

Suggested Reading List for The Other Book: Black History in Alachua County

Non-fiction

General resources

- African Studies Library Research Guide: <https://africanstudies.uflib.ufl.edu/>
- African American Studies Library Resources: <https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/aas/home>. Including page on Local Black Histories, <https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/aas/localhistory>
- PBS Documentaries on Black History (e.g. top 10 list from 2013: <https://www.pbs.org/articles/10-must-watch-black-history-documentaries>). And PBS Documentaries Prime Video Channel (list from 2022): <https://pbsdistribution.org/commemorate-black-history-month-with-iconic-films-streaming-on-the-pbs-documentaries-prime-video-channel/>
- Decolonizing the Curriculum (October 2022). WUFT. <https://www.wuft.org/decolonizing-the-curriculum> 5 episode podcast produced by WUFT working with high schools in Alachua County.

Pre-colonial Africa

- African Kingdoms: an Encyclopedia of Empires and Civilizations (2017) S. Aderinto (ed). This history-rich volume details the sociopolitical, economic, and artistic aspects of African kingdoms from the earliest times to the second half of the 19th century. * Provides relevant perspective on globalization in the pre-modern era, documenting how humans across time and places have shared various components of custom ranging from food, language, and music to religion and spirituality. ISBN: 9781610695800
- The A to Z of Pre-Colonial Africa (2010) The Heart of Darkness, this is the image that most in the West hold of pre-colonial Africa. Joseph Conrad's description of a continent lacking in civilization, commerce, and Christianity is familiar to many readers. Historians have been working to dispel this notion before since the institution of African independence after World War II. The A to Z of Pre-Colonial Africa seeks to familiarize the reader with pre-colonial Africa, the Africa that began with the migrations of the Bantu from their homeland in 500 B.C. and ended with European control in the 19th century, revealing the culture, events, achievement and rulers of Africa from this time. ISBN: 0810875802
- The Golden Rhinoceros: Histories of the African Middle Ages (2018) F-X Fauvelle & T. Tice. Princeton University Press. [Link](#).
- Born in Blackness: Africa, Africans, and the making of the modern world, 1471 to the Second World War. (2021) Howard French. ISBN 9781631495823
- The Civilizations of Africa: a History to 1800 (2002). Christopher Ehret. ISBN 0-8139-2085-X
- History of Africa, 4th ed [textbook] (2019). Kevin Shillington. ISBN 0-333-59957-8 (UF has 2012 edition)

- Wonders of the African World with Hendry Louis Gates, Jr. [PBS online resource]
<https://www.pbs.org/wonders/index.html>

Slavery

- Slavery in Florida: Territorial days to emancipation (2000) L. E. Rivers. ISBN 978-0813033815
- No man's yoke on my shoulders: Personal accounts of slavery in Florida (2006) R. Williams. ISBN 9780895872852.
- Slavery and plantation growth in Antebellum Florida, 1821-1860. (2017) J. F. Smith. ISBN 9781947372627. Available online at
https://ufdcimages.uflib.ufl.edu/AA/00/06/19/96/00001/9781947372627_Smith.pdf
- Dred: A tale of the great Dismal swamp, together with Anti-slavery tales and papers, and Life in Florida after the war (1896). H. B. Stowe. ISBN 978-1313966146. Available online at
<https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/006131494>.
- The life and times of Joseph E. Clark: From slavery to town father (Eatonville, Florida). (2003) O. F. Mitchell, G. F. Magbie, M. C. Elden. ISBN 978-1479306428
- Slave Narratives: a folk history of slavery in the United States from interviews with former slaves, vol. III, Florida narratives (2004) U.S. Works Project Administration. Available online at <https://www.loc.gov/item/mesn030/>
- How the Word is Passed A Reckoning with the History of Slavery across America (2021) Clint Smith. ISBN 978-0316492935

Jim Crow

- Jim Crow Guide: the Way it Was (1990) Stetson Kennedy. ISBN 978-0813009872. Available online at <http://www.stetsonkennedy.com/jimcrow.html>
- Warmth of Other Suns: the Epic Story of America's Great Migration (2010) Isabel Wilkerson. ISBN 978-0679763888
- Remembering Jim Crow: African Americans tell about life in the segregated South (2014). W. H. Chafe, R. Gavins, and R. Korstad. ISBN 978-1620970270.
- Exploring South Florida's Black History (Your South Florida weekly WPBT TV series hosted by Emmy-award winning journalist, Pam Giganti, wbt2.org, S8 E2; aired 2/4/2024)
- Fugitive Pedagogy, Carter Woodson and the Art of Black Teaching (2021) Jarvis R. Givens Harvard University Press. ISBN 978-0674983687
- The Color of Law; A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America (2017) Richard Rothstein; Liveright Publishing Corporation. ISBN 978-1631492853

Civil Rights

- *March* (Trilogy, 2016) by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin and Nate Powell. Autobiographical graphic novels of late Congressman John Lewis.
- *Just Mercy: a Story of Justice and Redemption* (2014) Bryan Stevenson. ISBN 978-0812984965
- *How to be an AntiRacist* (2019) Ibram X. Kendi. ISBN 978-0525509288
- *Stamped from the Beginning* (2016) Ibram X. Kendi. ISBN 978-1568585987. Documentary based on this book available on Netflix (2023).

Fiction- Suggested books

- **Things Fall Apart – Chinua Achebe**
Things Fall Apart is the first of three novels in Chinua Achebe's critically acclaimed African Trilogy. It is a classic narrative about Africa's cataclysmic encounter with Europe as it establishes a colonial presence on the continent. Told through the fictional experiences of Okonkwo, a wealthy and fearless Igbo warrior of Umuofia in the late 1800s, Things Fall Apart explores one man's futile resistance to the devaluing of his Igbo traditions by British political and religious forces and his despair as his community capitulates to the powerful new order.
- **Half of a Yellow Sun – Chimimanda Ngozi Adichie**
With effortless grace, celebrated author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie illuminates a seminal moment in modern African history: Biafra's impassioned struggle to establish an independent republic in southeastern Nigeria during the late 1960s. We experience this tumultuous decade alongside five unforgettable characters: Ugwu, a thirteen-year-old houseboy who works for Odenigbo, a university professor full of revolutionary zeal; Olanna, the professor's beautiful young mistress who has abandoned her life in Lagos for a dusty town and her lover's charm; and Richard, a shy young Englishman infatuated with Olanna's willful twin sister Kainene.
- **Afterlives – Abdulrazak Gurnah**
When he was just a boy, Ilyas was stolen from his parents on the coast of east Africa by German colonial troops. After years away, fighting against his own people, he returns home to find his parents gone and his sister, Afiya, abandoned into de facto slavery. Hamza, too, returns home from the war, scarred in body and soul and with nothing but the clothes on his back—until he meets the beautiful, undaunted Afiya. As these young people live and work and fall in love, their fates knotted ever more tightly together, the shadow of a new war on another continent falls over them, threatening once again to carry them away.
- **The Book of Night Women – Marlon James**
A true triumph of voice and storytelling, The Book of Night Women rings with both profound authenticity and a distinctly contemporary energy. It is the story of Lilith, born into slavery on a Jamaican sugar plantation at the end of the eighteenth century. Even at her birth, the slave women around her recognize a dark power that they- and she-will come to both

revere and fear. The Night Women, as they call themselves, have long been plotting a slave revolt, and as Lilith comes of age they see her as the key to their plans. But when she begins to understand her own feelings, desires, and identity, Lilith starts to push at the edges of what is imaginable for the life of a slave woman, and risks becoming the conspiracy's weak link. But the real revelation of the book—the secret to the stirring imagery and insistent prose—is Marlon James himself, a young writer at once breathtakingly daring and wholly in command of his craft.

- **Let Us Descend – Jesmyn Ward**

Annis, sold south by the white enslaver who fathered her, is the reader's guide. As she struggles through the miles-long march, Annis turns inward, seeking comfort from memories of her mother and stories of her African warrior grandmother. Throughout, she opens herself to a world beyond this world, one teeming with spirits: of earth and water, of myth and history; spirits who nurture and give, and those who manipulate and take. While Annis leads readers through the descent, hers is ultimately a story of rebirth and reclamation.

- **The Underground Railroad – Colson Whitehead**

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. An outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is on the cusp of womanhood—where greater pain awaits. And so when Caesar, a slave who has recently arrived from Virginia, urges her to join him on the Underground Railroad, she seizes the opportunity and escapes with him.

In Colson Whitehead's ingenious conception, the Underground Railroad is no mere metaphor: engineers and conductors operate a secret network of actual tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora embarks on a harrowing flight from one state to the next, encountering, like Gulliver, strange yet familiar iterations of her own world at each stop.

- **The Nickel Boys – Colson Whitehead**

When Elwood Curtis, a black boy growing up in 1960s Tallahassee, is unfairly sentenced to a juvenile reformatory called the Nickel Academy, he finds himself trapped in a grotesque chamber of horrors. Elwood's only salvation is his friendship with fellow "delinquent" Turner, which deepens despite Turner's conviction that Elwood is hopelessly naive, that the world is crooked, and that the only way to survive is to scheme and avoid trouble. As life at the Academy becomes ever more perilous, the tension between Elwood's ideals and Turner's skepticism leads to a decision whose repercussions will echo down the decades.

- **The Reformatory – Tananarive Due**

Twelve-year-old Robbie Stephens, Jr., is sentenced to six months at the Gracetown School for Boys, a reformatory, for kicking the son of the largest landowner in town in defense of his older sister, Gloria. So begins Robbie's journey further into the terrors of the Jim Crow South and the very real horror of the school they call The Reformatory.

Robbie has a talent for seeing ghosts, or haints. But what was once a comfort to him after the loss of his mother has become a window to the truth of what happens at the reformatory. Boys forced to work to remediate their so-called crimes have gone missing, but the haints Robbie sees hint at worse things. Through his friends Redbone and Blue,

Robbie is learning not just the rules but how to survive. Meanwhile, Gloria is rallying every family member and connection in Florida to find a way to get Robbie out before it's too late.

- **Kindred – Octavia Butler**

Dana's torment begins when she suddenly vanishes on her 26th birthday from California, 1976, and is dragged through time to antebellum Maryland to rescue a boy named Rufus, heir to a slaveowner's plantation. She soon realizes the purpose of her summons to the past: protect Rufus to ensure his assault of her Black ancestor so that she may one day be born. As she endures the traumas of slavery and the soul-crushing normalization of savagery, Dana fights to keep her autonomy and return to the present.

- **Horse – Geraldine Brooks**

Kentucky, 1850. An enslaved groom named Jarret and a bay foal forge a bond of understanding that will carry the horse to record-setting victories across the South. When the nation erupts in civil war, an itinerant young artist who has made his name on paintings of the racehorse takes up arms for the Union. On a perilous night, he reunites with the stallion and his groom, very far from the glamor of any racetrack.

New York City, 1954. Martha Jackson, a gallery owner celebrated for taking risks on edgy contemporary painters, becomes obsessed with a nineteenth-century equestrian oil painting of mysterious provenance.

Washington, DC, 2019. Jess, a Smithsonian scientist from Australia, and Theo, a Nigerian-American art historian, find themselves unexpectedly connected through their shared interest in the horse—one studying the stallion's bones for clues to his power and endurance, the other uncovering the lost history of the unsung Black horsemen who were critical to his racing success.

- **The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois**

The great scholar, W. E. B. Du Bois, once wrote about the Problem of race in America, and what he called "Double Consciousness," a sensitivity that every African American possesses in order to survive. Since childhood, Ailey Pearl Garfield has understood Du Bois's words all too well. Bearing the names of two formidable Black Americans—the revered choreographer Alvin Ailey and her great grandmother Pearl, the descendant of enslaved Georgians and tenant farmers—Ailey carries Du Bois's Problem on her shoulders.

Ailey is reared in the north in the City but spends summers in the small Georgia town of Chicasetta, where her mother's family has lived since their ancestors arrived from Africa in bondage. From an early age, Ailey fights a battle for belonging that's made all the more difficult by a hovering trauma, as well as the whispers of women—her mother, Belle, her sister, Lydia, and a maternal line reaching back two centuries—that urge Ailey to succeed in their stead.

To come to terms with her own identity, Ailey embarks on a journey through her family's past, uncovering the shocking tales of generations of ancestors—Indigenous, Black, and white—in the deep South. In doing so Ailey must learn to embrace her full heritage, a legacy

of oppression and resistance, bondage and independence, cruelty and resilience that is the story—and the song—of America itself.

- **Homegoing – Yaa Gyasi**

One of Oprah’s Best Books of the Year, Homegoing follows the parallel paths of these sisters and their descendants through eight generations: from the Gold Coast to the plantations of Mississippi, from the American Civil War to Jazz Age Harlem. Yaa Gyasi’s extraordinary novel illuminates slavery’s troubled legacy both for those who were taken and those who stayed—and shows how the memory of captivity has been inscribed on the soul of our nation.

Poetry - Suggested books

- **The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde** (ISBN-13 9780393319729)

A complete collection—over 300 poems—from one of this country's most influential poets.

"These are poems which blaze and pulse on the page."—Adrienne Rich "The first declaration of a black, lesbian feminist identity took place in these poems, and set the terms—beautifully, forcefully—for contemporary multicultural and pluralist debate."—Publishers Weekly "This is an amazing collection of poetry by . . . one of our best contemporary poets. . . . Her poems are powerful, often political, always lyrical and profoundly moving."—Chuckanut Reader Magazine "What a deep pleasure to encounter Audre Lorde's most potent genius . . . you will welcome the sheer accessibility and the force and beauty of this volume."—Out Magazine

- **The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes** (ISBN-13 9780679764083)

The definitive sampling of a writer whose poems were “at the forefront of the Harlem Renaissance and of modernism itself, and today are fundamentals of American culture” (OPRAH Magazine).

Here, for the first time, are all the poems that Langston Hughes published during his lifetime, arranged in the general order in which he wrote them. Lyrical and pungent, passionate and polemical, the result is a treasure of a book, the essential collection of a poet whose words have entered our common language.

The collection spans five decades, and is comprised of 868 poems (nearly 300 of which never before appeared in book form) with annotations by Arnold Rampersad and David Roessel. Alongside such famous works as "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and Montage of a Dream Deferred, The Collected Poems includes Hughes's lesser-known verse for children; topical poems distributed through the Associated Negro Press; and poems such as "Goodbye Christ" that were once suppressed.

- **Black Pastoral by Ariana Benson** (ISBN-13 9780820365183)

Finalist 2023 National Book Critics Circle John Leonard Prize

Black Pastoral explores the complex duality of Black peoples' past and present relationship with nature. It surveys the ways in which our histories (both Black histories and natural/ecological histories), our suffering and our thriving, are forever wound around one another. They are painful at times and act as a salve at others. Ariana Benson's poems meditate upon the violence and tenderness that simultaneously characterize the entangling of the two, taking the form of a series of eco-poetic musings that re-envision these confluences.

Moreover, Benson's poems illustrate the beauty inherent to Blackness, to nature, to the remarkable relationship they share, while also refusing its permission to collect idly, like an opaque skein of film obscuring uglier, necessary truths. Black Pastoral seeks to be both love letter and elegy, both flame to raze the field and flood to nourish the land anew

- **Lighthouse by Terrance Hayes** (ISBN-13 9780143116967)

Winner of the 2010 National Book Award for Poetry

In his fourth collection, Terrance Hayes investigates how we construct experience. With one foot firmly grounded in the everyday and the other hovering in the air, his poems braid dream and reality into a poetry that is both dark and buoyant. Cultural icons as diverse as Fela Kuti, Harriet Tubman, and Wallace Stevens appear with meditations on desire and history. We see Hayes testing the line between story and song in a series of stunning poems inspired by the Pecha Kucha, a Japanese presentation format. This innovative collection presents the light-headedness of a mind trying to pull against gravity and time. Fueled by an imagination that enlightens, delights, and ignites, Lighthouse leaves us illuminated and scorched.