

James Baldwin And Toni Morrison Comparative Critical And Theoretical Essays

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Utopianism, Modernism, and Literature in the Twentieth Century
A. Reeve-Tucker 2013-05-07
Utopianism, Modernism, and Literature in the Twentieth Century considers the links between utopianism and modernism in two ways: as an under-theorized nexus of aesthetic and political interactions; and as a sphere of confluences that challenges accepted critical models of modernist and twentieth-century literary history. An international group of scholars considers works by E. M. Forster, Ford Madox Ford, Wyndham Lewis, Naomi Mitchinson, Katharine Burdekin, Rex Warner, Yevgeny Zamyatin, Thomas Pynchon, Elizabeth Bowen, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and Ernst Bloch. In doing so, this volume's contributors prompt new reflections on key aspects of utopianism in experimental twentieth-century literature and non-fictional writing; deepen literary-historical understandings of modernism's socio-political implications; and bear out the on-going relevance of modernism's explorations of utopian thought. Utopianism, Modernism, and Literature in the Twentieth Century will appeal to anyone with an interest in how deeply and how differently modernist writers, as well as writers influenced by or resistant to modernist styles, engaged with issues of utopianism, perfectibility, and social betterment.

A Political Companion to James Baldwin
Susan J. McWilliams 2017-11-15
“Uniformly excellent” essays on the work of the renowned author and his “extraordinary relevance in the present moment” (Choice). In seminal works such as Go Tell It on the Mountain, Notes of a Native Son, and The Fire Next Time, acclaimed author and social critic James Baldwin expresses his profound belief that writers have the power to transform society, engage the public, and inspire and channel conversation to achieve lasting change. While Baldwin is best known for his writings on racial consciousness and injustice, he is also one of the country’s most eloquent theorists of democratic life and the national psyche. In this book, prominent scholars assess the prolific author’s relevance to present-day political challenges. Together, they address Baldwin as a democratic theorist, activist, and citizen, examining his writings on the civil rights movement, religion, homosexuality, and women’s rights. They investigate the ways in which his work speaks to and galvanizes a collective American polity, and explore his views on the political implications of individual experience in relation to race and gender. This volume not only considers Baldwin’s works within their own historical context, but also applies the author’s insights to recent events such as the Obama presidency and the Black Lives Matter movement, emphasizing his faith in the connections between the past and present. These incisive essays will encourage a new reading of Baldwin that celebrates his significant contributions to political and democratic theory.

James Baldwin
Bill Schwarz 2011-10-05
“This fine collection of essays represents an important contribution to the rediscovery of Baldwin’s stature as essayist, novelist, black prophetic political voice, and witness to the Civil Rights era. The title provides an excellent thematic focus. He understood both the necessity, and the impossibility, of being a black ‘American’ writer. He took these issues ‘Beyond’--Paris, Istanbul, various parts of Africa--but this formative experience only returned him to the unresolved dilemmas. He was a fine novelist and a major prophetic political voice. He produced some of the most important essays of the twentieth century and addressed in depth the complexities of the black political movement. His relative invisibility almost lost us one of the most significant voices of his generation. This welcome ‘revival’ retrieves it. Close call.” --Stuart Hall, Professor Emeritus, Open University
This interdisciplinary collection by leading writers in their fields brings together a discussion of the many facets of James Baldwin, both as a writer and as the prophetic conscience of a nation. The core of the volume addresses the shifting, complex relations between Baldwin as an American—“as American as any Texas GI” as he once wryly put it—and his life as an itinerant cosmopolitan. His ambivalent imaginings of America were always mediated by his conception of a world “beyond” America: a world he knew both from his travels and from his voracious reading. He was a man whose instincts were, at every turn, nurtured by America; but who at the same time developed a ferocious critique of American exceptionalism. In seeking to understand how, as an American, he could learn to live with difference—breaking the power of fundamentalisms of all stripes—he opened an urgent, timely debate that is still ours. His America was an idea fired by desire and grief in equal measure. As the authors assembled here argue, to read him now allows us to imagine new possibilities for the future. With contributions by Kevin Birmingham, Douglas Field, Kevin Gaines, Briallen Hopper, Quentin Miller, Vaughn Rasberry, Robert Reid-Pharr, George Shulman, Hortense Spillers, Colm Tóibín, Eleanor W. Traylor, Cheryl A. Wall, and Magdalena Zaborowska.
James Baldwin and the Heavenly City
Christopher Z. Hobson 2018-08-01
Behind James Baldwin’s uncanny ability to evoke a nation’s crisis and potential hope lies his use of religious language to describe social and sexual transformation. The first study of its kind, James Baldwin and the Heavenly City shows that Baldwin’s novels use biblical ideas in partly but not fully secularized ways to express the possible human attainment of a new life embodying a real but undefinable holiness. Focusing on Baldwin’s six novels, along with essays, stories, and drama, the book first shows Baldwin’s method of recasting biblical and African American prophetic traditions to reveal their liberating core. It then examines several key themes: the prophet’s selection, seen in Baldwin’s debut novel, Go Tell It on the Mountain; the three linked ideas of prophetic art, the “apocalyptic body,” and the “apocalyptic city,” as presented in all his novels; and the polarity between prophecy and doubt, the subject of his last novel, Just Above My Head. This important work provides new readings of Baldwin’s novels, reassesses his once-neglected later fiction, and shows Gospel music’s centrality (with blues) in his fictional imagination.

James Baldwin and the 1980s
Joseph Vogel 2018-03-20
By the 1980s, critics and the public alike considered James Baldwin irrelevant. Yet Baldwin remained an important, prolific writer until his death in 1987. Indeed, his work throughout the decade pushed him into new areas, in particular an expanded interest in the social and psychological consequences of popular culture and mass media. Joseph Vogel offers the first in-depth look at Baldwin’s dynamic final decade of work. Delving into the writer’s creative endeavors, crucial essays and articles, and the impassioned polemic The Evidence of Things Not Seen, Vogel finds Baldwin as prescient and fearless as ever. Baldwin’s sustained grappling with “the great transforming energy” of mass culture revealed his gifts for media and cultural criticism. It also brought him into the fray on issues ranging from the Reagan-era culture wars to the New South, from the deterioration of inner cities to the disproportionate incarceration of black youth, and from pop culture gender-bending to the evolving women’s and gay rights movements. Astute and compelling, revives and redeems the final act of a great American writer.

Me and My House
Magdalena J. Zaborowska 2018-04-06
The last sixteen years of James Baldwin’s life (1971–87) unfolded in a village in the South of France, in a sprawling house nicknamed “Chez Baldwin.” In Me and My House Magdalena J. Zaborowska employs Baldwin’s home space as a lens through which to expand his biography and explore the politics and poetics of blackness, queerness, and domesticity in his complex and underappreciated later works. Zaborowska shows how the themes of dwelling and black queer male sexuality in The Welcome Table, Just above My Head, and If Beale Street Could Talk directly stem from Chez Baldwin’s influence on the writer. The house was partially torn down in 2014. Accessible, heavily illustrated, and drawing on interviews with Baldwin’s friends and lovers, unpublished letters, and manuscripts, Me and My House offers new insights into Baldwin’s life, writing, and relationships, making it essential reading for all students, scholars, and fans of Baldwin.

Toni Morrison’s Fiction
Jan Furman 2014-05-19
In this revised introduction to Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison’s novels, Jan Furman extends and updates her critical commentary. New chapters on four novels following the publication of Jazz in 1992 continue Furman’s explorations of Morrison’s themes and narrative strategies. In all Furman surveys ten works that include the trilogy novels, a short story, and a book of criticism to identify Morrison’s recurrent concern with the destructive tensions that define human experience: the clash of gender and authority, the individual and community, race and national identity, culture and authenticity, and the self and other. As Furman demonstrates, Morrison more often than not renders meaning for characters and readers through an unflinching inquiry, if not resolution, of these enduring conflicts. She is not interested in tidy solutions. Enlightened self-love, knowledge, and struggle, even without the promise of salvation, are the moral measure of Morrison’s characters, fiction, and literary imagination. Tracing Morrison’s developing art and her career as a public intellectual, Furman examines the novels in order of publication. She also decodes their collective narrative chronology, which begins in the late seventeenth century and ends in the late twentieth century, as Morrison delineates three hundred years of African American experience. In Furman’s view Morrison tells new and difficult stories of old, familiar histories such as the making of Colonial America and the racing of American society. In the final chapters Furman pays particular attention to form, noting Morrison’s continuing practice of the kind of “deep” novelistic structure that transcends plot and imparts much of a novel’s meaning. Furman demonstrates, through her helpful analyses, how engaging such innovations can be.

Playing in the Dark
Toni Morrison 2007-07-24
An immensely persuasive work of literary criticism that opens a new chapter in the American dialogue on race—and promises to change the way we read American literature. Morrison shows how much the themes of freedom and individualism, manhood and innocence, depended on the existence of a black population that was manifestly unfree—and that came to serve white authors as embodiments of their own fears and desires. According to the Chicago Tribune, Morrison “reimagines and remaps the possibility of America.” Her brilliant discussions of the “Africanist” presence in the fiction of Poe, Melville, Cather, and Hemingway leads to a dramatic reappraisal of the essential characteristics of our literary tradition. Written with the artistic vision that has earned the Nobel Prize-winning author a pre-eminent place in modern letters, Playing in the Dark is an invaluable read for avid Morrison admirers as well as students, critics, and scholars of American literature.

James Baldwin and Toni Morrison: Comparative Critical and Theoretical Essays
Lovelarie King 2006-10-16
This collection of comparative critical and theoretical essays examines James Baldwin and Toni Morrison’s reciprocal literary relationship. By reading these authors side-by-side, this collection forges new avenues of discovery and interpretation related to their representations of African American and American literature and cultural experience.

James Baldwin’s Turkish Decade
Magdalena J. Zaborowska 2008-12-26
Between 1961 and 1971 James Baldwin spent extended periods of time in Turkey, where he worked on some of his most important books. In this first in-depth exploration of Baldwin’s “Turkish decade,” Magdalena J. Zaborowska reveals the significant role that Turkish locales, cultures, and friends played in Baldwin’s life and thought. Turkey was a nurturing space for the author, who by 1961 had spent nearly ten years in France and Western Europe and failed to reestablish permanent residency in the United States. Zaborowska demonstrates how Baldwin’s Turkish sojourns enabled him to re-imagine himself as a black queer writer and to revise his views of American identity and U.S. race relations as the 1960s drew to a close. Following Baldwin’s footsteps through Istanbul, Ankara, and Bodrum, Zaborowska presents many never published photographs, new information from Turkish archives, and original interviews with Turkish artists and intellectuals who knew Baldwin and collaborated with him on a play that he directed in 1969. She analyzes the effect of his experiences on his novel Another Country (1962) and on two volumes of his essays, The Fire Next Time (1963) and No Name in the Street (1972), and she explains how Baldwin’s time in Turkey informed his ambivalent relationship to New York, his responses to the American South, and his decision to settle in southern France. James Baldwin’s Turkish Decade expands the knowledge of Baldwin’s role as a transnational African American intellectual, casts new light on his later works, and suggests ways of reassessing his earlier writing in relation to ideas of exile and migration.

James Baldwin
Jules B. Farber 2016-07-01

James Baldwin’s Go Tell it on the Mountain
Carol E. Henderson 2006
The publication of James Baldwin’s Go Tell It on the Mountain ushered in a new age of the urban telling of a tale twice told yet rarely expressed in such vivid portraits. Go Tell it unveils the struggle of man with his God and that of man with himself. Baldwin’s intense scrutiny of the spiritual and communal customs that serve as moral centers of the black community directs attention to the striking incongruities of religious fundamentalism and oppression. This book examines these multiple impulses, challenging the widely held convention that politics and religion do not mix.

Toni Morrison
Adrienne Lanier Seward 2014-08-12
Toni Morrison: Memory and Meaning boasts essays by well-known international scholars focusing on the author’s literary production and including her very latest works—the theatrical production Desdemona and her tenth and latest novel, Home. These original contributions are among the first scholarly analyses of these latest additions to her oeuvre and make the volume a valuable addition to potential readers and teachers eager to understand the position of Desdemona and Homewithin the wider scope of Morrison’s career. Indeed, in Home, we find a reworking of many of the tropes and themes that run throughout Morrison’s fiction, prompting the editors to organize the essays as they relate to themes prevalent in Home. In many ways, Morrison has actually initiated paradigm shifts that permeate the essays. They consistently reflect, in approach and interpretation, the revolutionary change in the study of American literature represented by Morrison’s focus on the interior lives of enslaved Africans. This collection assumes black subjectivity, rather than argues for it, in order to reread and revise the horror of slavery and its consequences into our time. The analyses presented in this volume also attest to the broad range of interdisciplinary specializations and interests in novels that have now become classics in world literature. The essays are divided into five sections, each entitled with a direct quotation from Home, and framed by two poems: Rita Dove’s “The Buckeye” and Sonia Sanchez’s “Aaayeee Babo, Aaayeee Babo.”

The Critical Life of Toni Morrison
Susan Neal Mayberry 2021
The first book to trace the critical reception of the great African American woman writer, attending not only to her fiction but to her nonfiction and critical writings.
Toni Morrison and the Limits of a Politics of Recognition
William Jefferson 2014-05-25
Is Toni Morrison’s writing as politically progressive as is widely assumed? In this eye-opening study, critic William Jefferson argues that it is not. Analyzing Morrison’s major texts from the 1970s, ‘80s, and ‘90s, Jefferson argues that Morrison’s writing has advanced problematic conceptions of racial essentialism, sexuality, and agency that would not be identified as in any way progressive if issued from the pen of a white writer. More than merely showing readers underappreciated aspects of African-American history, Morrison’s fiction has actively intervened in the politics of her era—and in ways politically reactionary and disturbing. Stepping back from Morrison’s fiction, Jefferson asks why scholars have not recognized these political aspects of Morrison’s writing. What he finds is a purportedly left-wing academy focused predominantly on recognizing the indisputably black aspects of Morrison’s work. This “politics of recognition,” unfortunately, also naturalizes Morrison’s representations in the same manner liberal humanist criticism naturalized the representations of the pre-1970 literary canon.

Drawing the Line
Doreen Fowler 2013-05-06
In an original contribution to the psychoanalytic approach to literature, Doreen Fowler focuses on the fiction of four major American writers—William Faulkner, Richard Wright, Flannery O’Connor, and Toni Morrison—to examine the father’s function as a “border figure.” Although the father has most commonly been interpreted as the figure who introduces opposition and exclusion to the child, Fowler finds in these literary depictions fathers who instead support the construction of a social identity by mediating between cultural oppositions. Fowler counters the widely accepted notion that boundaries are solely sites of exclusion and offers a new theoretical model of boundary construction. She argues that boundaries are mysterious, dangerous, in-between places where a balance of sameness and difference makes differentiation possible. In the fiction of these southern writers, father figures introduce a separate cultural identity by modeling this mix of relatedness and difference. Fathers intervene in the mother-child relationship, but the father is also closely related to both mother and child. This model of boundary formation as a balance of exclusion and relatedness suggests a way to join with others in an inclusive, multicultural community and still retain ethnic, racial, and gender differences. Fowler’s model for the father’s mediating role in initiating gender, race, and other social differences shows not only how psychoanalytic theory can be used to interpret fiction and cultural history but also how literature and history can reshape theory.

The White Man’s World
Bill Schwarz 2011-10-27
Includes bibliographical references and index.

All Those Strangers
Douglas Field 2015-06-02
Adored by many, appalling to some, baffling still to others, few authors defy any single critical narrative to the confounding extent that James Baldwin manages. Was he a black or queer writer? Was he a religious or secular writer? Was he a spokesman for the civil rights movement or a champion of the individual? His critics, as disparate as his readership, endlessly wrestle with paradoxes, not just in his work but also in the life of a man who described himself as “all those strangers called Jimmy Baldwin” and who declared that “all theories are suspect.” Viewing Baldwin through a cultural-historical lens alongside a more traditional literary critical approach, All Those Strangers examines how his fiction and nonfiction shaped and responded to key political and cultural developments in the United States from the 1940s to the 1980s. Showing how external forces molded Baldwin’s personal, political, and psychological development, Douglas Field breaks through the established critical difficulties caused by Baldwin’s geographical, ideological, and artistic multiplicity by analyzing his life and work against the radically transformative politics of his time. The book explores under-researched areas in Baldwin’s life and work, including his relationship to the Left, his FBI files, and the significance of

Africa in his writing, while also contributing to wider discussions about postwar US culture. Field deftly navigates key twentieth-century themes—the Cold War, African American literary history, conflicts between spirituality and organized religion, and transnationalism—to bring a number of isolated subjects into dialogue with each other. By exploring the paradoxes in Baldwin’s development as a writer, rather than trying to fix his life and work into a single framework, All Those Strangers contradicts the accepted critical paradigm that Baldwin’s life and work are too ambiguous to make sense of. By studying him as an individual and an artist in flux, Field reveals the manifold ways in which Baldwin’s work develops and coheres.

What Moves at the Margin
Toni Morrison 2008
Collects nonfiction writings and speeches by the American author, on topics including family and history, writers and writing, and politics and society.

The Cambridge Introduction to Toni Morrison
Tessa Roynton 2013
Lively and accessibly written, this Introduction offers readers a guide to the complex and rewarding literature of Toni Morrison.

Between the World and Me
Ta-Nehisi Coates 2015-07-14
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNER • NAMED ONE OF TIME’S TEN BEST NONFICTION BOOKS OF THE DECADE • PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST • NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD FINALIST • ONE OF OPRAH’S “BOOKS THAT HELP ME THROUGH” • NOW AN HBO ORIGINAL SPECIAL EVENT
Hailed by Toni Morrison as “required reading,” a bold and personal literary exploration of America’s racial history by “the most important essayist in a generation and a writer who changed the national political conversation about race” (Rolling Stone) NAMED ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL BOOKS OF THE DECADE BY CNN • NAMED ONE OF PASTE’S BEST MEMOIRS OF THE DECADE • NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times Book Review • O: The Oprah Magazine • The Washington Post • People • Entertainment Weekly • Vogue • Los Angeles Times • San Francisco Chronicle • Chicago Tribune • New York • Newsday • Library Journal • Publishers Weekly
In a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation’s history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of “race,” a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden? Between the World and Me is Ta-Nehisi Coates’s attempt to answer these 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. Beautifully woven from personal narrative, reimagined history, and fresh, emotionally charged reportage, Between the World and Me clearly illuminates the past, bracingly confronts our present, and offers a transcendent vision for a way forward.
The Cambridge Companion to James Baldwin
Michele Elam 2015-04-20
This Companion offers fresh insight into the art and politics of James Baldwin, one of the most important writers and provocative cultural critics of the twentieth century. Black, gay, and gifted, he was hailed as a "spokesman for the race," although he personally, and controversially, eschewed titles and classifications of all kinds. Individual essays examine his classic novels and nonfiction as well as his work across lesser-examined domains: poetry, music, theatre, sermon, photo-text, children’s literature, public media, comedy, and artistic collaboration. In doing so, The Cambridge Companion to James Baldwin captures the power and influence of his work during the civil rights era as well as his relevance in the "post-race" transnational twenty-first century, when his prescient questioning of the boundaries of race, sex, love, leadership, and country assume new urgency.

Toni Morrison
Linda Wagner-Martin

Salvific Manhood
Ernest L. Gibson 2019-10
“Salvific Manhood reimagines the complexities of human brotherhood and masculinity by examining distinct iterations of male intimacy within all of James Baldwin’s novels”--

Intergenerational Complexes in Analytical Psychology
Samuel L. Kimbles 2021-04-12
Intergenerational Complexes in Analytical Psychology: The Suffering of Ghosts draws attention to human suffering and how it relates to unacknowledged and unrecognized traumatic cultural histories that continue to haunt us in the present. The book shows the many ways that our internal lives are organized and patterned by both racial, ethnic, and national identities, and personal experiences. This book shows how the cultural unconscious with its multiple group dynamics, identities, nationalities, seething differences of conflicts, polarizations, and individual personalities are organized by cultural complexes and narrated by archetypal story formations, which the author calls phantom narratives. The emotional dynamics generated constitute potential transitional spaces or holding containers that allow us to work with these issues psychologically at both the individual and group levels, offering opportunities for healing. The chapters of the book provide numerous examples of the applications of these terms to natural and cultural catastrophes as well as expressions as uncanny phenomena. Intergenerational Complexes in Analytical Psychology is essential reading for analytical psychologists, Jungian psychotherapists, and other professionals seeking to understand the impact of intergenerational trauma on individuals and groups. It is also relevant to the work of academics and scholars of Jungian studies, sociology, trauma studies, politics, and social justice.

James Baldwin and Toni Morrison: Comparative Critical and Theoretical Essays
Lovelarie King 2006-12-15
This collection of comparative critical and theoretical essays examines James Baldwin and Toni Morrison’s reciprocal literary relationship. By reading these authors side-by-side, this collection forges new avenues of discovery and interpretation related to their representations of African American and American literature and cultural experience.

Dismemberment in the Fiction of Toni Morrison
Jaleel Akhtar 2014-06-19
Dismemberment in the Fiction of Toni Morrison is a multifaceted study of Toni Morrison’s fiction. It investigates racism and the concomitant experiences of dismemberment in Morrison’s fiction from multiple perspectives, including history, psychology, and culture. Looking at dismemberment from multiple perspectives, rather than the more generic and abstract expression of fragmentation, likens the impact of racism on individuals to the splitting of bodies, amputation, phantom limbs and traumatic memories, and in more concrete and visceral terms. Morrison’s art of story-telling involves an interactive conversation from multiple perspectives, demanding more attentive participation from her readers in deconstructing the meaning of her narratives. Studying her fiction from multiple perspectives suggests various ways of examining the pernicious impact of racism which produces various forms of dismemberment in her characters. This investigation does this without giving prominence to one perspective at the expense of other equally relevant modes of interpretation. Morrison’s depiction of the trauma of racism on the psyche of her characters and the concomitant experiences of dismemberment has its roots in the historical and social realities of African Americans. The psychological impact of racism on Morrison’s characters requires viewing through the lens of the historical and social realities that play a significant role. Morrison enacts racial alienation and dismemberment as complex processes; it is consequently important to look at her project from multiple perspectives. Examining the lived reality of African Americans from only one perspective ignores dismemberment in the light of the socio-political and historical realities of African American experience in the United States, and entails reconsideration of the physical, historical, social and psychological realities. This investigation argues for the importance of combining these historical and psychological, as well as socio-cultural, analyses of Morrison’s fiction in order to acquire a more rounded understanding of racism and its debilitating effects on the psyche. By situating Morrison’s fiction within a variety of discourses, this study offers a multifaceted, highly interdisciplinary framework for a more rewarding analysis of her fiction.

Hypermasculinities in the Contemporary Novel
Josef Benson 2014-07-16
This book examines exaggerated masculinities in select novels by James Baldwin, Cormac McCarthy, and Toni Morrison. Through this analysis Josef Benson connects the masculinities of frontier figures with black male protagonists in postwar American novels, and how these novels present alternative ideal masculinities.

Race, Trauma, and Home in the Novels of Toni Morrison
Evelyn Jaffe Schreiber 2010-12
In this first interdisciplinary study of all nine of Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison’s novels, Evelyn Jaffe Schreiber investigates how the communal and personal trauma of slavery embedded in the bodies and minds of its victims lives on through successive generations of African Americans. Approaching trauma from several cutting-edge theoretical perspectives -- psychoanalytic, neurobiological, and cultural and social theories -- Schreiber analyzes the lasting effects of slavery as depicted in Morrison’s work and considers the almost insurmountable task of recovering from trauma to gain subjectivity. With an innovative application of neuroscience to literary criticism, Schreiber explains how trauma, whether initiated by physical abuse, dehumanization, discrimination, exclusion, or abandonment, becomes embedded in both psychic and bodily circuits. Slavery and its legacy of cultural rejection create trauma on individual, familial, and community levels, and parents unwittingly transmit their trauma to their children through repetition of their bodily stored experiences. Concepts of “home” -- whether a physical place, community, or relationship -- are reconstructed through memory to provide a positive self and serve as a healing space for Morrison’s characters. Remembering and retelling trauma within a supportive community enables trauma victims to move forward and attain a meaningful subjectivity and selfhood. Through careful analysis of each novel, Schreiber traces the success or failure of Morrison’s characters to build or rebuild a cohesive self, starting with slavery and the initial postslavery generation, and continuing through the twentieth century, with a special focus on the effects of inherited trauma on children. When characters attempt to escape trauma through physical relocation, or to project their pain onto others through aggressive behavior or scapegoating, the development of selfhood falters. Only when trauma is confronted through verbalization and challenged with reparative images of home, can memories of a positive self overcome the pain of past experiences and cultural rejection. While the cultural trauma of slavery can never truly disappear, Schreiber argues that memories that reconstruct a positive self, whether created by people, relationships, a physical place, or a concept, help Morrison’s characters to establish subjectivity. A groundbreaking interdisciplinary work, Schreiber’s book unites psychoanalytic, neurobiological, and social theories into a full and richly textured analysis of trauma and the possibility of healing in Morrison’s novels.

Toni Morrison
L. Wagner-Martin 2015-04-22
A reading of the oeuvre of Toni Morrison — fiction, non-fiction, and other — drawing extensively from her many interviews as well as her primary texts. The author aligns Morrison’s novels with the works of Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner, assessing her works as among the most innovative, and most significant, worldwide, of the past fifty years.

Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye
Harold Bloom 2010
Discusses the writing of The bluest eye by Toni Morrison. Includes critical essays on the work and a brief biography of the author.

A Historical Guide to James Baldwin
Douglas Field 2009-09-24
With contributions from major scholars of African American literature, history, and cultural studies, A Historical Guide to James Baldwin focuses on the four tumultuous decades that defined the great author’s life and art. Providing a comprehensive examination of Baldwin’s varied body of work that includes short stories, novels, and polemical essays, this collection reflects the major events that left an indelible imprint on the iconic writer: civil rights, black nationalism and the struggle for gay rights in the pre- and post-Stonewall eras. The essays also highlight Baldwin’s under-studied role as a trans-Atlantic writer, his lifelong struggle with faith, and his use of music, especially the blues, as a key to unlock the mysteries of his identity as an exile, an artist, and a black American in a racially hostile era.

James Baldwin
Douglas Field 2011
A clear overview and analysis of James Baldwin’s life and work. This study provides an engaging overview and clear analysis of the fiction, non-fiction and drama of African- American writer James Baldwin (1924-1987). Whilst giving close attention to Baldwin’s popular works such as Go Tell it on the Mountain and Another Country, it also explores other important but less well known themes and texts, including the use of the blues, masculinity, race and sexuality.

Race, Theft, and Ethics
Lovelarie King 2007-12
In *Race, Theft, and Ethics*, Lovelarie King examines African American literature’s critique of American law concerning matters of property, paying particular attention to the stereotypical image of the black thief. She draws on two centuries of African American writing that reflects the manner in which human value became intricately connected with property ownership in American culture, even as racialized social and legal custom and practice severely limited access to property. Using critical race theory, King builds a powerful argument that the stereotype of the black thief is an inevitable byproduct of American law, politics, and social customs. In making her case, King ranges far and wide in black literature, looking closely at over thirty literary works. She uses four of the best-known African American autobiographical narratives -- Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs’s Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Booker T. Washington’s Up From Slavery, and Richard Wright’s Black Boy -- to reveal the ways that law and custom worked to shape the black thief stereotype under the institution of slavery and to keep it firmly in place under the Jim Crow system. Examining the work of William Wells Brown, Charles Chesnut, James Weldon Johnson, and Alice Randall, King treats “the ethics of passing” and considers the definition and value of whiteness and the relationship between whiteness and property. Close readings of Richard Wright’s Native Son and Dorothy West’s The Living is Easy, among other works, question whether blacks’ unequal access to the economic opportunities held out by the American Dream functions as a kind of expropriation for which there is no possible legal or ethical means of reparation. She concludes by exploring the theme of theft and love in two famed neo--slave or neo--freedom narratives -- Toni Morrison’s Beloved and Charles Johnson’s Middle Passage. *Race, Theft, and Ethics* shows how African American literature deals with the racialized history of unequal economic opportunity in highly complex and nuanced ways, and illustrates that, for many authors, an essential aspect of their work involved contemplating the tensions between a given code of ethics and a moral course of action. A deft combination of history, literature, law and economics, King’s groundbreaking work highlights the pervasiveness of the property/race/ethics dynamic in the interfaces of African American lives with American law.

A Mercy
Toni Morrison 2009-08-11
A powerful tragedy distilled into a small masterpiece by the Nobel Prize-winning author of Beloved and, almost like a prelude to that story, set two centuries earlier, Jacob is an Anglo-Dutch trader in 1680s United States, when the slave trade is still in its infancy. Reluctantly he takes a small slave girl in part payment from a plantation owner for a bad debt. Feeling rejected by her slave mother, 14-year-old Florens can read and write and might be useful on his farm. Florens looks for love, first from Lina, an older servant woman at her new master’s house, but later from the handsome blacksmith, an African, never enslaved, who comes riding into their lives . . . At the novel’s heart, like Beloved, it is the ambivalent, disturbing story of a mother and a daughter – a mother who casts off her daughter in order to save her, and a daughter who may never exorcise that abandonment.

Slavery in Toni Morrison’s Beloved
Dedria Bryfonski 2012-07-10
This compelling volume explores Toni Morrison’s classic novel through the lens of slavery. The book examines Morrison’s life and influences and takes a critical look at key ideas related to slavery in Beloved, such as the role of slavery in both the forging and destruction of an African-American identity, the impact of slavery on family relationships, and the psychological trauma caused by slavery. Contemporary perspectives on the subject of slavery are presented as well, touching upon topics such as the global problem of human trafficking and the role of multinational corporations in modern day slavery.
Toni Morrison
Valerie Smith 2014-09-22
This compelling study explores the inextricable links between the Nobel laureate’s aesthetic practice and her political vision, through an analysis of the key texts as well as her lesser-studied works, books for children, and most recent novels. Offers provocative new insights and a refreshingly original contribution to the scholarship of one of the most important contemporary American writers
Analyzes the celebrated fiction of Morrison in relation to her critical writing about the process of reading and writing literature, the relationship between readers and writers, and the cultural contributions of African-American literature
Features extended analyses of Morrison’s lesser-known works, most recent novels, and books for children as well as the key texts

Depictions of Home in African American Literature
Trudier Harris 2021
This book studies fictional homespaces in African American literature from those set in the time of slavery to modern urban configurations of the homespace. The author examines the factors that influence homespaces in African American literature and analyzes why African American writers often portray troubling and dysfunctional homespaces.
Cross-Rhythms
Keren Omry 2011-10-20
Cross-Rhythms investigates the literary uses and effects of blues and jazz in African-American literature of the twentieth century. Texts by James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Gay L Jones, Toni Morrison and Ishmael Reed variously adopt or are consciously informed by a jazz aesthetic; this aesthetic becomes part of a strategy of ethnic identification and provides a medium with which to consider the legacy of trauma in African-American history. These diverse writers are all thoroughly immersed in a socio-cultural context and a literary aesthetic that embodies shifting conceptions of ethnic identity across the twentieth century. The emergence of blues and jazz is, likewise, a crucial product of, as well as catalyst for, this context, and in their own aesthetic explorations of notions of ethnicity these writers consciously engage with this musical milieu. By examining the highly varied manifestations of a jazz aesthetic as possibly the fundamental common denominator which links these writers, this study attempts to identify an underlying unifying principle. As the different writers write against essentializing or organic categories of race, the very fact of a shared engagement with jazz sensibilities in their work redefines the basis of African-American communal identity.

Sula Toni Morrison 2007-07-24 From the acclaimed Nobel Prize winner: Two girls who grow up to become women. Two friends who become something worse than enemies. This brilliantly imagined novel brings us the story of Nel Wright and Sula Peace, who meet as children in the small town of Medallion, Ohio. Nel and Sula's devotion is fierce enough to withstand bullies and the burden of a dreadful secret. It endures even after Nel has grown up to be a pillar of the black community and Sula has become a pariah. But their friendship ends in an unforgivable betrayal—or does it end? Terrifying, comic, ribald and tragic, Sula is a work that overflows with life.