

BLACK IN AMERICA

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The notes below connect to the small asterisks that appear periodically throughout *Black in America*. They are designed to be of particular help to students whose first language is not English and/or students who have limited familiarity with American culture—though the notes may offer additional support to any student who may wish to consult them.

This document may, if desired, be printed out and kept handy as you read the relevant suggestions.

OLAUDAH EQUIANO

from THE INTERESTING NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF OLAUDAH EQUIANO

study Aim to achieve.

falls on Attacks.

used me Behaved toward me.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

from FOURTH OF JULY ORATION

The causes ... British crown The complaints raised against Britain by the Declaration of Independence in 1776 were varied, but generally involved the King's refusal to create legislation for the genuine benefit of those residing in the Thirteen Colonies; *crown* I.e., monarchical rule.

pale Boundaries.

Potomac River flowing through West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland.

The arm ... shortened See Isaiah 59.1: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save."

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE COTTON STATES AND INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION, 18 SEPTEMBER 1895

Reconstruction Period (1865–77) after the Civil War during which federal troops occupied the former Confederacy and enforced federal laws in an attempt to rebuild Southern society without slavery. Federal intervention in Southern politics during this period brought some degree of hopeful progress for African Americans.

lynchings Executions by a mob, especially those conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

IDA B. WELLS

from LYNCH LAW IN AMERICA

Ku-Klux Relating to the Ku Klux Klan or KKK, an extremist white supremacist group in the United States.

lynching bees Lynching treated as a social gathering and conducted in a carnival-like way.

PAULINE E. HOPKINS (ONLINE)
from HON. FREDERICK DOUGLASS

swept the strings Played as one plays a musical instrument.

lynch-law Illegal practice of execution by a mob, especially one conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people, and their frequency increased after emancipation.

W.E.B. DU BOIS
OF OUR SPIRITUAL STRIVINGS

end Goal.

husband Make efficient use of resources.

hither and thither Here and there.

Greek to Foreign or not understandable to.

W.E.B. DU BOIS
from OF MR. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON AND OTHERS

lynchings Executions by a mob, especially those conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

eating away the vitals Idiom meaning “destroying the most important parts from within.”

THE NIAGARA MOVEMENT (ONLINE)
THE NIAGARA MOVEMENT’S DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, 1905

sanctuary Inner portion of a church.

LANGSTON HUGHES
THE NEGRO ARTIST AND THE RACIAL MOUNTAIN

Harlem Historically Black neighborhood in New York City.

Episcopal The Episcopal Church (related to the Anglican Church) has a reserved and formal liturgical style. The Church’s membership, predominantly middle- and upper-class, is also predominantly white, but there are prominent Black Episcopal parishes in many American cities, including New York.

nip of gin Small amount of gin.

ZORA NEALE HURSTON

HOW IT FEELS TO BE COLORED ME

Negro Term referring to people of African descent; it was current in the 1920s, but is outdated now.

Orlando Major city in Florida.

Northern I.e., from the Northern states (as opposed to the Southern states, such as Florida).

Miami Major city in Florida.

Chamber of Commerce Organization that advocates for the businesses in a given area.

oleanders Species of flowers.

sea change Idiom referring to a major transformation in character.

Orange County County in which Eatonville and Orlando are located.

oyster knife Knife used to open oysters. The expression “the world is your oyster” is usually used to mean “the world’s possibilities are open to you.”

On the line ... Go! “On the line! Get set! Go!” is shouted at the beginning of a race.

Harlem City District of New York City historically known for its large African American population. It was a center of the African American literary movement known as the Harlem Renaissance, of which Hurston was a part.

My country, right or wrong Common expression of patriotism.

JAMES BALDWIN

A TALK TO TEACHERS

Third Reich Term for the Nazi regime in Germany.

Harlem Neighborhood in Upper Manhattan, New York City, that since the early twentieth century has had a predominantly Black population and has been an important center of African American cultural life; it has also had and continues to have higher-than-average rates of unemployment and poverty.

Reconstruction Period (1865–77) after the Civil War during which federal troops occupied the former Confederacy and enforced federal laws in an attempt to rebuild Southern society without slavery. Federal intervention in Southern politics during this period brought some degree of hopeful progress for African Americans, but ongoing white Southern resistance to Reconstruction ultimately caused the federal government to abandon it and effectively acquiesce to the reimposition of white hegemony in the South in the form of the so-called “Jim Crow” system.

JAMES BALDWIN

MY DUNGEON SHOOK

Harlem Neighborhood in Upper Manhattan, New York City, that since the early twentieth century has had a predominantly Black population and has been an important center of African American cultural life; it has also had and continues to have higher-than-average rates of unemployment and poverty.

FRANTZ FANON

from THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH

niggers Highly derogatory term referring to Black people, once widely used by white people and still sometimes used as a very hostile slur. In the late twentieth century, some groups of African Americans began to “reclaim” the term *nigger*, using it only to refer to one another; it should still not be used by anyone who is not a part of the community.

towelheads Highly derogatory term referring to Middle Eastern people.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL

thus saith the Lord In the Old Testament, this phrase is frequently used by prophets to indicate that they are speaking on God’s behalf.

the most ... segregated city I.e., the city most strongly affected by racial discrimination, and especially by segregation laws. These laws required separation between white Americans and African Americans in public places and institutions, restricting African Americans to amenities and opportunities that were far inferior to those available to whites.

lynch Execute by a mob; lynchings are executions conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

First-Amendment privilege The First Amendment of the American Constitution establishes, among other things, that no law can be made that curtails “the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Ku Klux Klanner Member of the Ku Klux Klan or KKK, an extremist white supremacist group in the United States.

Zeitgeist Spirit of the age.

Abraham Lincoln American President (1809–65) under whom the practice of slavery was abolished.

Thomas Jefferson United States founder (1743–1826) who penned the American Declaration of Independence.

We hold ... equal Opening line of the American Declaration of Independence.

pilgrims ... Plymouth Pilgrims, English Protestants seeking religious freedom, famously arrived in what would be called Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620 to form one of the earliest colonies in the United States.

made cotton king Cotton was an important economic commodity in the early nineteenth-century United States; its production was supported largely by slave labor on cotton plantations in the South.

MALCOLM X WITH ALEX HALEY
from THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X

turn the other cheek Respond to insult or injury without fighting back. The origin of this idiom is Matthew 5.39: “But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

ALICE WALKER
IN SEARCH OF OUR MOTHERS’ GARDENS: THE CREATIVITY OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE SOUTH

backwater tramp Disreputable person who lives in a rural, isolated place.

Anon Abbreviation of “anonymous.”

THE COMBAHEE RIVER COLLECTIVE

A BLACK FEMINIST STATEMENT

mammy Racist caricature depicting a maternal, happily subservient Black woman, especially one tasked with the care of the children of a white enslaver or employer. The “mammy” stereotype originated in slavery-era discourse but continued to have significant cultural capital well over a century after slavery’s abolition.

AUDRE LORDE

USES OF ANGER: WOMEN RESPONDING TO RACISM

co-optation Appropriation.

generative Productive; creative.

libation Offering of ritual liquid in honor of a spirit, god, or deceased person.

lynching Execution by a mob, especially one conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

quarter Safe place.

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN FOR REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

WE REMEMBER: AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN ARE FOR REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states, instituted between the 1870s and the 1960s, that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places; on public transportation, including buses and trains; and in organizations such as schools and the military. Jim Crow laws thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

burned crosses The burning of crosses was adopted by the Ku Klux Klan in the early twentieth century as a ritual designed to intimidate African Americans (and members of other marginalized groups).

BELL HOOKS

COMING TO CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

mammy-made In southern American regional dialect, “mammy” was used by children and adults to mean “mother.” The term, often used in reference to Black women responsible for caring for white children, especially before the abolition of slavery, is not used today. In this context, the mammy-made dress is considered to be made by a mother with little sewing experience.

fun Used sarcastically, here meaning full of tricks or mischief rather than shared amusement.

apartheid south Often, “apartheid” refers to a system of enforced racial segregation of

white and Black South Africans that was in place from 1948 to 1991. Here, it is used in reference to racial segregation in America, which tends to be more pronounced in the southern than in the northern states.

BARACK OBAMA (ONLINE)
A MORE PERFECT UNION

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

MICHELLE ALEXANDER
from THE NEW JIM CROW

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“whites only” signs Signs declaring a given business or other establishment open only to whites were common in the United States during much of the twentieth century; some remained as late as the 1970s.

white-collar crime Nonviolent financially motivated crime committed by people with “white-collar,” professional jobs, often in business or government.

ADILIFU NAMA
from SUPER BLACK: AMERICAN POP CULTURE AND BLACK SUPERHEROES

pops Father.

Pandora’s Box In Greek mythology, Pandora was the first human woman, created during a time when life on earth was easy. She was given a sealed container and opened it out of curiosity; it turned out to contain disease and other evils, which she released into the world. To open a Pandora’s box is to do something with unforeseen terrible consequences.

ALISHA KNIGHT (ONLINE)
“TO AID IN EVERYWAY POSSIBLE IN UPLIFTING THE COLORED PEOPLE OF AMERICA”: HOPKINS’S
REVISIONARY DEFINITION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN SUCCESS

Protestant work ethic Belief in the moral importance of hard work and self-discipline.

Benjamin Franklin Accomplished inventor, entrepreneur, writer, and political figure (1705–90) who was one of the founders of the United States.

end I.e., ultimate goal.

mores Norms, or customary (rather than legal) rules of behavior governing a community.

Reconstruction Period (1865–77) after the Civil War during which federal troops occupied the former Confederacy and enforced federal laws in an attempt to rebuild Southern society without slavery. Federal intervention in Southern politics during this period brought some degree of hopeful progress for African Americans.

the American Dream American cultural ideal whereby happiness, fulfillment, and material prosperity are equally available to all citizens by virtue of their hard work.

Holy Grail I.e., object of an important quest; literally, the Holy Grail is a vessel that was used to collect the blood of Christ during the crucifixion, and which is quested after in many works of literature from the medieval era and later.

Jim Crow laws System of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans to enter certain places of business and required segregation in public places and organizations.

lynching Execution by a mob, especially those conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

BETTINA LOVE

from HIP HOP'S LI'L SISTAS SPEAK: NEGOTIATING HIP HOP IDENTITIES AND POLITICS IN THE NEW SOUTH

bling-bling Slang: flashy jewelry. The term was popularized by rapper Lil' Wayne in the song "Bling Bling" (1999).

hos and freaks Derogatory slang terms for promiscuous and sexually adventurous women.

DARNELL L. MOORE

BLACK, LGBT, AMERICAN: A SEARCH FOR SANCTUARIES

LGBTQ Acronym: lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning.

TA-NEHISI COATES

from THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS

the blues Style of music developed by African Americans in the Deep South, primarily in Mississippi, of the United States at the end of the nineteenth century.

lynch mob Racially-motivated groups carrying out vigilante retribution, punishment without trial—in the American south it was common practice for groups of white citizens to seize African Americans whom they suspected of having committed crimes, and lynch them (murder them by hanging).

Klansman Member of the Ku Klux Klan, a white supremacist organization.

separate but equal Racial policy in the United States that allowed legal segregation of black citizens where equal access to facilities, opportunities, and education were provided.

sharecropping System where a tenant is allowed a portion of land in return for shares of the land's produce.

antebellum period Before the American Civil War broke out (in 1861).

The Great Migration From 1910 to 1970, six million African Americans moved out of rural areas in the Southern United States and into urban centers in the Northeast, Midwest, and Western parts of the country.

Eisenhower years During the Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, from 1953 to 1961.

highwaymen Thieves on horseback who robbed people traveling public roads.

Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments Amendments to the United States Constitution that abolish slavery and declare that anyone born in the United States—even an African American—is an American citizen, respectively.

~~*affirmative action* Redresses groups disadvantaged due to discrimination.~~

freedwoman Slave legally released from slavery.

Revolution American Revolution (1765–83).

Quaker Christian sect.

Thomas Jefferson 3rd President of the United States (1743–1826), whose positions on slavery wavered throughout his life.

black-nationalist Supports separation from greater society to achieve independence and sovereignty.

NAACP National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, civil rights organization.

a second slavery ruled Refers to the continuing conditions of racism and segregation after the abolition of slavery in the South, where white citizens worked to establish different legal means of retaining supremacy.

New England Region encompassing the northeastern United States.

Reconstruction Period (1865–77) after the Civil War during which federal troops occupied the former Confederacy and enforced federal laws in an attempt to rebuild Southern society without slavery. Federal intervention in Southern politics during this period brought some degree of hopeful progress for African Americans.

Tulsa's "Black Wall Street" Prosperous area of Oklahoma, including the neighborhood of Greenwood, that thrived until the Tulsa Race Riot on 31 May and 1 June 1921.

Mississippi Delta region Northwestern section of the state of Mississippi.

COLORED ONLY signs Signs marking facilities that were for the use of African Americans only; other facilities were marked with “white only” signs.

foreclosure crisis Crisis that began in 2008 when the number of foreclosures on home loans in the United States became extremely high.

subprime loans Loans granted to people with low income or poor credit history who do not qualify for regular loans; interest rates on subprime loans are higher than the “prime rates” which are offered to those in stronger financial positions.

TA-NEHISI COATES

from THE FIRST WHITE PRESIDENT

Klansmen Members of the Ku Klux Klan, an American extremist white supremacist group with a history of terrorism.

grand wizards Leaders of the Ku Klux Klan.

orcish Orcs are aggressive, unintelligent, grotesque-looking fantasy creatures.

zip code Postal codes that identify the general area of an address (and therefore the

neighborhood that address is located in).

Jim Crow South Southern United States under Jim Crow, the name given to a system of laws between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans. Jim Crow is often more strongly associated with the Southern than with the Northern United States.

lynching Execution by a mob, especially one conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

CLAUDIA RANKINE

from CITIZEN: AN AMERICAN LYRIC

angry nigger exterior The word “nigger” is a highly derogatory term that was once very widely used in North America. The term conveyed a presumption that Black people were inferior to whites; it was frequently employed as an expression of blatant hatred and contempt. In the mid twentieth century the word nigger began to be acknowledged as racist and hence utterly unacceptable, and it disappeared from respectable publications and from polite conversation. But it never went away: the forbidden term continued to be used in certain less polite circles as an expression of racism—and it still continues to be so used today.

In the late twentieth century, as a gesture of resistance in the face of the continuing oppression of Black people in the United States, some groups of young African Americans began to reclaim the term, using the variation, nigga, as their own, defiantly among themselves to refer to one another.

played ... race card Exploiting the subject of race in an argument by accusing the opponent of racism.

Arnold Palmer Lemonade and iced tea mixed together in a drink named after U.S. golfer Arnold Palmer.

X-rated Material intended only for adult viewing.

legal state ... a time Slavery was, to varying degrees in varying times and locations, legal in the United States until the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865. The enslaved were generally considered to be the material property of their masters, and to not enjoy the status of citizens.

CNN Cable News Network, American television news channel.

BRYAN STEVENSON

from JUST MERCY

FEMA trailer Trailer provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as a means of housing people who are homeless due to a natural disaster.

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Reconstruction Period (1865–77) after the Civil War during which federal troops occupied the former Confederacy and enforced federal laws in an attempt to rebuild Southern society without slavery. Federal intervention in Southern politics during this period brought some degree of hopeful progress for African Americans.

clan I.e., the Ku Klux Klan, an American extremist white supremacist group with a history of terrorism.

NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES

SCHOOL SEGREGATION: THE CONTINUING TRAGEDY OF FERGUSON

mortar boards Hat with a stiff, square top and a tassel; typically worn during a graduating ceremony.

court-enforced integration Desegregation—ending the separation of two groups (usually race-based, i.e., white and Black)—under order by a court of law.

Jim Crow law System of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans to enter certain places of business and required segregation in public places and organizations.

DAWN MARIE DOW

THE DEADLY CHALLENGES OF RAISING AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS: NAVIGATING THE CONTROLLING IMAGE OF THE “THUG”

thug Informal term for a person (generally male) who engages in criminal activity

criminalized Treated as a criminal (even if one has not engaged in criminal activity).

hypermasculine Masculine to an extreme or excessive degree (with an emphasis on qualities of physical strength, sexuality, and aggression).

sororities Invitation-only women students’ social societies at universities and colleges.

the president Barack Obama, the first African American man to hold the office of President.

trumped class Took precedence over class.

‘hood’ mentality Mindset associated with those who are raised in lower class, inner-city neighborhoods, often characterized by hypermasculinity and influenced by the presence of violence.

agency Active power over or command of one’s self.

bookended Positioned at the beginning and at the end of something; here, two acts of violence that are pertinent to Dow’s argument.

MITCH LANDRIEU (ONLINE)

TRUTH: REMARKS ON THE REMOVAL OF CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS IN NEW ORLEANS

lynched Executed by a mob; lynchings are executions conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

STEVEN W. THRASHER

MOONLIGHT PORTRAYS BLACK GAY LIFE IN ITS JOY, SADNESS AND COMPLEXITY

lynched Executed by a vigilante mob; the term is especially used of killings conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle, such as the brutal murder of Black teenager Emmett Till by two white men in 1955. Till became an icon of the Civil Rights Movement when his mother, Mamie Till-Bradley, held a public open-casket funeral and had photographs of his mutilated body circulated in the Black press. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

CAMERON GLOVER

NO, BLACK-ONLY SPACES ARE NOT RACIST

Jim Crow era Period from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century during which the rights of African Americans were formally restricted by laws referred to as “Jim Crow laws.” Jim Crow laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

ZADIE SMITH

GETTING IN AND OUT: WHO OWNS BLACK PAIN?

America the Beautiful Patriotic song (1893–1911) incorporating descriptions of America’s natural features.

bread and butter of the show Main thing on which the show relies.

Waspy Characteristic of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (a reference to the acronym “WASP”).

zip code Set of numbers indicating the neighborhood in which a property is located.

JONATHAN CAPEHART

TAKING A KNEE WITH COLIN KAEPERNICK AND STANDING WITH STEPHEN CURRY AGAINST TRUMP

diss Insult.

make America great Reference to Trump’s campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again.”

CARVELL WALLACE

WHY *BLACK PANTHER* IS A DEFINING MOMENT FOR BLACK AMERICA

Harlem Historically Black neighborhood in New York City.

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; they thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

LEXI PANDELL

HOW *RUPAUL’S DRAG RACE* FUELED POP CULTURE’S DOMINANT SLANG ENGINE

Nightline American television news program.

Saturday Night Live Often abbreviated as *SNL*, popular late-night comedy and variety show.

butch Term originating in LGBTQ+ subculture to describe a lesbian whose appearance and mannerisms are considered masculine. In drag culture, a “butch queen” is a gay man (as opposed to a trans woman) who performs in drag.

America’s Next Top Model ... Project Runway Reality competition shows centered, respectively, on modeling and on fashion design.

Urban Dictionary Online slang dictionary comprised of user-submitted definitions.

Harlem Neighborhood in Upper Manhattan, New York City, that since the early twentieth century has had a predominantly Black population and has been an important center of African American cultural life. During the Prohibition era of the 1920s and early 1930s, Harlem also saw large influxes of mostly white tourism from Lower Manhattan, with tourists attracted by Harlem’s vibrant nightlife.

je ne sais quoi French: literally, “I don’t know what”; phrase used to describe a person possessed of a certain alluringly mysterious and indefinable quality.

Miss Piggy Puppet character who stars in *The Muppet Show*, known for her glamorous personality and use of French phrases.

cis Term used to describe a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex they were assigned at birth (as opposed to someone who is, for instance, transgender or nonbinary).

camp A quality of flamboyant, excessive theatricality; art described as “camp” or “campy” often knowingly or intentionally exhibits what is considered bad taste, and may be deemed aesthetically valuable for precisely that reason.

ELIJAH C. WATSON

THE ORIGIN OF WOKE: HOW THE DEATH OF WOKE LED TO THE BIRTH OF CANCEL CULTURE

Dave Chappelle Highly acclaimed and influential African American stand-up comedian and actor; his comedy, including his sketch series *Chappelle’s Show* (2003–06) and his numerous Netflix specials, addresses issues of race, gender, and sexuality in a way that has frequently engendered controversy and condemnation.

JESMYN WARD

WITNESS AND RESPAIR

chattel slavery Form of slavery in which the enslaved person is legally considered the personal property (chattel) of the enslaver. The form of slavery practiced in the U.S. before the Civil War was chattel slavery.

haka Variety of ceremonial dance that is part of the culture of the indigenous Māori people of New Zealand. The longstanding performance of a haka by New Zealand’s national rugby team before games (and subsequent similar performances by other sports teams) have led to haka being popularly perceived as war dances; historically, however, haka played a variety of purposes in Māori society, including welcoming guests and marking significant occasions or accomplishments, and some Māori scholars have criticized their inaccurate performance by non-Māori, and their widespread association with violence or intimidation, as offensive instances of cultural appropriation.

John Boyega Black British actor (b. 1992) best known for his role in the *Star Wars* sequel trilogy films (2015–19); he took part in a Black Lives Matter rally in Hyde Park, London, on 3 June 2020 and gave an impassioned speech, during which he said, “I don’t know if I’m going to have a career after this, but fuck that.”

13th Amendment Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that abolished slavery. The amendment was ratified by the two-thirds majority of the states required for it to take effect in December 1865, but the state of Mississippi did not ratify the amendment until 1995, and that ratification was not certified—i.e., it was not officially communicated to the federal government—until 2013.

Confederate battle emblem I.e., the battle flag of the army of the Confederate States of America, the government proclaimed by the slave states that seceded from the Union prior to and during the Civil War. This flag—frequently but inaccurately referred to as “the Confederate flag”—continued to be widely displayed in the American South, in particular, throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first and long appeared on Southern state flags such as Mississippi’s; its use has often been condemned as showing support for racism and white supremacy, and the display of the flag is increasingly considered unacceptable.

IMANI PERRY

RACISM IS TERRIBLE. BLACKNESS IS NOT.

oyster knife Knife used to open oysters. The expression “the world is your oyster” is usually used to mean “the world’s possibilities are open to you.”

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states, instituted between the 1870s and the 1960s, that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

antebellum Latin: before war. In an American context, this word is most commonly used to refer to the period before the American Civil War broke out (in 1861), and more specifically to the U.S. South—and the enslavement of African Americans there—during this period.

IBRAM X. KENDI

THE AMERICAN NIGHTMARE

lynching Execution by a mob, especially one conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people. The only public acknowledgment of lynching in America is in Montgomery, Alabama, at The National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

George Floyd African American truck driver, bouncer, and community mentor (1973–2020)

whose murder on 25 May 2020 by a Minneapolis police officer—who knelt on Floyd’s neck and back for over nine minutes, causing a fatal lack of oxygen—sparked mass national and international protests against police brutality and systemic racism. “I can’t breathe,” Floyd’s dying words, became a slogan of the protests.

Malcolm X Influential Black activist and Muslim minister (1925–65) who advocated for the rights of African Americans. He is associated with a branch of African American activism that accepted the use of violent methods when necessary to combat oppression and believed in Black separatism as the best means of ensuring the rights, security, and prosperity of Black people.

King I.e., Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–68), renowned African American Baptist minister and civil rights leader who emphasized nonviolence in his campaigns for desegregation. His 1963 “I Have a Dream” speech, in which he laid out his vision of a racially equitable and just society, has become one of the most iconic and venerated orations in American history.

All that ... again Reference to “Make America great again,” a political slogan used by and closely associated with President Donald Trump. (Before Trump, the phrase had also been used as a slogan by several other American political figures, including President Ronald Reagan.) Particularly as used by Trump, the slogan has been accused of being racially loaded by implicitly associating American “greatness” with the marginalization or exclusion of people of color, immigrants, and other historically disadvantaged communities.

NATASHA N. JONES AND MIRIAM F. WILLIAMS

THE JUST USE OF IMAGINATION: A CALL TO ACTION

Juneteenth Holiday long observed in African American communities in remembrance of Union Major General Gordon Granger’s arrival in Galveston, Texas—the westernmost state in the former Confederacy—on 19 June 1865 to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation, which had declared the freedom of all enslaved people in Confederate territory in 1863 but had been unenforceable behind Confederate lines prior to the end of the Civil War. Juneteenth, which was declared a federal holiday in 2021, is considered a celebration of the end of slavery in the U.S. and, more broadly, a celebration of Black culture, history, and resilience.

HBCUs Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Harlem Renaissance Artistic, literary, and cultural movement that grew out of the predominantly Black community of Harlem, New York in the 1920s and 30s.

George Floyd African American truck driver, bouncer, and community mentor (1973–2020) whose murder on 25 May 2020 by a Minneapolis police officer—who knelt on Floyd’s neck and back for over nine minutes, causing a fatal lack of oxygen—sparked mass national and international protests against police brutality and systemic racism.

Breonna Taylor African American emergency room technician who was shot to death by police during a nighttime raid on her apartment on 13 March 2020; the officers involved allegedly believed that Taylor’s home was being used by her ex-boyfriend Jamarus Glover for drug trafficking, although Taylor’s current boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, asserted that she and Glover had cut all ties months prior to the event.

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws

thus effectively ensured that amenities and opportunities for African Americans were far inferior to those available to white Americans.

John Lennon's "Imagine" 1971 song by British musician John Lennon, in which Lennon sings of a utopian world without war, religion, national borders, or capitalism.

Dr. King had a dream Reference to the famous "I Have a Dream" speech delivered by Black activist Martin Luther King Jr. on 28 August 1963, in which he laid out his vision of a racially equitable and just society.

BERTRAND COOPER

from WHO ACTUALLY GETS TO CREATE BLACK POP CULTURE?

Harlems Harlem is a neighborhood in Upper Manhattan, New York City, that since the early twentieth century has had a predominantly Black population and has been an important center of African American cultural life; it has also had and continues to have higher-than-average rates of unemployment and poverty.

George Floyd African American truck driver, bouncer, and community mentor (1973–2020) whose murder on 25 May 2020 by a Minneapolis police officer—who knelt on Floyd's neck and back for over nine minutes, causing a fatal lack of oxygen—sparked mass national and international protests against police brutality and systemic racism.

Chris Rock Black stand-up comedian, actor, and filmmaker (b. 1965).

public Ivy U.S. public university—i.e., a university owned by the state or which receives much of its funding from public sources—that is considered to provide an educational experience equivalent in quality, or nearly so, to the prestigious private universities (including Harvard, Yale, and Princeton) that comprise the Ivy League.

Dave Chappelle Highly acclaimed and influential African American stand-up comedian and actor, known for the ways in which his frequently controversial comedy, including his sketch series *Chappelle's Show* (2003–06) and his numerous Netflix specials, address issues of race, gender, and sexuality.

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FARAH JASMINE GRIFFIN

from READ UNTIL YOU UNDERSTAND: THE PROFOUND WISDOM OF BLACK LIFE AND LITERATURE

Earth, Wind & Fire Popular American musical group who came to prominence in the 1970s, known for their work in genres such as disco, funk, R&B, and soul.

Miles Influential Black jazz musician and trumpeter Miles Davis (1926–91).

Marvin Black musician Marvin Gaye (1939–84), known for his pioneering work in the Motown genre.

Ronald Reagan White Republican U.S. president who served from 1981 to 1989.

magnet school Public school with specialized courses that attracts students from different neighborhoods.

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places like trains and bathrooms and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured hostile treatment in spaces that could legally deny Black people entry, participation, or service.

Black Power movement Counterculture movement of the 1960s and 70s whose supporters advocated for Black self-sufficiency, self-determination, and racial pride (including the rejection of white beauty standards) and for alternatives to the forms of peaceful civil protest championed by prominent leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr.

antebellum Latin: before war. In an American context, the term is most commonly used to refer to the period before the outbreak of the American Civil War (1861–65) and the abolition of slavery.

Aretha Influential Black soul musician and activist Aretha Franklin (1942–2018).

KEEANGA-YAMAHTTA TAYLOR
THE DEFEAT OF IDENTITY POLITICS

lynching Execution by a mob, especially one conducted in a torturous way intended to create a violent public spectacle. The majority of lynchings in the United States have been perpetrated by white people against Black people.

George Floyd African American truck driver, bouncer, and community mentor (1973–2020) whose murder on 25 May 2020 by a Minneapolis police officer—who knelt on Floyd’s neck and back for over nine minutes, causing a fatal lack of oxygen—sparked mass national and international protests against police brutality and systemic racism.

Reparations In a modern U.S. context, term usually referring to the idea that Black people are owed compensation, including but not limited to government-issued payments, to redress the inequities faced due to the continued socioeconomic effects of slavery, segregation, housing discrimination, and other manifestations of race-based oppression over four hundred years.

apartheid Racial segregation. Originally, “apartheid” was the name of the system of institutionalized racial segregation that existed in South Africa and what is now Namibia from 1948 to approximately 1991, wherein white people—who formed only a small minority of the nations’ populations—held by far the most political, social, and economic power.

LISE FUNDERBURG
FOR THESE FAMILIES, H.B.C.U.S AREN’T JUST AN OPTION. THEY’RE A TRADITION.

Homecoming Series of events held by many universities, usually during September or October, to celebrate the beginning of the new academic year and welcome alumni back to campus. At some institutions, including Morehouse, homecomings are open to those with familial or other connections to the university as well as to current students.

Quaker Member of the Religious Society of Friends, a Protestant Christian denomination many of whose members historically supported a variety of social justice movements—most notably, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the abolitionist movement.

cronyism The tendency to give preference to family, friends, and acquaintances when making political, workplace, or educational appointments, especially when those family or friends

lack the appropriate qualifications for a position.

alma mater The school, college, or university one formerly attended.

Jim Crow Name given to a system of laws in various American states between the 1870s and 1960s that formally restricted the rights of African Americans. The laws required segregation in public places like banks and restaurants and in organizations such as schools and the military; these laws thus effectively ensured hostile treatment in spaces that could legally deny Black people entry, participation, or service.

Martin Luther King Jr. Renowned African American Baptist minister and civil rights leader (1929–68) who emphasized nonviolence in his campaigns for desegregation. He attended and graduated from Morehouse College, 1944 to 1948.

N.A.A.C.P. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, an American civil rights organization founded in 1909.

DAMON YOUNG

SOUP IS SO MUCH MORE THAN FOOD

Thursday I.e., Thanksgiving, which in the U.S. is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November.

OMNIA SAED

BLACK AMERICANS ARE LEADING A VEGAN MOVEMENT

Harlem Neighborhood in Upper Manhattan, New York City, that since the early twentieth century has had a predominantly Black population and has been an important center of African American cultural life.

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the public health agency of the U.S. federal government.

JOHN MCWHORTER

WHY RACIAL DISCUSSIONS SHOULD ALSO FOCUS ON PROGRESS

reparations In a modern U.S. context, term usually referring to the idea that Black people are owed compensation, including but not limited to government-issued payments, to redress the inequities faced due to the continued socioeconomic effects of slavery, segregation, housing discrimination, and other manifestations of race-based oppression over four hundred years.

a two-term Black President Barack Obama, who served as the 44th U.S. President from 2009 to 2017.

one Black (and South Asian) vice president Kamala Harris, who began serving as Vice President under Joe Biden in 2021.

cultural appropriation Term used by some to refer to the practice of adopting a custom or aesthetic that originates in a culture not one's own, especially when the cultural origins are unacknowledged or when the culture of origin occupies a position of less social power than the culture of those doing the appropriating. The ethics of cultural appropriation are controversial, with some commentators having suggested that it is inherently unethical in many or all of its manifestations, and others suggesting that it is a natural and ethically

neutral outcome in culturally diverse societies.

The prospect ... had died? The sequel to the extraordinarily successful superhero movie *Black Panther*, *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* was released in 2022, after the 2020 death of the previous film's star, Chadwick Boseman. Both films starred primarily Black actors and involved numerous Black creatives in key roles, including as director and as screenwriters.