

E-SOURCES ON WOMEN & GENDER

BLACK FEMINISM VIA THE WKDL PORTAL

WOMEN'S KNOWLEDGE DIGITAL LIBRARY (WKDL) is a free digital portal to information about women, feminism, gender, and LGBT+, with a focus on justice, equality, and empowerment for women around the world. WKDL's curated resources, organized alphabetically by topic, include websites, reports, articles, research, audiovisual materials, and more.¹

In this issue of *Feminist Collections*, we'll look at a few of the links in the **BLACK FEMINISM** subject area — which itself is one of more than 75 topics represented at the WKDL portal.

The first link on the list leads to a mother lode! **BLACK AMERICAN FEMINISMS: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY**, compiled and maintained by librarian Sherri L. Barnes at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is “an effort to combat the erasure of black feminist subjectivity and thought through the promotion and use of the literature for the general public, students, scholars and life-long learners seeking information on African American feminism and African American feminist interpretations of a broad range of issues. The bibliography documents and validates an intellectual tradition that is continuously ghettoized within black studies, women's studies and society as a whole. Moreover, the bibliography serves to ensure a place for black American feminist thought in the social change discourse, ensuring its preservation and perpetuation” (from “Purpose,” in the online bibliography's introduction). While not meant to be “a comprehensive bibliography of black American feminist thought,” the work “does seek to be comprehensive in subject coverage, citing sources from numerous subject areas within the humanities, social sciences, and health, medicine and science. Citations date back to the nineteenth century to the present, with the majority of references representing the very influential contemporary black feminist thought that emerged in the 1970s and continues today” (from “Description and Scope”).


Black American Feminisms is really a metabibliography. Nineteen distinct bibliographies, arranged under four “broad discipline-based section headings” (arts and humanities; social sciences; education; and health, medicine, and science), cite numerous books and articles on topics ranging from art to legal theory, from lesbian subjectivities to economics, from the history of education to health and

healing, and more. Six additional bibliographies cite resources by format: (auto)biographies, memoirs, & personal narratives; interviews; speeches; multidisciplinary anthologies; special issues of periodicals; and websites.

The next link in WKDL's Black Feminism subject area is to a “living document” compilation — the **BLACK DISABLED WOMAN SYLLABUS** — from Ramp Your Voice: A Self-Advocacy & Empowerment Movement for People with Disabilities. Compiler Vilissa Thompson, who invites contributors to share other recommendations by email or on social media using the hashtag #BDWSyllabus, has grouped links to resources in seven categories: black feminism/womanism; the black disabled body and identity; articles about blackness, feminism, and/or disability; books about blackness in America; fiction and poetic works; audio/video; and music. The last category highlights musicians Casselberry-Dupree, Kebra Moore, Miriam Makeba, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and Toni Hickman.

Another syllabus featured under this subject heading at the WKDL portal is a suggested reading list that Melissa Harris-Perry, who was with MSNBC at the time, sent to Washington reporter Michelle Cottle in 2013, to offer a different perspective after Cottle called First Lady Michelle Obama “a feminist nightmare.” The ‘MHP’ **BLACK FEMINISM SYLLABUS** cites 25 books and articles, including Beth Richie's *Compelled to Crime: The Gender Entrapment of Battered Black Women*, Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South* (published in 1892), and Jeanne Theoharis's *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*.

“Once again, Beyoncé has created a text that excites, beguiles, enralls, and *challenges*,” wrote Jessica Marie Johnson and Janell Hobson in a May 2016 blog post for the African American Intellectual History Society. “No one can doubt that #Lemonade is committed to black women and illustrating a story of black womanhood. It is likewise true that black women as intellectuals — as thinkers, scholars, creators, mothers, daughters, lovers, and across generations — are diverse and complex, rich and ratchet, fleshy and sensitive to the touch. Our reactions to #Lemonade reflect this power and this complexity.” Johnson and Hobson's co-curated selection of posts, titled **#LEMONADE: A BLACK FEMINIST RESOURCE LIST**, is also



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Research Help > Women's Knowledge Digital ... > Subject Areas > Black Feminism

Black Feminism

- Black American Feminisms is a multidisciplinary bibliography website compiled by Sherri L. Barnes.
- *Black Disabled Woman Syllabus: A Compilation* is a compilation of books, essays/articles, speeches, music, and other bodies of work that accurately explains the diverse forms of Blackness that exists for Black women, and how the lives of Black disabled women meshed within that discourse. This resources is to be updated as needed and comes from the organization, Ramp Your Voice. The mission of Ramp Your Voice is to promote empowerment, education, inclusion, and self-advocacy for people with disabilities in South Carolina and across the United States.
- *Black Feminism* from Amistad Digital Resource is a short write up on Black Feminism, and lists four open-access sources at the bottom of the page.
- *Black feminism and intersectionality* is an article by Sharon Smith published by International Socialist Review
- Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination is an excerpt from Patricia Hill Collins' book, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment outlining her theory Matrix of Domination*.
- *But Some of Us Are Brave: A History of Black Feminism in the United States* is a paper written published by MIT's *The Thistle Alternative News Collective*.
- *The Combahee River Collective Statement* is an historic statement made in April 1977 written by Black feminists and lesbians.
- *Defining Black Feminist Thought* is written by noteworthy, Patricia Hill Collins, discussing the intricacies of Black Feminism Black Feminist Thought, and what constitutes both.
- *Herstory: The Origins and Continued Relevancy of Black Feminist Thought* in the United States by Cherise Charleswell is a publication housed by The Hampton Institute and discusses the history and present of Black Feminist Thought.
- *#Lemonade: A Black Feminist Resource List* is a selection of posts on Beyoncé and #Lemonade that run the gamut from discussing feminism (as theory, as practice, as both), slavery, the South, infidelity, ancestry, motherhood, Afrxdiasporic systems of belief, sex and sexuality, capitalism and survival co-curated by Jessica Marie Johnson and Janell Hobson.
- *The 'MHP' Black Feminism Syllabus* is a suggested reading list from Melissa Harris Perry.
- *Makers Moment: Long History of Black Feminism* is a video of Beverly Guy-Sheftall talking about the remarkably long history of black feminists and the links between the abolition and suffragist movements for Makers, a women's leadership platform.
- *Women of Color and Feminism: A History Lesson and Way Forward* is an article by Anthea Butler for Rewire

linked from the WKDL portal. It explores feminism (as theory, as practice, as both), slavery, the South, infidelity, ancestry, motherhood, Afrxdiasporic systems of belief, sex and sexuality, capitalism, and survival. The first resources on the list are themselves bibliographies: for instance, Nyasha Junior's "Ten Books to Read after You've Watched 'Lemonade'"; Zetta Elliott, Sarah Park Dahlen, & Edith Campbell's "#Lemonade for Girls: In Formation (reading resources for young black girls)"; and Crystal Sanders's "18 Books on Black Women's History to Read to Better Understand 'Lemonade.'"

Note

1. The UW Gender & Women's Studies Librarian (GWSL) curates the WKDL resources. The portal is hosted by the GWSL at library.wisc.edu/gwslibrarian/research-help/wkdl and sponsored in partnership with Women's Knowledge International; 4W: Women, Wellbeing, Wisconsin, & the World; the UW System Women's & Gender Studies Consortium; and the UNESCO Chair on Gender, Wellbeing, & a Culture of Peace at UW-Madison.