



UNAPOLOGETIC DELVE DEEPER READING LIST



This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by kYmberly Keeton of ART | library deco of Austin, Texas provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Unapologetic*.

About Film: After two police killings, Black millennial organizers challenge a Chicago administration complicit in state violence against its Black residents. Told through the lens of Janaé and Bella, two fierce abolitionist leaders, Unapologetic is a deep look into the Movement for Black Lives, from the police murder of Rekia Boyd to the election of mayor Lori Lightfoot.

Contributors

Kyemberly Keeton

ADULT NON-FICTION

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York, New Press, 2010.

This powerful text highlights the racial dimensions of the "War on Drugs." The author argues that federal drug policy unfairly targets communities of color, keeping millions of young, Black men in a cycle of poverty and behind bars. *The New Jim Crow* is a stunning account of the rebirth of a caste-like system in the United States, one that has resulted in millions of African Americans locked behind bars and then relegated to a permanent second-class status—denied the very rights supposedly won in the Civil Rights Movement.

Bennett, Michael, and Dave Zirin. *Things That Make White People Uncomfortable*. Chicago, Haymarket Books, 2019.

Bennett adds his unmistakable voice to discussions of racism and police violence, Black athletes and their relationship to powerful institutions like the NCAA and the NFL, the role of protest in history, and the responsibilities of athletes as role models to speak out against injustice. Following in the footsteps of activist-athletes from Muhammad Ali to Colin Kaepernick, Bennett demonstrates his outspoken leadership both on and off the field. Written with award-winning sportswriter and author Dave Zirin, *Things that Make White People Uncomfortable* is a sports book for our turbulent times, a memoir, and a manifesto as hilarious and engaging as it is illuminating.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. New York, Spiegel & Grau, 2015.

Between the World and Me unfolds as a six-chapter letter from Coates to his 15-year-old son Samori, prompted by his son's stunned and heartbroken reaction to the announcement that no charges would be brought against Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson in the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown. *Between the World and Me* is Ta-Nehisi Coates's attempt to answer questions in a letter to his adolescent son. Coates shares with his son—and readers—the story of his awakening to the truth about his place in the world through a series of revelatory experiences, from Howard University to Civil War battlefields, from the South Side of Chicago to Paris, from his childhood home to the living rooms of mothers whose children's lives were taken as American plunder.

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Fighting Words: Black Women and the Search for Justice (Contradictions of Modernity)*. 1st ed. vol. 7, University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

In *Fighting Words*, Collins investigates how effectively Black feminist thought confronts the injustices African American women currently face. The book examines poverty, mothering, white supremacy and Afrocentrism, the resegregation of American society by race and class, and the ideas of Sojourner Truth and how they can serve as a springboard for more liberating social theory.

Day, Susie. *Brother You Choose: Panthers, Politics, and Revolution*. 2020.

Paul Coates and Eddie Conway met as young men in Baltimore in the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. When Conway went to prison in 1970 based on flimsy evidence, Coates advocated for him. Coates (father of Ta-Nehisi) founded Black Classic Press and maintained his friendship with Conway despite the 44 years the latter spent in prison. Day has compiled and edited their wide-ranging conversations.

Haga, Kazu. *Healing Resistance: A Radically Different Response to Harm*. Parallax Press, 2020.

Activists and social change agents, restorative justice practitioners, faith leaders, and anybody engaged in social progress and shifting society will find this mindful approach to nonviolent action indispensable. Nonviolence was once considered the highest form of activism and radical change. And yet its basic truth, its restorative power, has been forgotten. In *Healing Resistance*, leading Kingian Nonviolence trainer Kazu Haga blazingly reclaims the energy and assertiveness of nonviolent practice (utilized by the Women's March and Black Lives Matter), and proves that nonviolent civil resistance remains the most effective strategy for social change in hostile times. With over 20 years of experience practicing and teaching Kingian Nonviolence, Haga offers us the practical approach to societal conflict first begun by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the Civil Rights Movement, which has been developed into a fully workable, step-by-step training and deeply transformative philosophy. Kingian Nonviolence takes on the timely issues of endless protest and activist burnout, and presents tried-and-tested strategies for staying resilient, creating equity, and restoring peace.

hooks, bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. 1st ed. Routledge, 2003.

In *Teaching Community* bell hooks seeks to theorize from the place of the positive, looking at what works. Writing about struggles to end racism and white supremacy, she makes the useful point that "No one is born a racist. Everyone makes a choice." *Teaching Community* tells us how we can choose to end racism and create a beloved community. hooks looks at many issues--among them, spirituality in the classroom, white people looking to end racism, and erotic relationships between professors and students. Spirit, struggle, service, love, the ideals of shared knowledge and shared learning - these values motivate progressive social change. Teachers of vision know that democratic education can never be confined to a classroom. Teaching - so often undervalued in our society -- can be a joyous and inclusive activity. bell hooks shows the way. "When teachers teach with love, combining care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust, we are often able to enter the classroom and go straight to the heart of the matter, which is knowing what to do on any given day to create the best climate for learning."

Lorde, Audre. *A Burst of Light*. 2nd ed. Ixia Press, 2017.

Winner of the 1988 Before Columbus Foundation National Book Award, this path-breaking collection of essays is a clarion call to build communities that nurture our spirit. Lorde announces the need for a radical politics of intersectionality while struggling to maintain her own faith as she wages a battle against liver cancer. From reflections on her struggle with the disease to thoughts on lesbian sexuality and African-American identity in a straight white man's world, Lorde's voice remains enduringly relevant in today's political landscape.

Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider*. 1984. Reprint, Penguin Random House, 2007.

In this charged collection of fifteen essays and speeches, Lorde takes on sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, and class, and propounds social difference as a vehicle for action and change. Her prose is incisive, unflinching, and lyrical, reflecting struggle but ultimately offering messages of hope. This commemorative edition includes a new foreword by Lorde-scholar and poet Cheryl Clarke, who celebrates the ways in which Lorde's philosophies resonate more than twenty years after they were first published. These landmark writings are, in Lorde's own words, a call to "never close our eyes to the terror, to the chaos which is Black which is creative which is female which is dark which is rejected which is messy which is . . ."

Moraga, Cherríe and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. 4th ed. State University of New York Press, 1981.

Through personal essays, criticism, interviews, testimonials, poetry, and visual art, the collection explores, as coeditor Cherríe Moraga writes, "the complex confluence of identities--race, class, gender, and sexuality--systemic to women of color oppression and liberation." Reissued here, nearly thirty-five years after its inception, the fourth edition contains an extensive new introduction by Moraga, along with a previously unpublished statement by Gloria Anzaldúa.

Parenti, Christian. *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*. New York, Verso, 2001.

In this important book, Parenti surveys the rise of the prison industrial complex from the Nixon through Reagan eras and into the present. Why does the United States currently have one of the highest rates of incarceration in the world, with over 1.8 million Americans living behind bars? Why are only 29 percent of all prisoners violent offenders? Parenti, a former radio journalist and now a professor at the New College of California, argues that capitalism implies and demands a certain amount of poverty; the powers that be then respond by incarcerating drug users, the underclass, and other relatively powerless persons.

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen :An American Lyric*. Graywolf Press, 2014.

Claudia Rankine's bold new book recounts mounting racial aggressions in ongoing encounters in twenty-first-century daily life and in the media. Some of these encounters are slights, seeming slips of the tongue, and some are intentional offensives in the classroom, at the supermarket, at home, on the tennis court with Serena Williams and the soccer field with Zinedine Zidane, online, on TV—everywhere, all the time. Including personal stories about the weight of racism, Hurricane Katrina, the denigration of Serena Williams, police killings and more, “Citizen” plunges readers into a world of pain, but softens the blow with writing so beautiful that my breath caught in my throat.

Reagan, Michale Beyea. *Intersectional Class Struggle*. AK Press, 2021.

This innovative study, explores the relevance of class as a theoretical category in our world today, arguing that leading traditions of class analysis have missed major elements of what class is and how it operates. It combines intersectional theory and materialism to show that culture, economics, ideology, and consciousness are all factors that go into making “class” meaningful. Using a historical lens, it studies the experiences of working class peoples, from migrant farm workers in California’s central valley, to the “factory girls” of New England, and black workers in the South to explore the variety of working-class experiences. It investigates how the concepts of racial capitalism and black feminist thought, when applied to class studies and popular movements, allow us to walk and chew gum at the same time—to recognize that our movements can be diverse and particularistic as well as have elements of the universal experience shared by all workers. Ultimately, it argues that class is made up of all of us, it is of ourselves, in all our contradiction and complexity.

Saeed Jones. *How We Fight for Our Lives: A Memoir*. Cengage Gale, 2020.

As a teenager growing up in Texas, Jones had wrestled with the feelings provoked by other men’s bodies. The murders of James Byrd, Jr. and Matthew Shepard taught him that “[b]eing a black gay boy is a death wish.” Yet Jones endured and embraced his sexuality. His relationship with his Buddhist mother forms the backbone of this affecting story.

Samaran, Nora. *Turn this World Inside Out: The Emergence of Nurturance Culture*. AK Press, 2019.

As Nora Samaran writes, “violence is nurturance turned backwards.” In its place, she proposes “nurturance culture” as the opposite of rape culture, suggesting that models of care and accountability—different from “call-outs” rooted in the politics of guilt—can move toward dismantling systems of dominance and oppression.

When communities identify and interrupt systemic violence, prioritize the needs of those harmed, and hold a circle of belonging that humanizes everyone, they create a foundation that can begin to resist and repair the harms inflicted by patriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism. Emerging from insights in gender studies, race theory, and psychology, and influenced by contemporary social movements, *Turn This World Inside Out* engages today's crucial questions, helping move us beyond seemingly intractable barriers to collective change.

Smith, Clint. *How the World is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*. Little, Brown, and Company, 2021.

Beginning in his hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader on an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks—those that are honest about the past and those that are not—that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation’s collective history, and ourselves.

It is the story of the Monticello Plantation in Virginia, the estate where Thomas Jefferson wrote letters espousing the urgent need for liberty while enslaving more than four hundred people. It is the story of the Whitney Plantation, one of the only former plantations devoted to preserving the experience of the enslaved people whose lives and work sustained it. It is the story of Angola, a former plantation-turned-maximum-security prison in Louisiana that is filled with Black men who work across the 18,000-acre land for virtually no pay. And it is the story of Blandford Cemetery, the final resting place of tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers.

Smith, Mychal Denzel. *Invisible Man, Got the Whole World Watching: A Young Black Man’s Education*. New York, Bold Type Books, 2017.

How do you learn to be a Black man in America? For young Black men today, it means coming of age during the presidency of Barack Obama. It means witnessing the deaths of Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Akai Gurley, and too many more. It means celebrating powerful moments of Black self-determination for LeBron James, Dave Chappelle, and Frank Ocean. Mychal Denzel Smith chronicles his own personal and political education during these tumultuous years, describing his efforts to come into his own in a world that denied his humanity

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta, editor. *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*. Haymarket, 2017.

The Combahee River Collective, a path-breaking group of radical black feminists, was one of the most important organizations to develop out of the antiracist and women's liberation movements of the 1960s and 70s. In this collection of essays and interviews edited by activist-scholar Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, founding members of the organization and contemporary activists reflect on the legacy of its contributions to Black feminism and its impact on today's struggles.

Taylor, Renee Sonya. *The Body Is Not An Apology: The Power Of Radical Self-Love*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018.

Humans are a varied and divergent bunch with all manner of beliefs, morals, and bodies. Systems of oppression thrive off our inability to make peace with difference and injure the relationship we have with our own bodies.

The Body Is Not an Apology offers radical self-love as the balm to heal the wounds inflicted by these violent systems. World-renowned activist and poet Sonya Renee Taylor invites us to reconnect with the radical origins of our minds and bodies and celebrate our collective, enduring strength. As we awaken to our own indoctrinated body shame, we feel inspired to awaken others and to interrupt the systems that perpetuate body shame and oppression against all bodies. When we act from this truth on a global scale, we usher in the transformative opportunity of radical self-love, which is the opportunity for a more just, equitable, and compassionate world—for us all.

Ward, Jesmyn. *Men We Reaped : A Memoir*. London, Bloomsbury, 2018.

Jesmyn's memoir shines a light on the community she comes from, in the small town of DeLisle, Mississippi, a place of quiet beauty and fierce attachment. Here, in the space of four years, she lost five young men dear to her, including her beloved brother—lost to drugs, accidents, murder, and suicide. Their deaths were seemingly unconnected, yet their lives had been connected, by identity and place, and as Jesmyn dealt with these losses, she came to a staggering truth: These young men died because of who they were and the place they were from, because certain disadvantages breed a certain kind of bad luck. Because they lived with a history of racism and economic struggle.

ADULT FICTION

Butler, Octavia E. *Fledgling*. S.L., Seven Stories Press, 2021.

In this sci-fi social commentary, Shori is a 53-year-old Ina (a juvenile) who wakes up in a cave, amnesiac and seriously wounded. As is later revealed, her family and their symbionts were murdered because they genetically engineered a generation of part-Ina, part-human children. Shori was their most successful experiment: she can stay conscious during daylight hours, and her black skin helps protect her from the sun. The lone survivor, Shori must rely on a few friendly (and tasty) people to help her warn other Ina families and rediscover herself.

Butler, Octavia E. *Parable of the Sower*. Four Walls, Eight Windows, 1993.

It is an apocalypse science fiction novel that provides commentary on climate change and social inequality. The novel follows Lauren Olamina in her quest for freedom. Several characters from various walks of life join her on her journey north and learn of a religion she has crafted titled Earthseed.

Butler, Octavia E. *Parable of the Talents*. Seven Stories Press, 1998.

Parable of the Talents celebrates the classic Butlerian themes of alienation and transcendence, violence and spirituality, slavery and freedom, separation and community, to astonishing effect, in the shockingly familiar, broken world of 2032. Long awaited, *Parable of the Talents* is the continuation of the travails of Lauren Olamina, the heroine of 1994's Nebula-Prize finalist, bestselling *Parable of the Sower*. *Parable of the Talents* is told in the voice of Lauren Olamina's daughter—from whom she has been separated for most of the girl's life—with sections in the form of Lauren's journal. Against a background of a war-torn continent, and with a far-right religious crusader in the office of the U.S. presidency, this is a book about a society whose very fabric has been torn asunder, and where the basic physical and emotional needs of people seem almost impossible to meet.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *The Water Dancer: A Novel*. New York, One World, 2019.

Young Hiram Walker was born into bondage—and lost his mother and all memory of her when he was a child—but he is also gifted with a mysterious power. Hiram almost drowns when he crashes a carriage into a river, but is saved from the depths by a force he doesn't understand, a blue light that lifts him up and lands him a mile away. This strange brush with death forces a new urgency on Hiram's private rebellion. Spurred on by his improvised plantation family, Thena, his chosen mother, a woman of few words and many secrets, and Sophia, a young woman fighting her own war even as she and Hiram fall in love, he becomes determined to escape the only home he's ever known.

Gyasi, Yaa. *Homegoing*. New York, NY, Penguin Random House, 2016.

Two half sisters, Effia and Esi, unknown to each other, are born into two different tribal villages in 18th century Ghana. Effia will be married off to an English colonial, and will live in comfort in the sprawling, palatial rooms of Cape Coast Castle, raising half-caste children who will be sent abroad to be educated in England before returning to the Gold Coast to serve as administrators of the Empire. Her sister, Esi, will be imprisoned beneath Effia in the Castle's women's dungeon, and then shipped off on a boat bound for America, where she will be sold into slavery.

James, Marlon. *The Book of Night Women*. London Oneworld Publications, 2015.

Lilith is born into slavery on a Jamaican sugar plantation at the end of the eighteenth century. Even at her birth, the slave women around her recognize a dark power that they- and she-will come to both revere and fear. The Night Women, as they call themselves, have long been plotting a slave revolt, and as Lilith comes of age they see her as the key to their plans. But when she begins to understand her own feelings, desires, and identity, Lilith starts to push at the edges of what is imaginable for the life of an enslaved woman, and risks becoming the conspiracy's weak link.

Jemisin, N K. *How Long 'Til Black Future Month?*. S.L., Orbit Us, 2019.

In these stories, Jemisin sharply examines modern society, infusing magic into the mundane, and drawing deft parallels in the fantasy realms of her imagination. Dragons and hateful spirits haunt the flooded streets of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In a parallel universe, a utopian society watches our world, trying to learn from our mistakes. A black mother in the Jim Crow South must save her daughter from a fey offering impossible promises. And in the Hugo award-nominated short story "The City Born Great," a young street kid fights to give birth to an old metropolis's soul.

Reid, Kiley. *Such a Fun Age*. Penguin Publishing Group, 2020.

Alix Chamberlain is a woman who gets what she wants and has made a living, with her confidence-driven brand, showing other women how to do the same. So she is shocked when her babysitter, Emira Tucker, is confronted while watching the Chamberlains' toddler one night, walking the aisles of their local high-end supermarket. The store's security guard, seeing a young black woman out late with a white child, accuses Emira of kidnapping two-year-old Briar. A small crowd gathers, a bystander films everything, and Emira is furious and humiliated. Alix resolves to make things right.

Scott, Rion A. *The World Doesn't Require You: Stories*. London, Head Of Zeus, 2020.

Established by the leaders of America's only successful slave revolt, the town still evokes the fierce rhythms of its founding. Among its residents are David Sherman, a struggling musician who just happens to be God's last son; Tyrone, a ruthless PhD candidate, whose dissertation about a childhood game ignites mayhem in the neighboring, once-segregated town of Port Yooga; and Jim, an all-too-obedient robot who serves his Master. Culminating with an explosive novella, these haunting stories of the denizens of Cross River serve to explore larger themes of religion, violence, and love--all told with sly humor and a dash of magical realism.

Ward, Jesmyn. *Sing, Unburied, Sing: A Novel*. 2017. Reprint, Scribner, 2018.

An intimate portrait of a family and an epic tale of hope and struggle, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* journeys through Mississippi's past and present, examining the ugly truths at the heart of the American story and the power—and limitations—of family bonds. Jojo is thirteen years old and trying to understand what it means to be a man. He doesn't lack fathers to study, chief among them his Black grandfather, Pop. But there are other men who complicate his understanding: his absent White father, Michael, who is being released from prison; his absent White grandfather, Big Joseph, who won't acknowledge his existence; and the memories of his dead uncle, Given, who died as a teenager. Rich with Ward's distinctive, lyrical language, *Sing, Unburied, Sing* is a majestic new work and an unforgettable family story.

Whitehead, Colson. *The Nickel Boys*. New York, Random House Us, 2020.

The story of two boys sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida. As the Civil Rights movement begins to reach the black enclave of Frenchtown in segregated Tallahassee, Elwood Curtis takes the words of Dr. Martin Luther King to heart: He is "as good as anyone." Abandoned by his parents, but kept on the straight and narrow by his grandmother, Elwood is about to enroll in the local black college. But for a black boy in the Jim Crow South of the early 1960s, one innocent mistake is enough to destroy the future. Elwood is sentenced to a juvenile reformatory called the Nickel Academy, whose mission statement says it provides "physical, intellectual and moral training" so the delinquent boys in their charge can become "honorable and honest men."

Wilkinson, Lauren. *American Spy : A Novel*. New York, Random House, 2020.

It's 1986, the heart of the Cold War, and Marie Mitchell is an intelligence officer with the FBI. She's brilliant, but she's also a young black woman working in an old boys' club. Her career has stalled out, she's overlooked for every high-profile squad, and her days are filled with monotonous paperwork. So when she's given the opportunity to join a shadowy task force aimed at undermining Thomas Sankara, the charismatic revolutionary president of Burkina Faso whose Communist ideology has made him a target for American intervention, she says yes.

YOUNG ADULT NON-FICTION

Alexander, Kwame. *The Undefeated*. Andersen Press, 2019.

Originally performed for ESPN's *The Undefeated*, this poem is a love letter to black life in the United States. It highlights the unspeakable trauma of slavery, the faith and fire of the civil rights movement, and the grit, passion, and perseverance of some of the world's greatest heroes. The text is also peppered with references to the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, and others, offering deeper insights into the accomplishments of the past, while bringing stark attention to the endurance and spirit of those surviving and thriving in the present. Robust back matter at the end provides valuable historical context and additional detail for those wishing to learn more.

Bausum, Ann. *The March against Fear: The Last Great Walk of the Civil Rights Movement and the Emergence of Black Power*. National Geographic Society, 2017.

James Meredith's 1966 march in Mississippi began as one man's peaceful protest for voter registration and became one of the South's most important demonstrations of the civil rights movement. It brought together leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Stokely Carmichael, who formed an unlikely alliance that resulted in the Black Power movement, which ushered in a new era in the fight for equality. The retelling of Meredith's story opens on the day of his assassination attempt and goes back in time to recount the moments leading up to that event and its aftermath. Readers learn about the powerful figures and emerging leaders who joined the over 200-mile walk that became known as the "March Against Fear."

Freedman, Russell. *Freedom Walkers*. Holiday House, 2015.

Now a classic, Freedman's book tells the dramatic stories of the heroes who stood up against segregation and Jim Crow laws in 1950s Alabama. A master of succinct historical narratives, Freeman explains the contributions of and sacrifices made by Rosa Parks and Claudette Colvin, who refused give up their seats, to Jo Ann Robinson, who began the boycott, to Martin Luther King, Jr., whose leadership was instrumental in carrying it through, and others. Full of eye-witness reports, iconic photographs from the era, and crucial primary sources, this work brings the narratives alive for contemporary readers. A map, source notes, a bibliography, and other backmatter make it a valuable classroom resource.

Khan-Cullors, Patrisse, and Asha Bandele. *When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir*. Saint Martin's Griffin, 2020.

Raised by a single mother in an impoverished neighborhood in Los Angeles, Patrisse Khan-Cullors experienced firsthand the prejudice and persecution Black Americans endure at the hands of law enforcement. For Patrisse, the most vulnerable people in the country are Black people. Deliberately and ruthlessly targeted by a criminal justice system serving a white privilege agenda, Black people are subjected to unjustifiable racial profiling and police brutality. In 2013, when Trayvon Martin's killer went free, Patrisse's outrage led her to co-found Black Lives Matter with Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi.

Kuklin, Susan. *No Choirboy: Murder, Violence, and Teenagers on Death Row*. Square Fish, 2014.

No Choirboy takes readers inside America's prisons and allows inmates sentenced to death as teenagers to speak for themselves. In their own voices—raw and uncensored—they talk about their lives in prison and share their thoughts and feelings about how they ended up there. Susan Kuklin also gets inside the system, exploring capital punishment itself and the intricacies and inequities of criminal justice in the United States. This is a searing, unforgettable read, and one that could change the way we think about crime and punishment.

Noah, Trevor. *It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood (Adapted for Young Readers)*. Yearling, 2020.

Trevor Noah, host of *The Daily Show* on Comedy Central, shares his remarkable story of growing up in South Africa with a black South African mother and a white European father at a time when it was against the law for a mixed-race child to exist. But he did exist—and from the beginning, the often-misbehaved Trevor used his keen smarts and humor to navigate a harsh life under a racist government. In a country where racism barred blacks from social, educational, and economic opportunity, Trevor surmounted staggering obstacles and created a promising future for himself thanks to his mom's unwavering love and indomitable will.

Partridge, Elizabeth. *Marching for Freedom: Walk Together, Children, and Don't You Grow Weary*. Viking Books for Young Readers, 2009.

An inspiring look at the fight for the vote, by an award-winning author.

Only 44 years ago in the U.S., Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was leading a fight to win blacks the right to vote. Ground zero for the movement became Selma, Alabama. Award-winning author Elizabeth Partridge leads you straight into the chaotic, passionate, and deadly three months of protests that culminated in the landmark march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. Focusing on the courageous children who faced terrifying violence in order to march alongside the King, this is an inspiring look at their fight for the vote. Stunningly emotional black-and-white photos accompany the text.

Philippe, Ben. *Sure, I'll Be Your Black Friend: Notes from the Other Side of the Fist Bump*. Harper Perennial, 2021.

In an era in which “I have many black friends” is often a medal of Wokeness, Ben hilariously chronicles the experience of being on the receiving end of those fist bumps. He takes us through his immigrant childhood, from wanting nothing more than friends to sit with at lunch, to his awkward teenage years, to college in the age of Obama, and adulthood in the Trump administration—two sides of the same American coin. Ben takes his role as your new black friend seriously, providing original and borrowed wisdom on stereotypes, slurs, the whole “swimming thing,” how much Beyoncé is too much Beyoncé, Black Girl Magic, the rise of the Karens, affirmative action, the Black Lives Matter movement, and other conversations you might want to have with your new BBFF.

Slater, Dashka. *The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives*. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2017.

If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment. The case garnered international attention, thrusting both teenagers into the spotlight.

YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Acevedo, Elizabeth. *The Poet X.*, HarperTeen, 2018.

The author begins the story with 15-year-old Xiomara sitting on the stoop of her building in Harlem in the last week before school starts. Even the drug dealers seem more pleasant as they catcall her. Xiomara sneaks back upstairs before Mami gets home from work. Xiomara explains that she's tall, curvy, and gets a lot of attention on the street—but Mami tells her that it's her responsibility to not let men catcall her. She explains that her name means “one who is ready for war,” and she's lived up to it spectacularly. Her twin brother, whom she calls Twin, was born first with no complications, but Xiomara's birth was difficult and she hasn't lived up to her parents' expectations since then.

Beatty, Paul. *The Sellout.* New York, N.Y., Picador/Farrar, Straus And Giroux, 2021.

A biting satire about a young man's isolated upbringing and the race trial that sends him to the Supreme Court, Paul Beatty's *The Sellout* showcases a comic genius at the top of his game. It challenges the sacred tenets of the United States Constitution, urban life, the civil rights movement, the father-son relationship, and the holy grail of racial equality—the black Chinese restaurant. Raised by a single father, a controversial sociologist, he spent his childhood as the subject in racially charged psychological studies. He is led to believe that his father's pioneering work will result in a memoir that will solve his family's financial woes. But when his father is killed in a police shoot-out, he realizes there never was a memoir. All that's left is the bill for a drive-thru funeral.

Coles, Jay. *Tyler Johnson Was Here.* Little, Brown Young Readers, 2018.

When Marvin Johnson's twin, Tyler, goes to a party, Marvin decides to tag along to keep an eye on his brother. But what starts as harmless fun turns into a shooting, followed by a police raid. The next day, Tyler has gone missing, and it's up to Marvin to find him. But when Tyler is found dead, a video leaked online tells an even more chilling story: Tyler has been shot and killed by a police officer. Terrified as his mother unravels and mourning a brother who is now a hashtag, Marvin must learn what justice and freedom really mean.

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

Liz Lighty has always believed she's too black, too poor, too awkward to shine in her small, rich, prom-obsessed midwestern town. But it's okay -- Liz has a plan that will get her out of Campbell, Indiana, forever: attend the uber-elite Pennington College, play in their world-famous orchestra, and become a doctor. But when the financial aid she was counting on unexpectedly falls through, Liz's plans come crashing down . . . until she's reminded of her school's scholarship for prom king and queen. There's nothing Liz wants to do less than endure a gauntlet of social media trolls, catty competitors, and humiliating public events, but despite her devastating fear of the spotlight she's willing to do whatever it takes to get to Pennington.

Magoon, Kekla. *How It Went Down*. Henry Holt & Company, 2014.

When sixteen-year-old Tariq Johnson dies from two gunshot wounds, his community is thrown into an uproar. Tariq was black. The shooter, Jack Franklin, is white. In the aftermath of Tariq's death, everyone has something to say, but no two accounts of the events line up. Day by day, new twists further obscure the truth. Tariq's friends, family, and community struggle to make sense of the tragedy, and to cope with the hole left behind when a life is cut short. In their own words, they grapple for a way to say with certainty: This is how it went down.

Medina, Tony. *I Am Alfonso Jones*. Tu Books, 2017.

Alfonso Jones can't wait to play the role of Hamlet in his school's hip-hop rendition of the classic Shakespearean play. He also wants to let his best friend, Danetta, know how he really feels about her. But as he is buying his first suit, an off-duty police officer mistakes a clothes hanger for a gun, and he shoots Alfonso. In the first graphic novel for young readers to focus on police brutality and the Black Lives Matter movement, as in Hamlet, the dead shall speak—and the living yield even more surprises.

Reynolds, Jason, and Brendan Kiely. *All American Boys*. Atheneum Books, 2015.

That's the sidewalk graffiti that started it all... Well, no, actually, a lady tripping over Rashad at the store, making him drop a bag of chips, was what started it all. Because it didn't matter what Rashad said next—that it was an accident, that he wasn't stealing—the cop just kept pounding him. Over and over, pummeling him into the pavement. So then Rashad, an ROTC kid with mad art skills, was absent again...and again...stuck in a hospital room. Why? Because it looked like he was stealing. And he was a black kid in baggy clothes. So he must have been stealing. And that's how it started.

Shabazz, Ilyasah, and Kekla Magoon. *X: A Novel*. Candlewick Press, 2015.

Malcolm Little's parents have always told him that he can achieve anything, but from what he can tell, that's nothing but a pack of lies—after all, his father's been murdered, his mother's been taken away, and his dreams of becoming a lawyer have gotten him laughed out of school. There's no point in trying, he figures, and lured by the nightlife of Boston and New York, he escapes into a world of fancy suits, jazz, girls, and reefer. *X* follows Malcolm from his childhood to his imprisonment for theft at age twenty, when he found the faith that would lead him to forge a new path and command a voice that still resonates today.

Stone, Nic. *Dear Martin*. Random House Children's Books, 2017.

Justyce McAllister is top of his class and set for the Ivy League—but none of that matters to the police officer who just put him in handcuffs. And despite leaving his rough neighborhood behind, he can't escape the scorn of his former peers or the ridicule of his new classmates. Justyce looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for answers. But do they hold up anymore? He starts a journal to Dr. King to find out. Then comes the day Justyce goes driving with his best friend, Manny, windows rolled down, music turned up—way up, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. Justyce and Manny are caught in the crosshairs. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who is under attack.

Watson, Renee, and Ellen Hagan. *Watch Us Rise*. Bloomsbury YA, 2019.

Jasmine and Chelsea are sick of the way women are treated even at their progressive NYC high school, so they decide to start a Women's Rights Club. They post everything online—poems, essays, videos of Chelsea performing her poetry, and Jasmine's response to the racial microaggressions she experiences—and soon they go viral. But with such positive support, the club is also targeted by online trolls. When things escalate, the principal shuts the club down. Jasmine and Chelsea will risk everything for their voices—and those of other young women—to be heard.