



THE
**BLACKEST
BOOK CLUB**

Reading List



recon.today/blackest-book-club

This is a collection of stories, poems, and essays from classic and contemporary leaders of Black thought and literature. We share this list so that their genius will continue to create understanding and connection among us. We share with the hope that these titles provide mirrors into the political, social, and personal realities of the intersection of Black lives with the notions of power, gender, race, faith, and love.

Reconstruction, **Pod Save the People** and **Campaign Zero** came together to answer these questions and we think they are a great way for you to talk with your kids, families, and friends.

- **Looking at the state of our world, what book do you recommend to educate and inform Black people?**
- **What book in the last year has sparked your spirit?**
- **Which Black author would you love to interview on your podcast? Which of their books would you discuss?**
- **Which book has recently taught you something new about Black history or culture?**
- **Which book best explains and explores solutions for a societal problem you most want to solve?**



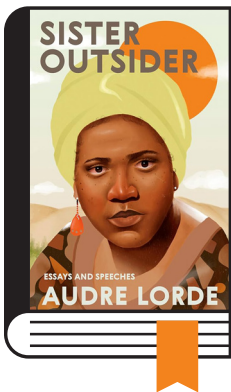
Reconstruction is a Black owned and Black operated curriculum company that provides live, K-12 supplemental and enrichment courses through an online platform that situates Black people, Black culture and Black heritage and contributions to American and the world in an authentic, identity-affirming manner. These interactive courses are designed to bring joy to students with a blend of academic intensives and cultural exploration curriculum. Students of all backgrounds benefit from a more complete understanding of our shared history and society.



De'Ara Balenger

Social Impact

Looking at the state of our world, what book do you recommend to educate and inform Black people?



Sister Outsider

AUDRE LORDE

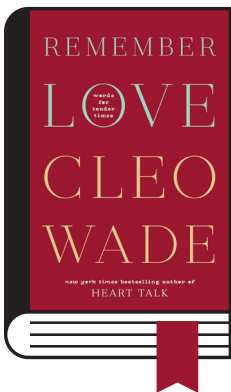
In this charged collection of fifteen essays and speeches, Lorde takes on sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia, and class, and propounds social difference as a vehicle for action and change. Her prose is incisive, unflinching, and lyrical, reflecting struggle but ultimately offering messages of hope. These landmark writings are, in Lorde's own words, a call to "never close our eyes to the terror, to the chaos which is Black, which is creative, which is female, which is dark, which is rejected, which is messy, which is..."

“

This is a big question - but what immediately comes up for me is Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde

”

What book in the last year has sparked your spirit?



Remember Love

CLEO WADE

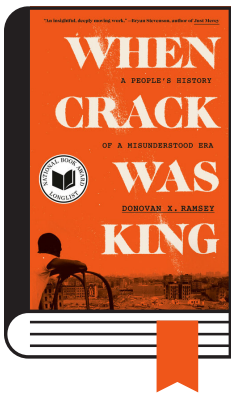
At a time when many of us feel overwhelmed by fear and isolation, Cleo Wade's *Remember Love* offers intimate, uplifting words that anchor, nurture, and make us feel less alone. She shares that the heart work we do for ourselves is not done to avoid the tough stuff—periods of lostness, self-doubt, depression, grief, heartbreak, and anxiety. Wade instead suggests that to live is to get lost, and it's our task, our great privilege, to learn to love ourselves so that we can handle these periods and our discomfort does not block our healing. *Remember Love* reminds us that lostness is not our permanent state but a starting point for self-discovery, connection, and growth.



DeRay Mckesson

Organizer, Activist

Looking at the state of our world, what book do you recommend to educate and inform Black people?

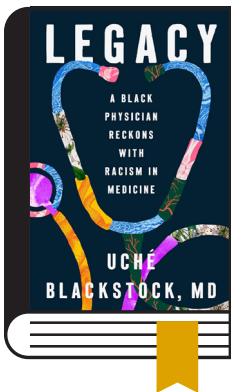


When Crack Was King: A People's History of a Misunderstood Era

DONOVAN X. RAMSEY

The crack epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s is arguably the least examined crisis in American history. Beginning with the myths inspired by Reagan's war on drugs, journalist Donovan X. Ramsey's exacting analysis traces the path from the last triumphs of the Civil Rights Movement to the devastating realities we live with today: a racist criminal justice system, continued mass incarceration and gentrification, and increased police brutality.

What book in the last year has sparked your spirit?



Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons with Racism in Medicine

UCHÉ BLACKSTOCK, MD

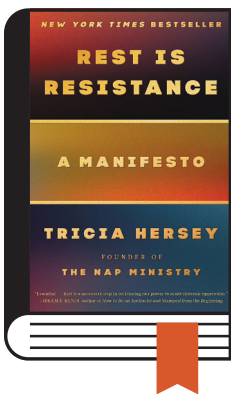
Legacy is a journey through the critical intersection of racism and healthcare. At once a searing indictment of our healthcare system, a generational family memoir, and a call to action, *Legacy* is Dr. Blackstock's odyssey from child to medical student to practicing physician—to finally seizing her own power as a health equity advocate against the backdrop of the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement.



Myles E. Johnson

Performance Artist, Writer, Mystic

Looking at the state of our world, what book do you recommend to educate and inform Black people?

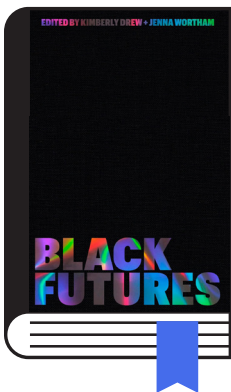


Rest is Resistance

TRICIA HERSEY

Disrupt and push back against capitalism and white supremacy. In this book, Tricia Hersey, aka The Nap Bishop, encourages us to connect to the liberating power of rest, daydreaming, and naps as a foundation for healing and justice. In *Rest Is Resistance*, Tricia Hersey, aka the Nap Bishop, casts an illuminating light on our troubled relationship with rest and how to imagine and dream our way to a future where rest is exalted. Our worth does not reside in how much we produce, especially not for a system that exploits and dehumanizes us. Rest, in its simplest form, becomes an act of resistance and a reclaiming of power because it asserts our most basic humanity. We are enough. The systems cannot have us.

What book in the last year has sparked your spirit?



Black Futures

KIMBERLY DREW & JENNA WORTHAM

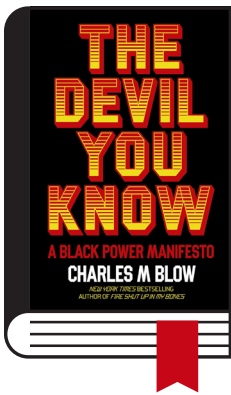
What does it mean to be Black and alive right now? Kimberly Drew and Jenna Wortham have brought together this collection of work - images, photos, essays, memes, dialogues, recipes, tweets, poetry, and more - to tell the story of the radical, imaginative, provocative, and gorgeous world that Black creators are bringing forth today. The book presents a succession of startling and beautiful pieces that generate an entrancing rhythm: Readers will go from conversations with activists and academics to memes and Instagram posts, from powerful essays to dazzling paintings and insightful infographics.



Kaya Henderson

Educator, CEO

Looking at the state of our world, what book do you recommend to educate and inform Black people?



The Devil You Know

CHARLES BLOW

Acclaimed columnist and author Charles Blow never wanted to write a “race book.” But as violence against Black people—both physical and psychological—seemed only to increase in recent years, culminating in the historic pandemic and protests of the summer of 2020, he felt compelled to write a new story for Black Americans. He envisioned a succinct, counterintuitive, and impassioned corrective to the myths that have for too long governed our thinking about race and geography in America. Drawing on both political observations and personal experience as a Black son of the South, Charles set out to offer a call to action by which Black people can finally achieve equality, on their own terms.

What book in the last year has sparked your spirit?



Black Futures

KIMBERLY DREW & JENNA WORTHAM

What does it mean to be Black and alive right now? Kimberly Drew and Jenna Wortham have brought together this collection of work - images, photos, essays, memes, dialogues, recipes, tweets, poetry, and more - to tell the story of the radical, imaginative, provocative, and gorgeous world that Black creators are bringing forth today. The book presents a succession of startling and beautiful pieces that generate an entrancing rhythm: Readers will go from conversations with activists and academics to memes and Instagram posts, from powerful essays to dazzling paintings and insightful infographics.