

Racism:

*Titles about Racism and the African American Experience available in the NHS Library**

Fiction Titles:

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah* - A young woman from Nigeria leaves behind her home and her first love to start a new life in America, only to find her dreams are not all she expected.

Bennett, Brit. *The Vanishing Half* - The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities. Ten years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other secretly passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' storylines intersect.

Craig, Colleen. *Afrika* - Traveling to South Africa with her journalist mother, thirteen-year-old Kim explores the country's diverse and often shocking history, while trying to unlock the secret that has always kept her from knowing her father.

Gyasi, Yaa. *Homegoing* - Ghana, eighteenth century: two half sisters are born into different villages, each unaware of the other. One will marry an Englishman and lead a life of comfort in the palatial rooms of the Cape Coast Castle. The other will be captured in a raid on her village, imprisoned in the very same castle, and sold into slavery. 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.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* - An African-American woman searches for a fulfilling relationship through two loveless marriages and finally finds it in the person of Tea Cake, an itinerant laborer and gambler.

Jones, Tayari. *An American Marriage* - Newlyweds Celestial and Roy, the living embodiment of the New South, are settling into the routine of their life together when Roy is sent to prison for a crime he didn't commit. A ... look into the lives of people who are bound and separated by forces beyond their control.

Kidd, Sue Mon. *The Invention of Wings* - The story follows Hetty "Handful" Grimke, a Charleston slave, and Sarah, the daughter of the wealthy Grimke family. The novel begins on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership over Handful, who is to be her handmaid and follows the next thirty-five years of their lives.

Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye* - An eleven-year-old African-American girl in Ohio, in the early 1940s, prays for her eyes to turn blue so that she will be beautiful.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Monster* - While on trial as an accomplice to a murder, sixteen-year-old Steve Harmon records his experiences in prison and in the courtroom in the form of a film script as he tries to come to terms with the course his life has taken.

Picoult, Jodi. *Small Great Things* - A woman and her husband admitted to a hospital to have a baby request that their nurse be reassigned - they are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is black, to touch their baby. The hospital complies, but the baby later goes into cardiac distress when Ruth is on duty. She hesitates before rushing in to perform CPR. When her indecision ends in tragedy, Ruth finds herself on trial, represented by a white public defender who warns against bringing race into a courtroom. As the two come to develop a truer understanding of each other's lives, they begin to doubt the beliefs they each hold most dear.

Reid, Kiley. *Such a Fun Age* - Alix Chamberlain is a woman who gets what she wants and has made a living, with her confidence-driven brand, showing other women how to do the same. So she is shocked when her babysitter, Emira Tucker, is confronted while watching the Chamberlains' toddler one night, walking the aisles of their local high-end supermarket. The store's security guard, seeing a young black woman out late with a white child, accuses Emira of kidnapping two-year-old Briar. A small crowd gathers, a bystander films everything, and Emira is furious and humiliated. Alix resolves to make things right. But Emira herself is aimless, broke, and wary of Alix's desire to help. At twenty-five, she is about to lose her health insurance and has no idea what to do with her life. When the video of Emira unearths someone from Alix's past, both women find themselves on a crash course that will upend everything they think they know about themselves, and each other.

Smith, Zadie. *White Teeth* - Archie Jones and Samad Iqbal, friends since serving together in World War II, deal with the problems of love, lust, and the other challenges of raising their families in 1970s London.

Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help* - Limited and persecuted by racial divides in 1962 Jackson, Mississippi, three women, including an African-American maid, her sassy and chronically unemployed friend, and a recently graduated white woman, team up for a clandestine project.

Stone, Nic. *Dear Martin* - Writing letters to the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., seventeen-year-old college-bound Justyce McAllister struggles to face the reality of race relations today and how they are shaping him.

Thomas, Angie. *The Hate U Give* - After witnessing her friend's death at the hands of a police officer, Starr Carter's life is complicated when the police and a local drug lord try to intimidate her in an effort to learn what happened the night Kahlil died.

Thomas, Angie. *On the Come Up* - Sixteen-year-old Bri hopes to become a great rapper, and after her first song goes viral for all the wrong reasons, must decide whether to sell out or face eviction with her widowed mother.

Walker, ALice. *The Color Purple* - Tells the story of two African-American sisters: Nettie, a missionary in Africa, and Celie, a child-wife living in the south, in the medium of their letters to each other and in Celie's case, the desperate letters she begins, "Dear God.

Ward, Jesmyn. *Sing, Unburied, Sing* - Living with his grandparents and sister on a Gulf Coast farm, Jojo navigates the challenges of his mother's addictions and his grandmother's cancer before the release of his father from prison prompts a road trip of danger and hope.

Whitehead, Colson. *The Underground Railroad* - Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a

terrifying risk and escape. Though they manage to find a station and head north, they are being hunted. Their first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. But the city's placid surface masks an insidious scheme designed for its black denizens. And even worse: Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their heels.

Whitehead, Colson. *The Nickel Boys* - Follows the experiences of two African-American teenagers at an abusive reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida.

Non-fiction Titles

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* - Argues that mass incarceration of African- and Latino Americans in the United States is a form of social control, and contends the civil rights community needs to become more active in protecting the rights of criminals.

Austin, Nefertiti. *Motherhood So White: a Memoir of Race, Gender, and Parenting in America*

Beals, Melba Pattillo. *Warriors Don't Cry* - The story of [the author's] fight to create the family she always knew she was meant to have and the story of motherhood that all American families need now. In this . . . account of her parenting journey, Nefertiti examines the history of adoption in the African American community, faces off against stereotypes of single, Black motherhood, and confronts the reality of raising children of color in racially charged, modern-day America.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me* - Coates takes readers along on his journey through America's history of race and its contemporary resonances through a series of awakenings--moments when he discovered some new truth about our long, tangled history of race, whether through his myth-busting professors at Howard University, a trip to a Civil War battlefield with a rogue historian, a journey to Chicago's South Side to visit aging survivors of 20th century America's 'long war on black people,' or a visit with the mother of a beloved friend who was shot down by the police.

Griffin, John Howard. *Black Like Me* - Presents the true story of journalist John Howard Griffin who, in the 1950s, had his skin medically darkened and traveled through the Deep South in order to experience first hand the cruelty and injustice of segregation.

Kennedy, Randall. *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word* - Provides an analysis of the word "nigger" and its repercussions for, effect on, and place in American culture, and the use of the controversial word as a racial epithet and methods that can deprive the word of its destructive character.

Kendi, Ibram X. *How to Be an Antiracist* - [The author] takes readers through a widening circle of antiracist ideas--from the most basic concepts to visionary possibilities--that will help readers see . . . [different] . . . forms of racism . . . , understand their . . . consequences, and work to oppose them in our systems and in ourselves.

Moore, Wes. *The Other Wes Moore* - The author, a Rhodes scholar and combat veteran, analyzes the various sociocultural factors that influenced him as well as another man of the same name and from the same

neighborhood who was drawn into a life of drugs and crime and ended up serving life in prison, focusing on the influence of relatives, mentors, and social expectations that could have led either of them on different paths.

Noah, Trevor. *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* - Trevor Noah's unlikely path from apartheid South Africa to the desk of The Daily Show began with a criminal act: his birth. Trevor was born to a white Swiss father and a black Xhosa mother at a time when such a union was punishable by five years in prison. *Born a Crime* is the story of a mischievous young boy who grows into a restless young man as he struggles to find himself in a world where he was never supposed to exist. It is also the story of that young man's relationship with his fearless, rebellious, and fervently religious mother-his teammate, a woman determined to save her son from the cycle of poverty, violence, and abuse that would ultimately threaten her own life.

Oluo, Ijeoma. *So You Want to Talk About Race* - A current, constructive, and actionable exploration of today's racial landscape, offering straightforward clarity that readers of all races need to contribute to the dismantling of the racial divide. In 'So You Want to Talk About Race', ... Ijeoma Oluo offers a contemporary, accessible take on the racial landscape in America, addressing head-on such issues as privilege, police brutality, intersectionality, micro-aggressions, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the 'N' word. ... Oluo answers the questions readers don't dare ask, and explains the concepts that continue to elude everyday Americans.

Reynolds, Jason and Ibram X. Kendi. *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* - A history of racist and antiracist ideas in America, from their roots in Europe until today, adapted from the National Book Award winner *Stamped from the Beginning*.

Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* - The founder of the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, recounts his experiences as a lawyer working to assist those desperately in need, reflecting on his pursuit of the ideal of compassion in American justice.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* - Wilkerson [presents] . . . a portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings. Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more, . . . shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day, . . . [and] points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.