



# **Writing African American Women [2 volumes]: An Encyclopedia of Literature by and about Women of Color**

*Elizabeth A. Beaulieu*

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Women have had a complex experience in African American culture. The first work of its kind, this encyclopedia approaches African American literature from a Women's Studies perspective. While Yolanda Williams Page's *Encyclopedia of African American Women Writers* provides biographical entries on more than 150 literary figures, this book is much broader in scope. Included are several hundred alphabetically arranged entries on African American women writers, as well as on male writers who have treated women in their works. Entries on genres, periods, themes, characters, historical events, texts, places, and other topics are included as well. Each entry is written by an expert contributor and relates its subject to the overall experience of women in African American literature. Entries cite works for further reading, and the encyclopedia closes with a selected, general bibliography.

African American culture is enormously diverse, and the experience of women in African American society is especially complex. Women were among the first African American writers, and works by black women writers are popular among students and general readers alike. At the same time, African American women have been oppressed, and texts by black male authors represent women in a variety of ways. The first of its kind, this encyclopedia approaches African American literature from a Women's Studies perspective, and thus significantly illuminates the African American cultural experience through literary works.

Included are several hundred alphabetically arranged entries, written by numerous expert contributors. In addition to covering male and female African American authors, the encyclopedia also discusses themes, major works and characters, genres, periods, historical events, places, and other topics.

Included are entries on such authors as:

; Maya Angelou

; James Baldwin

; Frederick Douglass

; Nikki Giovanni

; June Jordan

; Claude McKay

; Ishmael Reed

; Sojourner Truth

; Phillis Wheatley  
; And many others.

In addition, the many works discussed include:

; *Beloved*  
; *Blanche on the Lam*  
; *I know Why the Caged Bird Sings*  
; *The Men of Brewster Place*  
; *Quicksand*  
; *The Street*  
; *Waiting to Exhale*  
; And many more.

The many topical entries cover:

; Black Feminism  
; Black Nationalism  
; Conjuring  
; Children's and Young Adult Literature  
; Detective Fiction  
; Epistolary Novel  
; Motherhood  
; Sexuality  
; Spirituality  
; Stereotypes  
; And many others.

Entries relate their topics to the experience of African American women and cite works for further reading.

Features and Benefits:

- ; Includes hundreds of alphabetically arranged entries.
- ; Draws on the work of numerous expert contributors.
- ; Includes a selected, general bibliography.
- ; Offers a range of finding aids, such as a list of entries, a guide to related topics, and an extensive index.
- ; Supports the literature curriculum by helping students analyze major writers and works.
- ; Supports the social studies curriculum by helping students use literature to understand the experience of African American women.
- ; Covers the full chronological range of African American literature.
- ; Fosters a respect for cultural diversity.
- ; Develops research skills by directing students to additional sources of information.
- ; Builds bridges between African American history, literature, and Women's Studies.

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