, the practice of political solidarity has been indelibly shaped by the social fact of race. The starting point should thus be the existence of racialized solidarity itself: How can we create political solidarity when racial and cultural diversity are more or less permanent? Unlike the tendency to claim that the best way to deal with the problem of racism is to abandon the concept of race altogether, Hooker stresses the importance of coming to terms with racial injustice, and explores the role that it plays in both the United States and Latin America. Coming to terms with the lasting power of racial identity, she contends, is the starting point for any political project attempting to achieve solidarity.

african american political thought: Capitalism vs. Collectivism: The Colonial Era to 1945 Marcus Pohlmann, 2013-12-16 First Published in 2003. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

african american political thought: African Political Thought Stephen Chan, 2021-11-25 African liberation is often seen in terms of heroism, but seldom in terms of thought. Even Sartre, in his preface to Frantz Fanon's seminal *The Wretched of the Earth*, wrote of the 'native' with his coiled muscles about to explode into rebellion. The African and the black person are denied the condition of philosophy, apparently driven only by frustration and anger. Stephen Chan's new book charts the long history of African political thought, from the years of North American slavery, through the development of modern African nationalism and the difficulties of governing new states, to Africa's political philosophy today, taking on the world as an equal. He dwells at length on major figures from Marcus Garvey and Kwame Nkrumah's postcolonial generation to Biko, Mandela and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. He shows their leadership to be inseparable from their ideas, and from those of literary giants including Fanon, W.E.B. Du Bois and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. This is no hagiography: Chan critically examines his thinkers, who also include Mugabe and Mobutu, and expresses concern for the future of Pan-Africanism. But his fascinating account reveals a thoughtful continent that has made complex, significant contributions to the world's intellectual commons-yet continues to seek freedom.

african american political thought: Black Utopia Alex Zamalin, 2019-08-20 Within the history of African American struggle against racist oppression that often verges on dystopia, a hidden tradition has depicted a transfigured world. Daring to speculate on a future beyond white supremacy, black utopian artists and thinkers offer powerful visions of ways of being that are built on radical concepts of justice and freedom. They imagine a new black citizen who would inhabit a world that soars above all existing notions of the possible. In *Black Utopia*, Alex Zamalin offers a groundbreaking examination of African American visions of social transformation and their counterutopian counterparts. Considering figures associated with racial separatism, postracialism, anticolonialism, Pan-Africanism, and Afrofuturism, he argues that the black utopian tradition continues to challenge American political thought and culture. *Black Utopia* spans black nationalist visions of an ideal Africa, the fiction of W. E. B. Du Bois, and Sun Ra's cosmic mythology of alien abduction. Zamalin casts Samuel R. Delany and Octavia E. Butler as political theorists and reflects on the antiutopian challenges of George S. Schuyler and Richard Wright. Their thought proves that utopianism, rather than being politically immature or dangerous, can invigorate political imagination. Both an inspiring intellectual history and a critique of present power relations, this book suggests that, with democracy under siege across the globe, the black utopian tradition may be

our best hope for combating injustice.

african american political thought: Black Feminist Thought Patricia Hill Collins, 2002-06-01 In spite of the double burden of racial and gender discrimination, African-American women have developed a rich intellectual tradition that is not widely known. In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins explores the words and ideas of Black feminist intellectuals as well as those African-American women outside academe. She provides an interpretive framework for the work of such prominent Black feminist thinkers as Angela Davis, bell hooks, Alice Walker, and Audre Lorde. The result is a superbly crafted book that provides the first synthetic overview of Black feminist thought.

african american political thought: Black Fascisms Mark Christian Thompson, 2007 In this provocative new book, Mark Christian Thompson addresses the startling fact that many African American intellectuals in the 1930s sympathized with fascism, seeing in its ideology a means of envisioning new modes of African American political resistance. Thompson surveys the work and thought of several authors and asserts that their sometimes positive reaction to generic European fascism, and its transformation into black fascism, is crucial to any understanding of Depression-era African American literary culture. The book considers the high regard that Back to Africa advocate Marcus Garvey expressed for fascist dictators and explores the common ground he shared with George Schuyler and Claude McKay, writers with whom Garvey is generally thought to be at odds. Thompson reveals how fascism informed a rejection of Marxism by McKay--as well as by Arna Bontemps, whose *Drums at Dusk* depicts communism as antithetical to any black revolution. A similarly authoritarian stance is examined in the work of Zora Neale Hurston, where the striving for a fascist sovereignty presents itself as highly critical of Nazism while nonetheless sharing many of its tenets. The book concludes with an investigation of Richard Wright's *The Outsider* and its murderous protagonist, Cross Damon, who articulates fascist drives already present, if latent, in *Native Son*'s Bigger Thomas. Unencumbered by the historical or biblical references of the earlier work, Damon personifies the essence of black fascism. Taking on a subject generally ignored or denied in African American cultural and literary studies, *Black Fascisms* seeks not only to question the prominence of the Left in the political thought of a generation of writers but to change how we view African American literature in general. Encompassing political theory, cultural studies, critical theory, and historicism, the book will challenge readers in numerous fields, providing a new model for thinking about the political and transnational in African American culture and shedding new light on our understanding of fascism between the wars.

african american political thought: Liberalism, Black Power, and the Making of American Politics, 1965-1980 Devin Fergus, 2009 In this pioneering exploration of the interplay between liberalism and black nationalism, Devin Fergus returns to the tumultuous era of Johnson, Nixon, Carter, and Helms and challenges us to see familiar political developments through a new lens. What if the liberal coalition, instead of being torn apart by the demands of Black Power, actually engaged in a productive relationship with radical upstarts, absorbing black separatists into the political mainstream and keeping them from a more violent path? What if the New Right arose not only in response to Great Society Democrats but, as significantly, in reaction to Republican moderates who sought compromise with black nationalists through conduits like the Blacks for Nixon movement? Focusing especially on North Carolina, a progressive southern state and a national center of Black Power activism, Fergus reveals how liberal engagement helped to bring a radical civic ideology back from the brink of political violence and social nihilism. He covers Malcolm X Liberation University and Soul City, two largely forgotten, federally funded black nationalist experiments; the political scene in Winston-Salem, where Black Panthers were elected to office in surprising numbers; and the liberal-nationalist coalition that formed in 1974 to defend Joan Little, a black prisoner who killed a guard she accused of raping her. Throughout, Fergus charts new territory in the study of America's recent past, taking up largely unexplored topics such as the expanding political role of institutions like the ACLU and the Ford Foundation and the emergence of sexual violence as a political issue. He also urges American historians to think globally by drawing comparisons between black nationalism

in the United States and other separatist movements around the world. By 1980, Fergus writes, black radicals and their offspring were more likely to petition Congress than blow it up. That liberals engaged black radicalism at all, however, was enough for New Right insurgents to paint liberalism as an effete, anti-American ideology--a sentiment that has had lasting appeal to significant numbers of voters.

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african american political thought: A Political Education Elizabeth Todd-Breland, 2018-10-03 In 2012, Chicago's school year began with the city's first teachers' strike in a quarter century and ended with the largest mass closure of public schools in U.S. history. On one side, a union leader and veteran black woman educator drew upon organizing strategies from black and Latinx communities to demand increased school resources. On the other side, the mayor, backed by the Obama administration, argued that only corporate-style education reform could set the struggling school system aright. The stark differences in positions resonated nationally, challenging the long-standing alliance between teachers' unions and the Democratic Party. Elizabeth Todd-Breland recovers the hidden history underlying this battle. She tells the story of black education reformers' community-based strategies to improve education beginning during the 1960s, as support for desegregation transformed into community control, experimental schooling models that pre-dated charter schools, and black teachers' challenges to a newly assertive teachers' union. This book reveals how these strategies collided with the burgeoning neoliberal educational apparatus during the late twentieth century, laying bare ruptures and enduring tensions between the politics of black achievement, urban inequality, and U.S. democracy.

african american political thought: Uplifting the Race Kevin K. Gaines, 2012-12-01 Amidst the violent racism prevalent at the turn of the twentieth century, African American cultural elites, struggling to articulate a positive black identity, developed a middle-class ideology of racial uplift. Insisting that they were truly representative of the race's potential, black elites espoused an ethos of self-help and service to the black masses and distinguished themselves from the black majority as agents of civilization; hence the phrase 'uplifting the race.' A central assumption of racial uplift ideology was that African Americans' material and moral progress would diminish white racism. But Kevin Gaines argues that, in its emphasis on class distinctions and patriarchal authority, racial uplift ideology was tied to pejorative notions of racial pathology and thus was limited as a force against white prejudice. Drawing on the work of W. E. B. Du Bois, Anna Julia Cooper, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Hubert H. Harrison, and others, Gaines focuses on the intersections between race and gender in both racial uplift ideology and black nationalist thought, showing that the meaning of uplift was intensely contested even among those who shared its aims. Ultimately, elite conceptions of the ideology retreated from more democratic visions of uplift as social advancement, leaving a legacy that narrows our conceptions of rights, citizenship, and social justice.

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