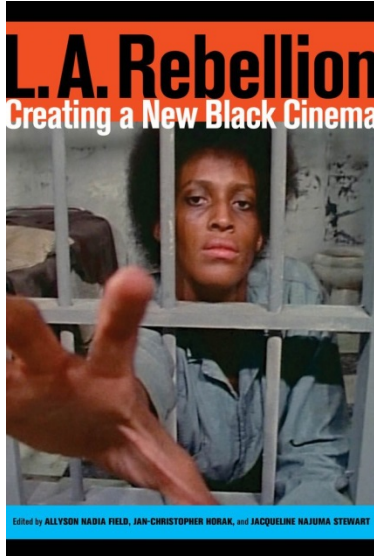
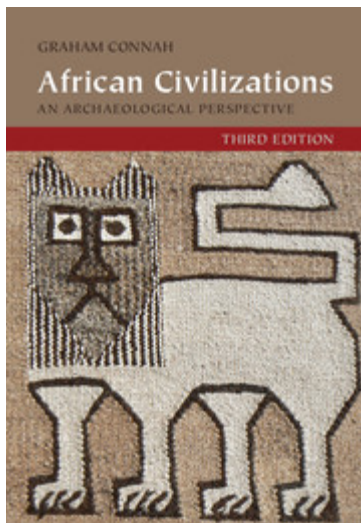


# Books of Interest



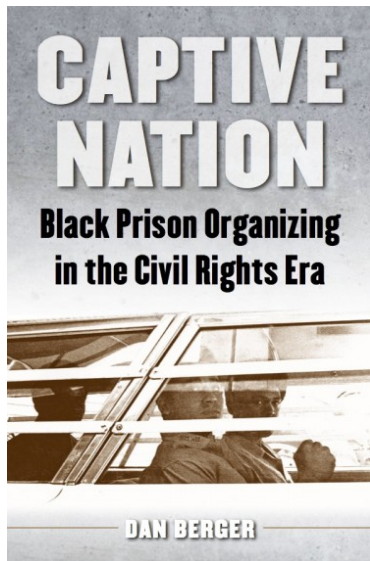
Field, Allyson, Jan-Christopher Horak, Jacqueline Najuma Stewart, eds. *L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2015, pp.480, ISBN: 0520284682.

A book dedicated to the films and filmmakers of the L.A. Rebellion, a group of African and African American independent film and video artists that formed at the University of California, Los Angeles, in the 1970s and 1980s. The group—including Charles Burnett, Julie Dash, Haile Gerima, Billy Woodberry, Jamaa Fanaka, and Zeinabu Irene Davis—shared a desire to create alternatives to the dominant modes of narrative, style, and practice in American cinema, works that reflected the full complexity of Black experiences. This collection of essays and oral histories examines the creative output of the L.A. Rebellion, contextualizing the group's film practices and offering sustained analyses of the wide range of works, with particular attention to newly discovered films and lesser-known filmmakers. Based on archival work and preservation, this collection includes a complete filmography of the movement, over 100 illustrations (most of which are previously unpublished), and a bibliography of primary and secondary materials.



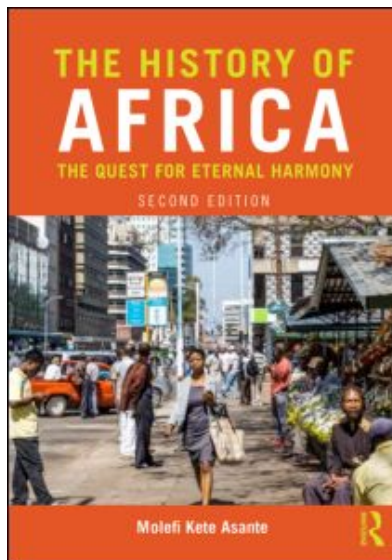
Connah, Graham. *African Civilizations: An Archaeological Perspective* (3rd edition). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015, ISBN: 9781107621275.

This new revised edition re-examines the physical evidence for developing social complexity in Africa over the last six thousand years, focused upon the archaeological research of two key aspects of complexity, urbanism and state formation, in ten main areas of Africa: Egypt, North Africa, Nubia, Ethiopia, the West African savanna, the West African forest, the East African coast and islands, the Zimbabwe Plateau, parts of Central Africa and South Africa. The book's main concern is to review the available evidence in its varied environmental settings, and to consider possible explanations of the developments that gave rise to it.



Berger, Dan. *Captive Nation: Black Prison Organizing in the Civil Rights Era*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 2014, pp.424, 28 halftones, notes, bibl., index, ISBN: 978-1-4696-1824-1.

Showing that the prison was a central focus of the Black radical imagination from the 1950s through the 1980s, the author (assistant professor of Comparative Ethnic Studies at the University of Washington at Bothell and adjunct assistant professor of History at University of Washington at Seattle) traces the dynamic and dramatic history of this political struggle, arguing that the prison shaped the rise and spread of Black activism, from civil rights demonstrators to the many current and former prisoners that built or joined organizations such as the Black Panther Party. Grounded in extensive research, the presentation works to demonstrate that prison organizing made prison walls porous and thus, it influenced generations of activists.

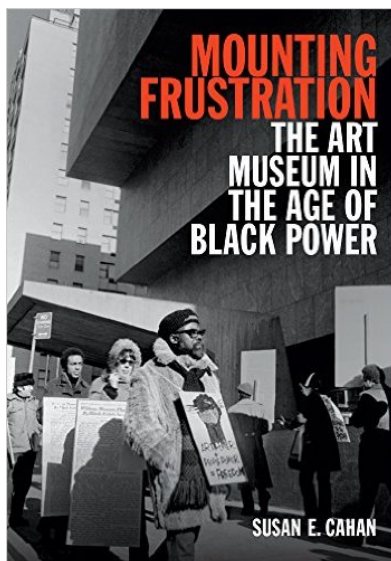


Asante, Molefi Kete. *The History of Africa: The Quest for Eternal Harmony* (second edition). New York, NY: Routledge, 2015, pp. 400, ISBN: 978-0-415-84455-0.

This book provides a wide-ranging history of Africa from earliest prehistory to the present day—using the cultural, social, political, and economic lenses of Africa as instruments to illuminate African life. The result is a survey that includes indigenous ideas, African concepts, and traditional outlooks that have escaped the writing of African history in the West. The edition includes information on the Arab Spring, the rise of FrancAfrica, the presence of the Chinese in Africa, the birth of South Sudan, U.S. President Barack Obama's policies toward Africa. The text is straightforward, and illustrated which allows for access the major developments, personalities, and events in Africa. The author is Professor and Chair of the Department of African American Studies at Temple University (home of the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies), founding editor of the *Journal of Black Studies*, a member of the advisor board of *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, he as published 76 books; President of the Molefi Kete Asante Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Pan African Strategies in Dakar of the République du Sénégal, and advisor to the Thabo Mbeki Institute for African Leadership in Tshwane, South Africa.

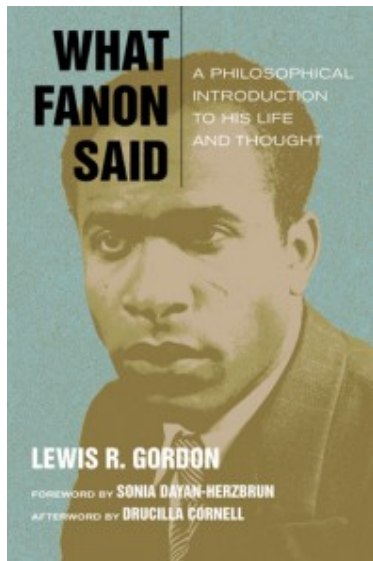
Cahan, Susan E. *Mounting Frustration: The Art Museum in the Age of Black Power*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016, pp. 400, ISBN: 0822358972.

This book investigates the strategies African American artists and museum professionals employed as they wrangled over access to and the direction of New York City's elite museums. Drawing on numerous interviews with artists and analyses of internal museum documents, the author gives a detailed and at times surprising picture of the institutional and social forces that both drove and inhibited racial justice in New York's museums. Hence, Cahan focuses on high-profile and wildly contested exhibitions that attempted to integrate African American culture and art into museums, each of which ignited debate, dissension, and protest. The Metropolitan Museum's 1969 exhibition *Harlem on My Mind* was supposed to represent the neighborhood, but it failed to include the work of the Black artists living and working there. While the Whitney's 1971 exhibition *Contemporary Black Artists in America* featured Black artists, it was heavily criticized for being haphazard and not representative.



The Whitney show revealed the consequences of museums' failure to hire African American curators, or even white curators who possessed knowledge of Black art. The book also recounts the long history of the Museum of Modern Art's institutional ambivalence toward contemporary artists of color, which reached its zenith in its 1984 exhibition "*Primitivism*" in *Twentieth Century Art*. Representing modern art as a white European and American creation that was influenced by the "primitive" art of people of color, the show only served to further devalue and cordon off African American art.

In addressing the racial politics of New York's art world, Cahan shows how aesthetic ideas reflected the underlying structural racism and inequalities that African American artists faced. These inequalities are still felt in America's museums, as many fundamental racial hierarchies remain intact: art by people of color is still often shown in marginal spaces; one-person exhibitions are the preferred method of showing the work of minority artists, as they provide curators a way to avoid engaging with the problems of complicated, interlocking histories; and whiteness is still often viewed as the norm. The author is Associate Dean and Dean of the Arts at Yale College.



Gordon, Lewis (foreword by Sonia Dayan-Herzbrun, afterword by Drucilla Cornell). *What Fanon Said: A Philosophical Introduction to His Life and Thought*. Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2015, 216 pp, ISBN: 9780823266081.

In this work the author (a professor of Philosophy and Africana Studies at the University of Connecticut, Storrs) offers a portrait of Martinican-turned-Algerian revolutionary psychiatrist and philosopher Frantz Fanon as an exemplar of "living thought" against forms of reason marked by colonialism and racism. Working from translations of the original French texts, Gordon engages everything in Fanon from dialectics, ethics, existentialism, and humanism to philosophical anthropology, phenomenology, and political theory as well as psychiatry and psychoanalysis. Thus, the author takes into account scholars from across the global to address controversies around Fanon's writings

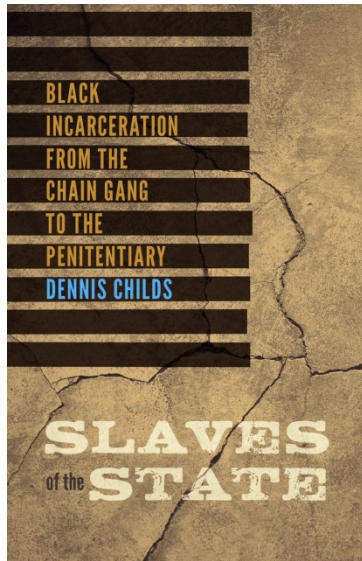
on gender and sexuality as well as political violence and the social underclass. In doing so, he confronts the replication of a colonial and racist geography of reason, allowing theorists from the Global South to emerge as interlocutors alongside northern ones in a move that exemplifies what, Gordon argues, Fanon represented in his plea to establish newer and healthier human relationships beyond colonial paradigms.



Roberts, Neil. *Freedom as Marronage*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015, pp.264, ISBN: 9780226201047.

Here, the author (associate professor of Africana studies and a faculty affiliate in political science at Williams College) investigates the concept of marronage—a form of escape from enslavement by the enslaved that was an important aspect of Caribbean and Latin American history. In examining this overlooked phenomenon—one of action from slavery and toward freedom—he deepens the understanding of freedom itself and the origin of political ideals. Thus, he examines the liminal and transitional space of escape in order to develop a theory of freedom as marronage, which contends that freedom is fundamentally located within this space as a form of perpetual flight to develop a lens to interpret the quandaries of slavery, freedom, and politics that still confront society today.

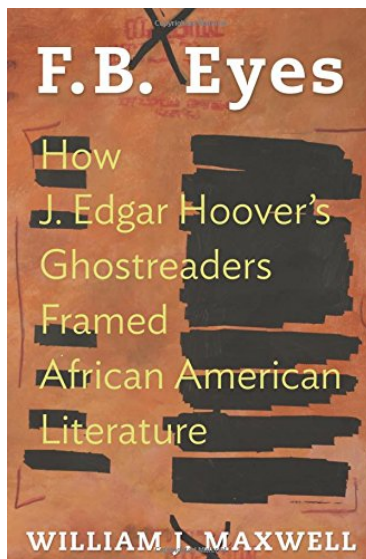




Childs, Dennis. *Slaves of the State: Black Incarceration from the Chain Gang to the Penitentiary*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2015, pp. 280, ISBN: 0816692416.

Here, the author (associate professor of literature and an affiliated faculty member of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, San Diego) argues that the incarceration of Black people and other historically repressed groups in chain gangs, peon camps, prison plantations, and penitentiaries represents a ghostly perpetuation of chattel slavery. He exposes how the Thirteenth Amendment's exception clause—allowing for enslavement as “punishment for a crime”—has inaugurated forms of racial capitalist misogynist incarceration that serve as haunting returns of conditions African people endured in the barracoons and slave ship holds of the Middle Passage, on plantations, and in chattel slavery. Hence, he seeks out the historically muted voices of those entombed within

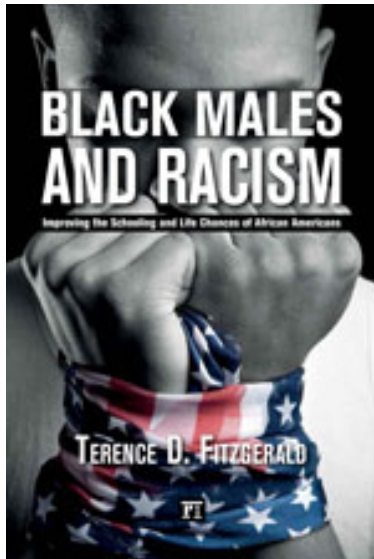
terrorizing spaces such as the chain gang rolling cage and the modern solitary confinement cell, engaging the writings of Toni Morrison and Chester Himes as well as a broad range of archival materials, including landmark court cases, prison songs, and testimonies, reaching back to the birth of modern plantations of enslavement such as Louisiana's “Angola” penitentiary. In short, the book paves the way for a new understanding of chattel slavery as a continuing social reality of U.S. empire—one resting at the very foundation of today's prison industrial complex that now holds more than 2.3 million people within the country's jails, prisons, and immigrant detention centers.



Maxwell, William J. *F.B. Eyes: How J. Edgar Hoover's Ghostreaders Framed African American Literature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015, pp.384, ISBN: 0691130205.

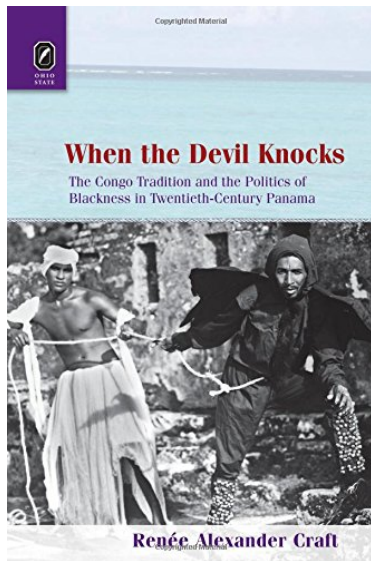
This book reports that behind the scenes the FBI's hostility to Black protest was a fear and respect for Black writing. Drawing on nearly 14,000 pages of newly released FBI files, the book exposes the intimate policing of five decades of African American poems, plays, essays, and novels. Starting in 1919, year one of Harlem's renaissance, secretive FBI "ghostreaders" monitored the latest developments in African American letters, and by 1972, these ghostreaders knew enough to simulate a sinister Black literature of their own. The official aim behind the FBI's close reading was to anticipate political unrest.

Yet, as the author reveals FBI surveillance came to influence the creation and public reception of African American literature in the heart of the twentieth century. Hence, the work details how the FBI threatened the international travels of African American writers and prepared to jail dozens of them in times of national emergency. All the same, the book also shows that the Bureau's paranoid style could prompt insightful criticism from the ghostreaders and creative replies from their literary targets. For authors such as Claude McKay, James Baldwin, and Sonia Sanchez, the suspicion that government spy-critics tracked their every word inspired rewarding stylistic experiments as well as disabling self-censorship. Illuminating both the serious harms of state surveillance and the ways in which imaginative writing can withstand and exploit; the book is an account of a long-hidden dimension of African American literature.



Fitzgerald, Terence D. *Black Males and Racism: Improving the Schooling and Life Chances of African Americans*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2014, pp.200, ISBN: 612055508.

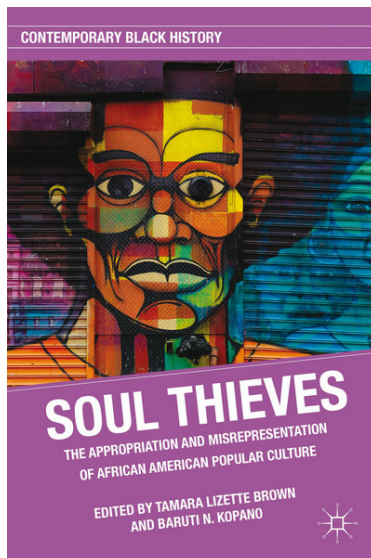
This work is based on extensive interviews of black males to reveal the experiences of racism that continue in public schools and in American higher education. Using empirical data and the methods of sociological research, the author analyzes how the persistent effects of white supremacy in education have threatened the psychological and economic welfare of Black males as the effects often last well into adulthood. Unraveling the subtle and overt mechanisms of institutional social control the author proposals to reduce structural racism and improve the lives of African American youth.



Craft, Renée Alexander. *When the Devil Knocks: The Congo Tradition and the Politics of Blackness in Twentieth-Century Panama*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2015, pp.288, ISBN: 0814212700.

This book examines an Afro-Latin Carnival performance tradition called “Congo” as it is enacted in the town of Portobelo, Panama—the nexus of trade in the Spanish colonial world. The author draws on over a decade of critical ethnographic research to argue that Congo traditions tell the story of *cimarronaje*, charting self-liberated Africans’ triumph over enslavement, their parody of the Spanish Crown and Catholic Church, their central values of communalism and self-determination, and their hard-won victories toward national inclusion and belonging. Hence, the book analyzes the Congo tradition as a dynamic cultural, ritual, and identity performance that tells an important story about a Black

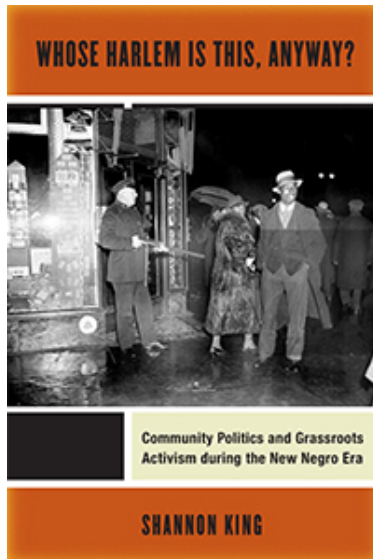
cultural past while continuing to create itself in a Black cultural present. This book also examines “Congo” within the history of twentieth century Panamanian *etnia negra* culture, politics, and representation, including its circulation within the political economy of contemporary tourism.



Brown, Tamara Lizette Brown, and Baruti N. Kopano, eds. *Soul Thieves: The Appropriation and Misrepresentation of African American Popular Culture*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 316, ISBN: 0230108970.

This presentation is a multidisciplinary collection of essays that examines both historically and contemporary manifestations of appropriated and commodified forms of African American popular culture. The book includes analyses of the misuse and in some cases outright abuse of Black popular culture through various genres. Hip hop is, and has been, one of the most dominant African American popular culture creations and is denoted in many of the offerings in this volume; however, the book is a historically inclusive documentation of the misappropriation of Black popular culture, thus spanning other areas and genres besides the contemporary and current craze

including music, dance, television, film, fashion and beauty, sports, and popular fiction. This book documents that historically African Americans have been in the forefront in the creation of American popular culture.

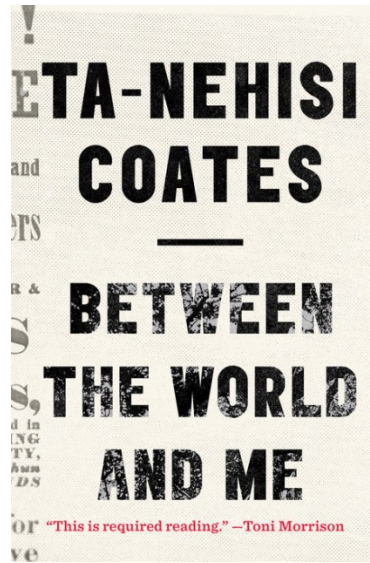


King, Shannon. *Whose Harlem Is This, Anyway: Community Politics and Grassroots Activism during the New Negro Era* New York, NY: New York University Press, 2015, pp.272, ISBN: 9781479811274.

This book argues that the mobilization for community rights raised the Black community's racial consciousness and established Harlem's political culture. By the end of the 1920s, Harlem had experienced a labor strike, a tenant campaign for affordable rents, and its first race riot. These public forms of protest and discontent represented the dress rehearsal for Black mass mobilization in the 1930s and 1940s. Hence, the author reports that the Harlem of the early twentieth century was more than just the stage upon which Black intellectuals, poets and novelists, and painters and jazz musicians created the *New Negro Renaissance*. It was also a community of working people and

Black institutions who combated the daily and structural manifestations of racial, class, and gender inequality within Harlem and across the city as New Negro activists, such as Hubert Harrison and Frank Crosswaith, challenged local forms of economic and racial inequality. And most interesting, insurgent stay-at-home Black mothers took negligent landlords to court, complaining to magistrates about the absence of hot water and heat in their apartment buildings; Black men and women, propelling dishes, bricks, and other makeshift weapons from their apartment windows and their rooftops, retaliated against hostile policemen harassing Black people on the streets of Harlem. Thus, from the turn of the twentieth century to the Great Depression, Black people in Harlem mobilized around local issues—such as high rents, jobs, leisure, and police brutality—to make their neighborhood an autonomous Black community.





Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. New York, NY: Random House (Spiegel & Grau), 2015, pp.176, ISBN: 0812993543.

This work attempt to answer the questions of what is it like to be a Black person in the U.S. and how to find a way to live within a nation built on the idea of 'race' and fact of enslavement? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden? In a letter to his adolescent son, the author (a former staff writer at *The Village Voice* and *Time*) 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.