

# **african american women in history**

## **African American Women in History: A Legacy of Resilience and Resistance**

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### **Introduction:**

Understanding the history of the United States necessitates a deep dive into the experiences of African American women. The narrative of African American women in history is one of unparalleled resilience, unwavering resistance, and extraordinary contributions across various fields, despite facing systemic racism, sexism, and immense societal obstacles. This exploration of African American women in history will examine their multifaceted roles, their pivotal moments of struggle and triumph, and their lasting legacies. Examining African American women in history reveals a complex and inspiring tapestry of human experience.

### **H1: The Antebellum Era: Slavery and the Seeds of Resistance**

Before the Civil War, the lives of African American women were defined by the brutal institution of slavery. Their experiences within this system were uniquely challenging, encompassing forced labor, sexual exploitation, and the constant threat of family separation. Yet, even within this horrific context, African American women demonstrated remarkable resilience. They maintained their cultural heritage, developed intricate support networks, and engaged in subtle acts of resistance to challenge the oppressive system. This era laid the groundwork for the fight for freedom and equality that would define the lives of African American women in history for generations to come.

## H2: Reconstruction and the Fight for Suffrage

The Reconstruction era following the Civil War presented a period of both opportunity and immense struggle for African American women. While the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments offered legal advancements, the reality of racial and gender discrimination remained deeply entrenched. However, African American women like Ida B. Wells-Barnett became prominent voices against racial injustice and fought tirelessly for voting rights. Their activism laid the groundwork for the women's suffrage movement and demonstrated the interconnectedness of racial and gender equality in the struggle for African American women in history.

## H3: The Jim Crow Era and the Rise of Activism

The Jim Crow era witnessed the systematic disenfranchisement and oppression of African Americans. African American women faced the dual burden of racism and sexism, navigating a world of segregation, violence, and limited opportunities. However, this period also witnessed the rise of powerful women activists who challenged the status quo. Figures like Mary McLeod Bethune, founder of Bethune-Cookman College, used education as a tool for empowerment, while others engaged in direct action and civil disobedience. The contributions of African American women in history during this era were essential to the Civil Rights Movement.

## H4: The Civil Rights Movement and Beyond

The Civil Rights Movement of the mid-20th century saw African American women at the forefront of the struggle for equality. Women like Rosa Parks, whose courageous act of defiance sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and Fannie Lou Hamer, a fearless activist and organizer, played crucial roles in challenging segregation and fighting for voting rights. The movement also highlighted the critical role of Black women in organizing and strategizing for social change, a crucial aspect often overlooked in historical accounts of African American women in history.

## H5: African American Women in the Modern Era

In the decades following the Civil Rights Movement, African American women continued to break barriers and make significant contributions in various fields – from politics and science to arts and literature. The election of Shirley Chisholm as the first African American woman elected to Congress marked a significant milestone. The achievements of women like Oprah Winfrey, Toni Morrison, and Condoleezza Rice demonstrate the ongoing impact of African American women in history and their continued fight for representation and equality.

## Conclusion:

The history of African American women is a testament to their resilience, strength, and unwavering commitment to social justice. Their contributions have shaped the United States and the world, impacting everything from politics and education to art and culture.

Understanding the narratives of African American women in history is essential for a complete understanding of American history and for creating a more equitable and just future. Further research and education are vital to continue to uncover, celebrate, and learn from the untold stories of African American women in history.

#### FAQs:

1. What were the key challenges faced by African American women throughout history? African American women faced systemic racism, sexism, economic inequality, and violence, often experiencing a unique form of oppression resulting from the intersection of these factors.
1. How did African American women contribute to the Civil Rights Movement? They were key organizers, strategists, and activists, participating in marches, boycotts, and voter registration drives.
1. Who are some notable figures in African American women's history? Notable figures include Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary McLeod Bethune, Rosa Parks, Fannie Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, Toni Morrison, and Oprah Winfrey.
1. How did African American women preserve their culture and traditions during slavery? They maintained cultural practices through storytelling, music, religion, and family structures, despite attempts by slaveholders to suppress their heritage.
1. What were the lasting impacts of the struggles of African American women? Their struggles have led to significant legal and social changes, including the expansion of voting rights, improved educational opportunities, and increased representation in various fields.
1. How did African American women navigate the complexities of racism and sexism? They developed strong support networks within their communities, utilized creative strategies for resistance, and formed powerful alliances across racial and gender lines.

1. What are some current challenges faced by African American women? Ongoing challenges include racial and gender disparities in education, employment, healthcare, and the criminal justice system.
1. How can we better represent African American women's history? We can do this by including their stories in educational curricula, supporting scholarship on their experiences, and actively amplifying their voices in media and public discourse.
1. Where can I learn more about African American women's history? Explore reputable museums, archives, historical societies, academic journals, and books dedicated to the subject.

#### Related Articles:

1. Ida B. Wells-Barnett and the Anti-Lynching Movement: An in-depth examination of Wells-Barnett's life and her pivotal role in exposing the horrors of lynching and fighting for racial justice.
1. Mary McLeod Bethune: Education as Empowerment: A biography focusing on Bethune's life and her dedication to providing educational opportunities for African American women.
1. The Untold Stories of Black Women in the Civil Rights Movement: A collection of essays exploring the significant contributions of often-overlooked women in the fight for equality.
1. African American Women in STEM: Breaking Barriers and Achieving Excellence: A look at the accomplishments of Black women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
1. The Legacy of Black Women Writers: An exploration of the literary contributions of African American women, highlighting their unique voices and perspectives.

1. African American Women in Politics: A History of Resistance and Representation: An overview of the struggles and triumphs of African American women in the political arena.
1. The Role of Black Women in the Great Migration: Examining the experiences and contributions of African American women who migrated from the South to the North during the early 20th century.
1. Black Women and the Fight for Reproductive Justice: An exploration of the intersection of race, gender, and reproductive rights in the experiences of African American women.
1. African American Women's Contributions to the Arts: A survey of the impactful contributions of African American women in music, visual arts, theatre, and dance.

**african american women in history: A Black Women's History of the United States** Daina Ramey Berry, Kali Nicole Gross, 2020-02-04 The award-winning Revisioning American History series continues with this “groundbreaking new history of Black women in the United States” (Ibram X. Kendi)—the perfect companion to *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States* and *An African American and Latinx History of the United States*. An empowering and intersectional history that centers the stories of African American women across 400+ years, showing how they are—and have always been—instrumental in shaping our country. In centering Black women’s stories, two award-winning historians seek both to empower African American women and to show their allies that Black women’s unique ability to make their own communities while combatting centuries of oppression is an essential component in our continued resistance to systemic racism and sexism. Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross offer an examination and celebration of Black womanhood, beginning with the first African women who arrived in what became the United States to African American women of today. *A Black Women’s History of the United States* reaches far beyond a single narrative to showcase Black women’s lives in all their fraught complexities. Berry and Gross prioritize many voices: enslaved women, freedwomen, religious leaders, artists, queer women, activists, and women who lived outside the law. The result is a starting point for exploring Black women’s history and a testament to the beauty, richness, rhythm, tragedy, heartbreak, rage, and enduring love that abounds in the spirit of Black women in communities throughout the nation.

**african american women in history: This Is Your Time** Ruby Bridges, 2020-11-10 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • CBC KIDS’ BOOK CHOICE AWARD WINNER Civil rights icon Ruby Bridges—who, at the age of six, was the first black child to integrate into an all-white elementary school in New Orleans—inspires readers and calls for action in this moving letter. Her elegant,

memorable gift book is especially uplifting in the wake of Kamala Harris making US history as the first female, first Black, and first South Asian vice president-elect. Written as a letter from civil rights activist and icon Ruby Bridges to the reader, *This Is Your Time* is both a recounting of Ruby's experience as a child who had to be escorted to class by federal marshals when she was chosen to be one of the first black students to integrate into New Orleans' all-white public school system and an appeal to generations to come to effect change. This beautifully designed volume features photographs from the 1960s and from today, as well as stunning jacket art from *The Problem We All Live With*, the 1964 painting by Norman Rockwell depicting Ruby's walk to school. Ruby's honest and impassioned words, imbued with love and grace, serve as a moving reminder that "what can inspire tomorrow often lies in our past." *This Is Your Time* will electrify people of all ages as the struggle for liberty and justice for all continues and the powerful legacy of Ruby Bridges endures.

**african american women in history:** *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 women in history:** *In Pursuit of Knowledge* Kabria Baumgartner, 2022-04 Winner, 2021 AERA Outstanding Book Award Winner, 2021 AERA Division F New Scholar's Book Award Winner, 2020 Mary Kelley Book Prize, given by the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Winner, 2020 Outstanding Book Award, given by the History of Education Society Uncover the hidden role of girls and women in the desegregation of American education The story of school desegregation in the United States often begins in the mid-twentieth-century South. Drawing on archival sources and genealogical records, Kabria Baumgartner uncovers the story's origins in the nineteenth-century Northeast and identifies a previously overlooked group of activists: African American girls and women. In their quest for education, African American girls and women faced numerous obstacles—from threats and harassment to violence. For them, education was a daring undertaking that put them in harm's way. Yet bold and brave young women such as Sarah Harris, Sarah Parker Remond, Rosetta Morrison, Susan Paul, and Sarah Mapps Douglass persisted. *In Pursuit of Knowledge* argues that African American girls and women strategized, organized, wrote, and protested for equal school rights—not just for themselves, but for all. Their activism gave rise to a new vision of womanhood: the purposeful woman, who was learned, active, resilient, and forward-thinking. Moreover, these young women set in motion equal-school-rights victories at the local and state level, and laid the groundwork for further action to democratize schools in twentieth-century America. In this thought-provoking book, Baumgartner demonstrates that the confluence of race and gender has shaped the long history of school desegregation in the United States right up to the present.

**african american women in history:** *To Turn the Whole World Over* Keisha Blain, Tiffany Gill, 2019-03-16 Black women undertook an energetic and unprecedented engagement with internationalism from the late nineteenth century to the 1970s. In many cases, their work reflected a complex effort to merge internationalism with issues of women's rights and with feminist concerns. *To Turn the Whole World Over* examines these and other issues with a collection of cutting-edge essays on black women's internationalism in this pivotal era and beyond. Analyzing the contours of gender within black internationalism, scholars examine the range and complexity of black women's global engagements. At the same time, they focus on these women's remarkable experiences in shaping internationalist movements and dialogues. The essays explore the travels and migrations of black women; the internationalist writings of women from Paris to Chicago to Spain; black women advocating for internationalism through art and performance; and the involvement of black women in politics, activism, and global freedom struggles. Contributors: Nicole Anae, Keisha N. Blain, Brandon R. Byrd, Stephanie Beck Cohen, Anne Donlon, Tiffany N. Florvil, Kim Gallon, Dayo F. Gore, Annette K. Joseph-Gabriel, Grace V. Leslie, Michael O. West, and Julia Erin Wood

**african american women in history:** *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, 1998-05-22 Rosalyn Terborg-Penn draws from original documents

to take a comprehensive look at the African American women who fought for the right to vote. She analyzes the women's own stories, and examines why they joined and how they participated in the U.S. women's suffrage movement.

**african american women in history: African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000** Quintard Taylor, Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, 2008-08-01 Reconstructs the history of black women's participation in western settlement "A stellar collection of essays by talented authors who explore fascinating topics."—Journal of American Ethnic History African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000 is the first major historical anthology on the topic. The editors argue that African American women in the West played active, though sometimes unacknowledged, roles in shaping the political, ideological, and social currents that have influenced the United States over the past three centuries. Contributors to this volume explore African American women's life experiences in the West, their influences on the experiences of the region's diverse peoples, and their legacy in rural and urban communities from Montana to Texas and from California to Kansas. The essayists explore what it has meant to be an African American woman, from the era of Spanish colonial rule in eighteenth-century New Mexico to the black power era of the 1960s and 1970s.

**african american women in history: Remaking Black Power** Ashley D. Farmer, 2017-10-10 In this comprehensive history, Ashley D. Farmer examines black women's political, social, and cultural engagement with Black Power ideals and organizations. Complicating the assumption that sexism relegated black women to the margins of the movement, Farmer demonstrates how female activists fought for more inclusive understandings of Black Power and social justice by developing new ideas about black womanhood. This compelling book shows how the new tropes of womanhood that they created--the Militant Black Domestic, the Revolutionary Black Woman, and the Third World Woman, for instance--spurred debate among activists over the importance of women and gender to Black Power organizing, causing many of the era's organizations and leaders to critique patriarchy and support gender equality. Making use of a vast and untapped array of black women's artwork, political cartoons, manifestos, and political essays that they produced as members of groups such as the Black Panther Party and the Congress of African People, Farmer reveals how black women activists reimagined black womanhood, challenged sexism, and redefined the meaning of race, gender, and identity in American life.

**african american women in history: All Bound Up Together** Martha S. Jones, 2009-11-30 The place of women's rights in African American public culture has been an enduring question, one that has long engaged activists, commentators, and scholars. All Bound Up Together explores the roles black women played in their communities' social movements and the consequences of elevating women into positions of visibility and leadership. Martha Jones reveals how, through the nineteenth century, the woman question was at the core of movements against slavery and for civil rights. Unlike white women activists, who often created their own institutions separate from men, black women, Jones explains, often organized within already existing institutions--churches, political organizations, mutual aid societies, and schools. Covering three generations of black women activists, Jones demonstrates that their approach was not unanimous or monolithic but changed over time and took a variety of forms, from a woman's right to control her body to her right to vote. Through a far-ranging look at politics, church, and social life, Jones demonstrates how women have helped shape the course of black public culture.

**african american women in history: Black Women in Texas History** Bruce A. Glasrud, Merline Pitre, 2008-03-03 Though often consigned to the footnotes of history, African American women are a significant part of the rich, multiethnic heritage of Texas and the United States. Until now, though, their story has frequently been fragmented and underappreciated. Black Women in Texas History draws together a multi-author narrative of the experiences and impact of black American women from the time of slavery until the recent past. Each chapter, written by an expert on the era, provides a readable survey and overview of the lives and roles of black Texas women during that period. Each provides careful documentation, which, along with the thorough bibliography compiled by the volume editors, will provide a starting point for others wanting to build on this important

topic. The authors address significant questions about population demographics, employment patterns, family and social dimensions, legal and political rights, and individual accomplishments. They look not only at how African American women have been shaped by the larger culture but also at how these women have, in turn, affected the culture and history of Texas. This work situates African American women within the context of their times and offers a due appreciation and analysis of their lives and accomplishments. *Black Women in Texas History* is an important addition to history and sociology curriculums as well as black studies and women's studies programs. It will provide for interested students, scholars, and general readers a comprehensive survey of the crucial role these women played in shaping the history of the Lone Star State.

**african american women in history: African American Women During the Civil War** Ella Forbes, 1998 This study uses an abundance of primary sources to restore African American female participants in the Civil War to history by documenting their presence, contributions and experience. Free and enslaved African American women took part in this process in a variety of ways, including black female charity and benevolence. These women were spies, soldiers, scouts, nurses, cooks, seamstresses, laundresses, recruiters, relief workers, organizers, teachers, activists and survivors. They carried the honor of the race on their shoulders, insisting on their right to be treated as ladies and knowing that their conduct was a direct reflection on the African American community as a whole. For too long, black women have been rendered invisible in traditional Civil War history and marginal in African American chronicles. This book addresses this lack by reclaiming and resurrecting the role of African American females, individually and collectively, during the Civil War. It brings their contributions, in the words of a Civil War participant, Susie King Taylor, in history before the people.

**african american women in history: Telling Histories** Deborah Gray White, 2009-09-17 The field of black women's history gained recognition as a legitimate field of study late in the twentieth century. Collecting stories that are both deeply personal and powerfully political, *Telling Histories* compiles seventeen personal narratives by leading black women historians at various stages in their careers, illuminating how they entered and navigated higher education, a world concerned with - and dominated by - whites and men. In distinct voices and from different vantage points, the personal histories revealed here also tell the story of the struggle to establish the fields of African American and African American women's history.

**african american women in history: Creating Their Own Image** Lisa E. Farrington, 2005 *Creating Their Own Image* marks the first comprehensive history of African-American women artists, from slavery to the present day. Using an analysis of stereotypes of Africans and African-Americans in western art and culture as a springboard, Lisa E. Farrington here richly details hundreds of important works--many of which deliberately challenge these same identity myths, of the carnal Jezebel, the asexual Mammy, the imperious Matriarch--in crafting a portrait of artistic creativity unprecedented in its scope and ambition. In these lavishly illustrated pages, some of which feature images never before published, we learn of the efforts of Elizabeth Keckley, fashion designer to Mary Todd Lincoln; the acclaimed sculptor Edmonia Lewis, internationally renowned for her neoclassical works in marble; and the artist Nancy Elizabeth Prophet and her innovative teaching techniques. We meet Laura Wheeler Waring who portrayed women of color as members of a socially elite class in stark contrast to the prevalent images of compliant maids, impoverished malcontents, and exotics others that proliferated in the inter-war period. We read of the painter Barbara Jones-Hogu's collaboration on the famed Wall of Respect, even as we view a rare photograph of Hugu in the process of painting the mural. Farrington expertly guides us through the fertile period of the Harlem Renaissance and the New Negro Movement, which produced an entirely new crop of artists who consciously imbued their work with a social and political agenda, and through the tumultuous, explosive years of the civil rights movement. Drawing on revealing interviews with numerous contemporary artists, such as Betye Saar, Faith Ringgold, Nanette Carter, Camille Billops, Xenobia Bailey, and many others, the second half of *Creating Their Own Image* probes more recent stylistic developments, such as abstraction, conceptualism, and post-modernism, never losing sight of the



struggles and challenges that have consistently influenced this body of work. Weaving together an expansive collection of artists, styles, and periods, Farrington argues that for centuries African-American women artists have created an alternative vision of how women of color can, are, and might be represented in American culture. From utilitarian objects such as quilts and baskets to a wide array of fine arts, *Creating Their Own Images* serves up compelling evidence of the fundamental human need to convey one's life, one's emotions, one's experiences, on a canvas of one's own making.

**african american women in history: *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice*** Bettie Collier-Thomas, 2010-02-02 "The Negroes must have Jesus, Jobs, and Justice," declared Nannie Helen Burroughs, a nationally known figure among black and white leaders and an architect of the Woman's Convention of the National Baptist Convention. Burroughs made this statement about the black women's agenda in 1958, as she anticipated the collapse of Jim Crow segregation and pondered the fate of African Americans. Following more than half a century of organizing and struggling against racism in American society, sexism in the National Baptist Convention, and the racism and paternalism of white women and the Southern Baptist Convention, Burroughs knew that black Americans would need more than religion to survive and to advance socially, economically, and politically. *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice* explores the ways in which women had to cope with sexism in black churches, as well as racism in mostly white denominations, in their efforts to create missionary societies and form women's conventions. It also reveals the hidden story of how issues of sex and sexuality have sometimes created tension and divisions within institutions. Black church women created national organizations such as the National Association of Colored Women, the National League of Colored Republican Women, and the National Council of Negro Women. They worked in the interracial movement, in white-led Christian groups such as the YWCA and Church Women United, and in male-dominated organizations such as the NAACP and National Urban League to demand civil rights, equal employment, and educational opportunities, and to protest lynching, segregation, and discrimination. And black women missionaries sacrificed their lives in service to their African sisters whose destiny they believed was tied to theirs. *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice* restores black women to their rightful place in American and black history and demonstrates their faith in themselves, their race, and their God.

**african american women in history: *At the Dark End of the Street*** Danielle L. McGuire, 2011-10-04 Here is the courageous, groundbreaking story of Rosa Parks and Recy Taylor—a story that reinterprets the history of America's civil rights movement in terms of the sexual violence committed against Black women by white men. An important step to finally facing the terrible legacies of race and gender in this country." —The Washington Post Rosa Parks was often described as a sweet and reticent elderly woman whose tired feet caused her to defy segregation on Montgomery's city buses, and whose supposedly solitary, spontaneous act sparked the 1955 bus boycott that gave birth to the civil rights movement. The truth of who Rosa Parks was and what really lay beneath the 1955 boycott is far different from anything previously written. In this groundbreaking and important book, Danielle McGuire writes about the rape in 1944 of a twenty-four-year-old mother and sharecropper, Recy Taylor, who strolled toward home after an evening of singing and praying at the Rock Hill Holiness Church in Abbeville, Alabama. Seven white men, armed with knives and shotguns, ordered the young woman into their green Chevrolet, raped her, and left her for dead. The president of the local NAACP branch office sent his best investigator

and organizer—Rosa Parks—to Abbeville. In taking on this case, Parks launched a movement that exposed a ritualized history of sexual assault against Black women and added fire to the growing call for change.

**african american women in history:** *Black Women's Intellectual Traditions* Kristin Waters, Carol B. Conaway, 2022-11-21 A new edition of a landmark work on Black women's intellectual traditions. An astonishing wealth of literary and intellectual work by nineteenth-century black women is being rediscovered and restored to print. In Kristin B. Waters's and Carol B. Conaway's landmark edited collection, *Black Women's Intellectual Traditions*, sophisticated commentary on this rich body of work chronicles a powerful and interwoven legacy of activism based on social and political theories that helped shape the history of North America. *Black Women's Intellectual Traditions* meticulously reclaims this American legacy, providing a collection of critical analyses of the primary sources and their vital traditions. Written by leading scholars, this book is particularly powerful in its exploration of the pioneering thought and action of the nineteenth-century Black woman lecturer and essayist Maria W. Stewart, abolitionist Sojourner Truth, novelist and poet Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, educator Anna Julia Cooper, newspaper editor Mary Ann Shadd Cary, and activist Ida B. Wells. The volume will interest scholars and readers of African American and women's studies, history, rhetoric, literature, poetry, sociology, political science, and philosophy. This updated edition features a new preface by the editors in light of current scholarship.

**african american women in history:** *Hine Sight* Darlene Clark Hine, 1997-03-22 A collection of 14 essays by Hine (American history, Michigan State U.) from the past 14 years, covering African-American women's history. Topics include female slave resistance, Black migration to the urban Midwest, 19th-century Black women physicians, and the Black studies movement. Annotation copyright by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

**african american women in history:** *African American Women and the Vote, 1837-1965* Bettye Collier-Thomas, 1997 The contributors focus on specific examples of women pursuing a dual ambition: to gain full civil and political rights and to improve the social conditions of African Americans. Together, the essays challenge us to rethink common generalizations that govern much of our historical thinking about the experience of African American women.

**african american women in history:** *Toward an Intellectual History of Black Women* Mia E. Bay, Farah J. Griffin, Martha S. Jones, Barbara D. Savage, 2015-04-13 Despite recent advances in the study of black thought, black women intellectuals remain often neglected. This collection of essays by fifteen scholars of history and literature establishes black women's places in intellectual history by engaging the work of writers, educators, activists, religious leaders, and social reformers in the United States, Africa, and the Caribbean. Dedicated to recovering the contributions of thinkers marginalized by both their race and their gender, these essays uncover the work of unconventional intellectuals, both formally educated and self-taught, and explore the broad community of ideas in which their work participated. The end result is a field-defining and innovative volume that addresses topics ranging from religion and slavery to the politicized and gendered reappraisal of the black female body in contemporary culture. Contributors are Mia E. Bay, Judith Byfield, Alexandra Cornelius, Thadious Davis, Corinne T. Field, Arlette Frund, Kaiama L. Glover, Farah J. Griffin, Martha S. Jones, Natasha Lightfoot, Sherie Randolph, Barbara D. Savage, Jon Sensbach, Maboula Soumahoro, and Cheryl Wall.

**african american women in history:** *Brave. Black. First.* Cheryl Willis Hudson, 2020-01-07 Published in collaboration with the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, discover over fifty remarkable African American women whose unique skills and contributions paved the way for the next generation of young people. Perfect for fans of *Rad Women Worldwide*, *Women in Science*, and *Girls Think of Everything*. Fearless. Bold. Game changers. Harriet Tubman guided the way. Rosa Parks sat for equality. Aretha Franklin sang from the soul. Serena Williams bested the competition. Michelle Obama transformed the White House. Black women everywhere have changed the world! Published in partnership with curators from the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, this illustrated biography

compilation captures the iconic moments of fifty African American women whose heroism and bravery rewrote the American story for the better. A beautifully illustrated testament to the continuing excellence and legacy of African American women. -Kirkus Reviews

**african american women in history:** Wicked Flesh Jessica Marie Johnson, 2020-08-28 The story of freedom pivots on the choices black women made to retain control over their bodies and selves, their loved ones, and their futures. The story of freedom and all of its ambiguities begins with intimate acts steeped in power. It is shaped by the peculiar oppressions faced by African women and women of African descent. And it pivots on the self-conscious choices black women made to retain control over their bodies and selves, their loved ones, and their futures. Slavery's rise in the Americas was institutional, carnal, and reproductive. The intimacy of bondage whet the appetites of slaveowners, traders, and colonial officials with fantasies of domination that trickled into every social relationship—husband and wife, sovereign and subject, master and laborer. Intimacy—corporeal, carnal, quotidian—tied slaves to slaveowners, women of African descent and their children to European and African men. In *Wicked Flesh*, Jessica Marie Johnson explores the nature of these complicated intimate and kinship ties and how they were used by black women to construct freedom in the Atlantic world. Johnson draws on archival documents scattered in institutions across three continents, written in multiple languages and largely from the perspective of colonial officials and slave-owning men, to recreate black women's experiences from coastal Senegal to French Saint-Domingue to Spanish Cuba to the swampy outposts of the Gulf Coast. Centering New Orleans as the quintessential site for investigating black women's practices of freedom in the Atlantic world, *Wicked Flesh* argues that African women and women of African descent endowed free status with meaning through active, aggressive, and sometimes unsuccessful intimate and kinship practices. Their stories, in both their successes and their failures, outline a practice of freedom that laid the groundwork for the emancipation struggles of the nineteenth century and reshaped the New World.

**african american women in history:** Pioneering African-American Women in the Advertising Business Judy Davis, 2016-12-08 Much has been written about the men and women who shaped the field of advertising, some of whom became legends in the industry. However, the contributions of African-American women to the advertising business have largely been omitted from these accounts. Yet, evidence reveals some trailblazing African-American women who launched their careers during the 1960s Mad Men era, and went on to achieve prominent careers. This unique book chronicles the nature and significance of these women's accomplishments, examines the opportunities and challenges they experienced and explores how they coped with the extensive inequities common in the advertising profession. Using a biographical narrative approach, this book examines the careers of these important African-American women who not only achieved managerial positions in major mainstream advertising agencies but also established successful agencies bearing their own names. Based on their words and memories, this study reveals experiences which are intriguing, triumphant, bittersweet and sometimes tragic. These women's stories comprise a vital part of the historical narrative on women and African-Americans in advertising and will be instructive not only to scholars of advertising and marketing history but to future generations of advertising professionals.

**african american women in history:** *African American Women of the Old West* Tricia Martineau Wagner, 2007-02-01 The brave pioneers who made a life on the frontier were not only male—and they were not only white. The story of African-American women in the Old West is one that has largely gone untold--until now. The story of ten African-American women is reconstructed from historic documents found in century-old archives. The ten remarkable women in *African American Women of the Old West* were all born before 1900, some were slaves, some were free, and some lived both ways during their lifetime. Among them were laundresses, freedom advocates, journalists, educators, midwives, business proprietors, religious converts, philanthropists, mail and freight haulers, and civil and social activists.

**african american women in history:** *Banking on Freedom* Shennette Garrett-Scott,

2019-05-07 Between 1888 and 1930, African Americans opened more than a hundred banks and thousands of other financial institutions. In *Banking on Freedom*, Shennette Garrett-Scott explores this rich period of black financial innovation and its transformative impact on U.S. capitalism through the story of the St. Luke Bank in Richmond, Virginia: the first and only bank run by black women. *Banking on Freedom* offers an unparalleled account of how black women carved out economic, social, and political power in contexts shaped by sexism, white supremacy, and capitalist exploitation. Garrett-Scott chronicles both the bank's success and the challenges this success wrought, including extralegal violence and aggressive oversight from state actors who saw black economic autonomy as a threat to both democratic capitalism and the social order. The teller cage and boardroom became sites of activism and resistance as the leadership of president Maggie Lena Walker and other women board members kept the bank grounded in meeting the needs of working-class black women. The first book to center black women's engagement with the elite sectors of banking, finance, and insurance, *Banking on Freedom* reveals the ways gender, race, and class shaped the meanings of wealth and risk in U.S. capitalism and society.

**african american women in history: The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America** Jane Cunningham Croly, 1898

**african american women in history:** *Hands on the Freedom Plow* Faith S. Holsaert, Martha Prescod Norman Noonan, Judy Richardson, Betty Garman Robinson, Jean Smith Young, Dorothy M. Zellner, 2010-09-30 In *Hands on the Freedom Plow*, fifty-two women--northern and southern, young and old, urban and rural, black, white, and Latina--share their courageous personal stories of working for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) on the front lines of the Civil Rights Movement. The testimonies gathered here present a sweeping personal history of SNCC: early sit-ins, voter registration campaigns, and freedom rides; the 1963 March on Washington, the Mississippi Freedom Summer, and the movements in Alabama and Maryland; and Black Power and antiwar activism. Since the women spent time in the Deep South, many also describe risking their lives through beatings and arrests and witnessing unspeakable violence. These intense stories depict women, many very young, dealing with extreme fear and finding the remarkable strength to survive. The women in SNCC acquired new skills, experienced personal growth, sustained one another, and even had fun in the midst of serious struggle. Readers are privy to their analyses of the Movement, its tactics, strategies, and underlying philosophies. The contributors revisit central debates of the struggle including the role of nonviolence and self-defense, the role of white people in a black-led movement, and the role of women within the Movement and the society at large. Each story reveals how the struggle for social change was formed, supported, and maintained by the women who kept their hands on the freedom plow. As the editors write in the introduction, Though the voices are different, they all tell the same story--of women bursting out of constraints, leaving school, leaving their hometowns, meeting new people, talking into the night, laughing, going to jail, being afraid, teaching in Freedom Schools, working in the field, dancing at the Elks Hall, working the WATS line to relay horror story after horror story, telling the press, telling the story, telling the word. And making a difference in this world.

**african american women in history: Raising Her Voice** Rodger Streitmatter, 2014-07-11 Each chapter is a biographical sketch of an influential black woman who has written for American newspapers or television news, including Maria W. Stewart, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Gertrude Bustill Mossell, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, Delilah L. Beasley, Marvel Cooke, Charlotta A. Bass, Alice Allison Dunnigan, Ethel L. Payne, and Charlayne Hunter-Gault.

**african american women in history: Black Women as Custodians of History: Unsung Rebel (M)Others in African American and Afro-Cuban Women's Writing** Paula Sanmartin, 2014-03-28 This book is an essential addition to the study of comparative black literature of the Americas; it will also fill the gap that exists on theoretical studies exploring black women's writing from the Spanish Caribbean. This book examines literary representations of the historic roots of black women's resistance in the United States and Cuba by studying the following texts by both African American and Afro-Cuban women from four different literary genres (autobiographical slave

narrative, contemporary novel on slavery, testimonial narrative, and poetry): *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) by the African American former slave Harriet Jacobs, *Dessa Rose* (1986) by the African American writer Sherley Ann Williams, *Reyita, sencillamente: testimonio de una negra cubana nonagenarian* [Simply Reyita. Testimonial Narrative of a Nonagenarian Black Cuban Woman] (1996), written/transcribed by the Afro-Cuban historian Daisy Rubiera Castillo from her interviews with her mother María de los Reyes Castillo Bueno, Reyita, and a selection of poems from the contemporary Afro-Cuban poets Nancy Morejón and Georgina Herrera. The study argues that the writers participate in black women's self-inscription in the historical process by positioning themselves as subjects of their history and seizing discursive control of their (hi)stories. Although the texts form part of separate discourses, the book explores the commonalities of the rhetorical devices and narrative strategies employed by the authors as they disassemble racist and sexist stereotypes, (re)constructing black female subjectivity through an image of active resistance against oppression, one that authorizes unconventional definitions of womanhood and motherhood. The book shows that in the womens' revisions of national history, their writings also demonstrate the pervasive role of racial and gender categories in the creation of a discourse of national identity, while promoting a historiography constructed within flexible borders that need to be negotiated constantly. The study's engagement in crosscultural exploration constitutes a step further in opening connections with a comparative literary study that is theoretically engaging, in order to include Afro-Cuban women writers and Afro-Caribbean scholars into scholarly discussions in which African American women have already managed to participate with a series of critical texts. The book explores connections between methods and perspectives derived from Western theories and from Caribbean and Black studies, while recognizing the black women authors studied as critics and scholars. In this sense, the book includes some of the writers' own commentaries about their work, taken from interviews (many of them conducted by the author Paula Sanmartín herself), as well as critical essays and letters. *Black Women as Custodians of History* adds a new dimension to the body of existing criticism by challenging the ways assumptions have shaped how literature is read by black women writers. Paula Sanmartín's study is a vivid demonstration of the strengths of embarking on multidisciplinary study. This book will be useful to several disciplines and areas of study, such as African diaspora studies, African American studies, (Afro) Latin American and (Afro) Caribbean studies, women's studies, genre studies, and slavery studies.

**african american women in history: History of Woman Suffrage: 1883-1900** Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan Brownell Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Ida Husted Harper, 1902

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**african american women in history: The Price for Their Pound of Flesh** Daina Ramey Berry, 2017-01-24 Groundbreaking look at slaves as commodities through every phase of life, from birth to death and beyond, in early America In life and in death, slaves were commodities, their monetary value assigned based on their age, gender, health, and the demands of the market. *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh* is the first book to explore the economic value of enslaved people

through every phase of their lives—including preconception, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, the senior years, and death—in the early American domestic slave trade. Covering the full “life cycle,” historian Daina Ramey Berry shows the lengths to which enslavers would go to maximize profits and protect their investments. Illuminating “ghost values” or the prices placed on dead enslaved people, Berry explores the little-known domestic cadaver trade and traces the illicit sales of dead bodies to medical schools. This book is the culmination of more than ten years of Berry’s exhaustive research on enslaved values, drawing on data unearthed from sources such as slave-trading records, insurance policies, cemetery records, and life insurance policies. Writing with sensitivity and depth, she resurrects the voices of the enslaved and provides a rare window into enslaved peoples’ experiences and thoughts, revealing how enslaved people recalled and responded to being appraised, bartered, and sold throughout the course of their lives. Reaching out from these pages, they compel the reader to bear witness to their stories, to see them as human beings, not merely commodities. A profoundly humane look at an inhumane institution, *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh* will have a major impact how we think about slavery, reparations, capitalism, nineteenth-century medical education, and the value of life and death. Winner of the 2018 Hamilton Book Award – from the University Coop (Austin, TX) Winner of the 2018 Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Book Prize (SHEAR) Winner of the 2018 Phillis Wheatley Literary Award, from the Sons and Daughters of the US Middle Passage Finalist for the 2018 Frederick Douglass Book Prize from Yale University’s Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition

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**african american women in history: U.S. History** P. Scott Corbett, Volker Janssen, John M. Lund, Todd Pfannestiel, Sylvie Waskiewicz, Paul Vickery, 2024-09-10 U.S. History is designed to meet the scope and sequence requirements of most introductory courses. The text provides a balanced approach to U.S. history, considering the people, events, and ideas that have shaped the United States from both the top down (politics, economics, diplomacy) and bottom up (eyewitness accounts, lived experience). U.S. History covers key forces that form the American experience, with particular attention to issues of race, class, and gender.

**african american women in history: A Book of Medical Discourses: in Two Parts** Rebecca Lee Crumpler, 2023-12-18 Reprint of the original, first published in 1883.

**african american women in history: Vanguard** Martha S. Jones, 2020-09-08 The epic history of African American women's pursuit of political power -- and how it transformed America. In the standard story, the suffrage crusade began in Seneca Falls in 1848 and ended with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. But this overwhelmingly white women's movement did not win the vote for most black women. Securing their rights required a movement of their own. In *Vanguard*, acclaimed historian Martha S. Jones offers a new history of African American women's political lives in America. She recounts how they defied both racism and sexism to fight for the ballot, and how they wielded political power to secure the equality and dignity of all persons. From the earliest days of the republic to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and beyond, Jones excavates the lives and work of black women -- Maria Stewart, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Fannie Lou Hamer, and more -- who were the vanguard of women's rights, calling on America to realize its best ideals.

**african american women in history: Black Women in White America** Gerda Lerner, 1973 In this stunning collection of documents (Washington Post Book World), African-American women speak of themselves, their lives, ambitions, and struggles from the colonial period to the present day. Theirs are stories of oppression and survival, of family and community self-help, of inspiring heroism and grass-roots organizational continuity in the face of racism, economic hardship, and, far too often, violence. Their vivid accounts, their strong and insistent voices, make for inspiring reading, enriching our understanding of the American past.

**african american women in history: How Long? How Long?** Belinda Robnett, 2000-01-13 A compelling and readable narrative history, *How Long? How Long?* presents both a rethinking of

social movement theory and a controversial thesis: that chroniclers have egregiously neglected the most important leaders of the Civil Rights movement, African-American women, in favor of higher-profile African-American men and white women. Author Belinda Robnett argues that the diversity of experiences of the African-American women organizers has been underemphasized in favor of monolithic treatments of their femaleness and blackness. Drawing heavily on interviews with actual participants in the American Civil Rights movement, this work retells the movement as seen through the eyes and spoken through the voices of African-American women participants. It is the first book to provide an analysis of race, class, gender, and culture as substructures that shaped the organization and outcome of the movement. Robnett examines the differences among women participants in the movement and offers the first cohesive analysis of the gendered relations and interactions among its black activists, thus demonstrating that femaleness and blackness cannot be viewed as sufficient signifiers for movement experience and individual identity. Finally, this book makes a significant contribution to social movement theory by providing a crucial understanding of the continuity and complexity of social movements, clarifying the need for different layers of leadership that come to satisfy different movement needs. An engaging narrative history as well as a major contribution to social movement and feminist theory, *How Long? How Long?* will appeal to students and scholars of social activism, women's studies, American history, and African-American studies, and to general readers interested in the perennially fascinating story of the American Civil Rights movement.

**african american women in history:** [Running from Bondage](#) Karen Cook Bell, 2021-07 A compelling examination of the ways enslaved women fought for their freedom during and after the Revolutionary War.

**african american women in history:** [Ain't I A Woman?](#) Sojourner Truth, 2020-09-24 'I am a woman's rights. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that? I am as strong as any man that is now' A former slave and one of the most powerful orators of her time, Sojourner Truth fought for the equal rights of Black women throughout her life. This selection of her impassioned speeches is accompanied by the words of other inspiring African-American female campaigners from the nineteenth century. One of twenty new books in the bestselling Penguin Great Ideas series. This new selection showcases a diverse list of thinkers who have helped shape our world today, from anarchists to stoics, feminists to prophets, satirists to Zen Buddhists.

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