

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Press Releases

Office of Communication

2-2-2021

Four people you should get to know (and read) for Black History Month 2021

Autumn Mortenson

Ouachita Baptist University

Ouachita News Bureau

Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Mortenson, Autumn and Ouachita News Bureau, "Four people you should get to know (and read) for Black History Month 2021" (2021). *Press Releases*. 1229.

https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases/1229

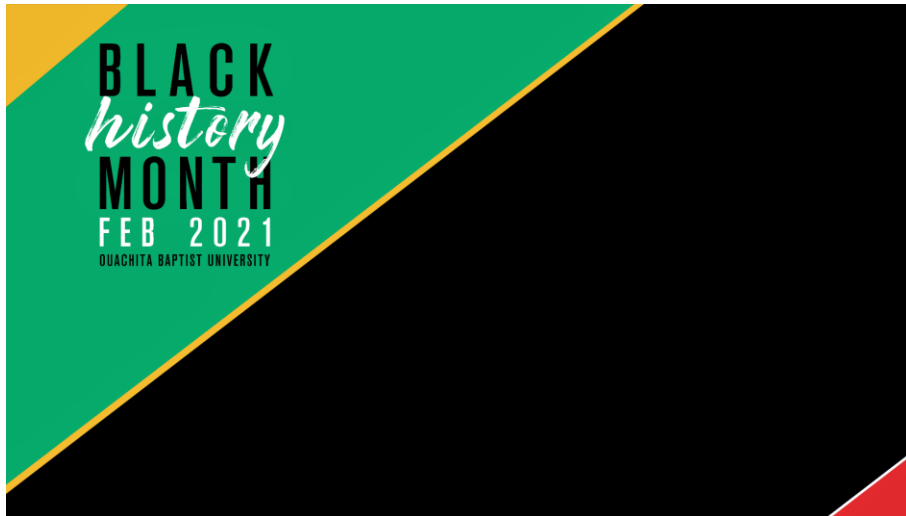
This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Communication at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Press Releases by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

Four people you should get to know (and read) for Black History Month 2021

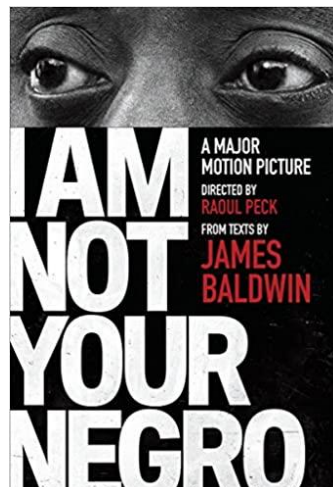
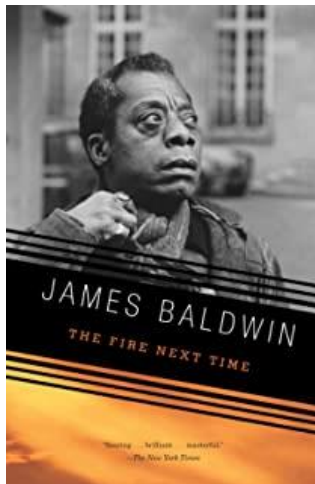


By Autumn Mortenson

February 02, 2021

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

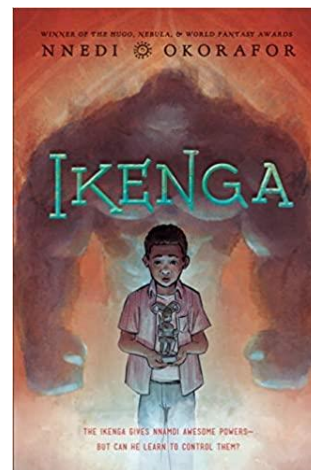
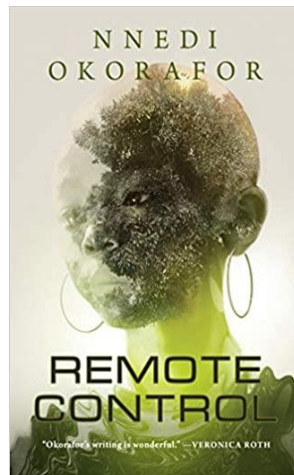
ARKADELPHIA, Ark. –This year, as you celebrate the accomplishments and contributions African Americans have made to American society, take time to learn about the Riley-Hickingbotham Library's four featured authors from four different genres, browse the other books on display and attend one of MORE's programmed events.



Essays

During the first week of Black History Month, stop by the library to check out the works of influential author James Baldwin, as well as essays from other celebrated Black authors. Baldwin always wanted to be known as a novelist, but instead he made his mark writing essays describing what living in America was like as a black man.[i] His essays, particularly those published in “The Fire Next Time,” have influenced such writers as Ta-Nehisi Coates[ii] and Toni Morrison,[iii] both featured on last year’s reading list.

Although he died in 1987, two thought-provoking movies based on Baldwin’s essays were released recently. The award-winning documentary “I Am Not Your Negro” was released in 2016, based on his unfinished manuscript, “Remember This House.” “If Beale Street Could Talk” was released in 2018, based on his book of the same title.[iv]



Young Adult Fiction And Children’s Books

Next, the library will highlight well known young adult fiction and children’s picture books. Nnedi Okorafor, was one of the authors I featured on my “28 Books for 28 Days” blog. Her book, “Binti,” the first book in a trilogy about a young girl – first of the Himba people – heading off to intergalactic college when aliens attack the spaceship and kill everyone but her. I love Okorafor’s unique perspective and world creation in her African futurism or African-based sci-fi novels.

Recently, Okorafor published two new young adult books, which are part of the library display along with other young adult novels and children’s books by Black authors. I am particularly interested in reading “Remote Control,” released in January 2021, about a girl who becomes Death’s daughter after touching

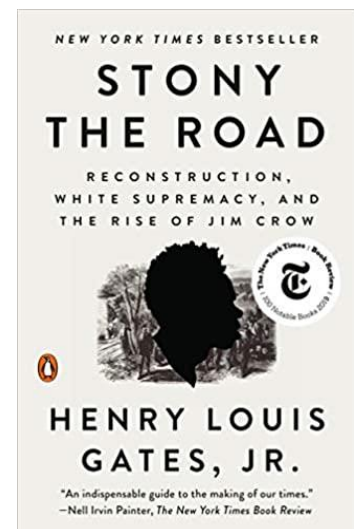
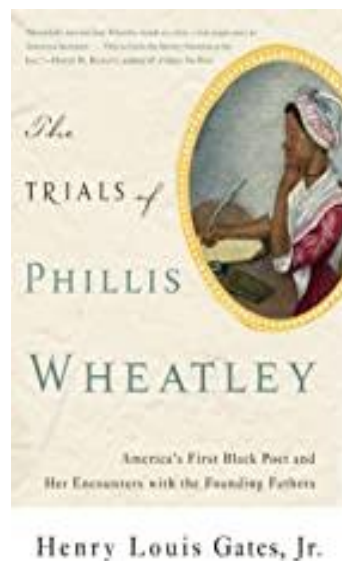
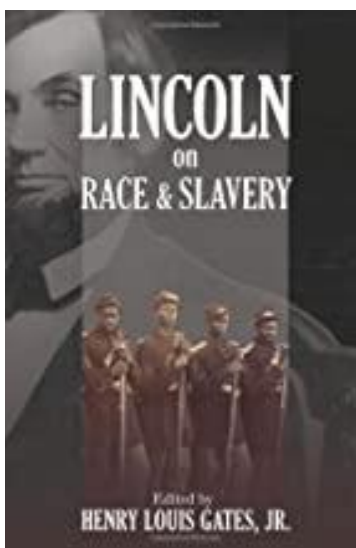
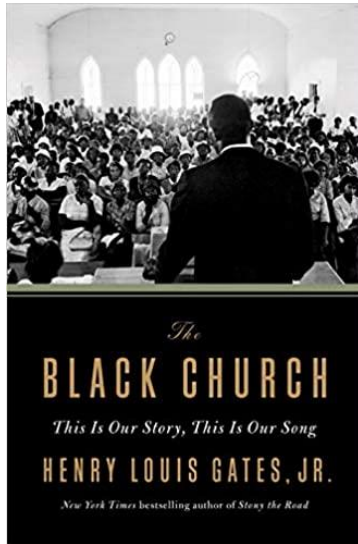
an alien artifact.



Music, Theatre and Film

During the third week of Black History Month, celebrate the arts by exploring work by the musicians, artists, actors and playwrights who have contributed so much to American culture. In particular, check out playwright August Wilson's award-winning scripts that are part of his Twentieth-Century Series, including award-winning plays "Fences" and "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom." Film adaptations of these plays are available to watch on streaming services.

On Monday, Feb. 23, at 6 p.m., [join the library and MORE for a virtual showing](#) of "The Slave Trade," an episode of "Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr." Gates will trace the genealogy of film director Ava DuVernay, actor S. Epatha Merkerson and musician Questlove. Faculty, staff and students can view other episodes by visiting the Films on Demand database through [the library website](#). (Off-campus students will have to log in with their student ID and password.)



History

Besides hosting the PBS series “Finding Your Roots,” Henry Louis Gates, Jr. is a prolific and award-winning author. The library will feature Gates’ books during the last week of this year’s Black History Month. However, students, faculty and staff can also access e-versions of his books, including “Lincoln on Race and Slavery” and “The Trials of Phillis Wheatley: America’s First Black Poet and Her Encounters with the Founding Fathers.” (See our online catalog for a [complete listing of Gates’ books held by the library](#). Off-campus students will need to log-in to gain access.)

Gates’ newest book, “The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song,” released this month, will be part of the display, as well as other books about Black history and Black church leadership.

Other Black History Month events across campus sponsored by Ouachita's Multicultural Student Programs and MORE include:

Thursday, Feb. 4: Lunch Celebration, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (Ouachita Commons)

Thursday, Feb. 11: Game Night, 6-8 p.m. (Evans Student Center)

Tuesday, Feb. 16: Prayer Gathering, 7:30-8 a.m. (Flag Plaza)

Wednesday, Feb. 17: Choir Night, 8-9 p.m. (McBeth Recital Hall)

Monday, Feb. 22: "Finding Your Roots: Slavery" film, 6-7 p.m. (Zoom hosted by the Library)

Tuesday, Feb. 23: Choir Night, 6 p.m. (TBA)

Friday, Feb. 26: Dr. Jack's Coffeehouse, 12:15 p.m. (Evans Student Center)