BLACK WOMEN'S STUDIES AND BLACK FEMINIST POLITICS:
SELECTED SOURCES 1970-1983 *

1. Black Studies/Women's Studies/Black Women's Studies: Confrontations
and Coalitions

ALL THE WOMEN ARE WHITE, ALL THE BLACKS ARE MEN, BUT SOME OF US ARE BRAVE:
BLACK WOMEN'S STUDIES. Ed. by Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and

A groundbreaking collection, which will help bring the richness of
Black Women's Studies into public view. Essays on Black feminism; racism
and Women's Studies; Black women and the social sciences; health;
spirituality; and literature. Bibliographies and course syllabi complete
the volume.

Aptheker, Bettina. "'Strong is What We Make Each Other': Unlearning
Racism Within Women's Studies." WOMEN'S STUDIES QUARTERLY v.IX, no.4 (Winter

Discusses subjective and institutional barriers to interracial solidarity
within Women's Studies. See also her article, "Race and Class: Patriarchal
Politics and Women's Experience," in WOMEN'S STUDIES QUARTERLY v.X, no.4

"Black Studies and Women's Studies: Search for a Long Overdue Partnership."
WOMEN'S STUDIES QUARTERLY v.X, no.2 (Summer 1982), pp.10-16.

A panel presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of the National
Council for Black Studies to increase awareness of the concept and material
of Black Women's Studies. Presentations are: "Toward a Plural and Equitable
Society" (Johnneilla E. Butler); "The 'Bridge' between Black Studies and Women's
Studies: Black Women's Studies" (Gloria T. Hull); "Afro-American Studies
and Women's Studies at Berkeley: A Case of Cooperation" (Charles
Henry); "Combatting the Marginalization of Black Women in the Classroom"
(Vicky Spelman).

Bulkin, Elly. "Racism and Writing: Some Implications for White Lesbian
Critics." SINISTER WISDOM 13 (Spring 1980), pp.3-22.

Bulkin calls upon white lesbian critics to commit themselves to
developing an anti-racist critical perspective. She examines Mary Daly's
Gyn/Ecology as an example of a feminist work whose racist overtones were
largely missed by white critics.

Cade, Toni, comp. THE BLACK WOMAN: AN ANTHOLOGY. New York: New American
Library, 1970.

An early, landmark anthology of poetry, fiction, and essays.

* Most of these sources are available at (or can be ordered through) A
Room of One's Own Feminist Bookstore, 317 W. Johnson St., Madison 53703.

Discusses obstacles to cooperation between Black Studies and Women's Studies, as well as possible areas for such cooperation (e.g., joint course offerings; coordinated efforts to secure new faculty; cooperative fundraising).

Cliff, Michelle. CLAIMING AN IDENTITY THEY TAUGHT ME TO DESPISE. Watertown, MA: Persephone Press, 1980.

Cliff fights to reclaim her identity as a Black woman of West Indian origin.


Historical discussion of three views of Black feminism and Black Women's Studies: the white feminist position; the Black nationalist position; and the Marxist-feminist position. The authors advocate increased involvement in Black Women's Studies by both Black Studies and Women's Studies. Foster is the author of Witnessing Slavery: The Development of Anti-Bellum Slave Narratives (Greenwood Press, 1979).


A controversial study of Black women's experience in the U.S. -- both historical and contemporary -- with special attention to the failings of the recent women's movement. For a thoughtful, critical response, see Barbara Smith's review in The New Women's Times Feminist Review (no.24, Nov./Dec. 1982, pp.10-11, 18-20).


The product of collaboration between two professors at Hampshire College -- one Black, one white. Essays on Black women's and white women's liberation; mothers and daughters; sexuality.


Includes: "Black Lesbians in Academia: Visible Invisibility" (Doris Davenport); "Lesbian Literature: A Third World Feminist Perspective" (Cherré Moraga and Barbara Smith); "Black Lesbians Before 1970: A Bibliographical Essay" (JR Roberts); "Is Feminist Criticism Really Feminist?" (Becky Birtha); and course syllabi by Barbara Smith and Cherré Moraga.


Lorde's Keynote Address to the 1981 National Women's Studies Association Convention (topic: "Women and Racism"). She invites women at the conference to deal openly and constructively with anger aroused by the discussion (and reality) of racism, and to avoid the silence of guilt.
"I conceive this paper as one strand in a meditation and colloquy among Black and white feminists, an intercourse just beginning, and charged with a history that touches our nerve-ends even though we are largely ignorant of it."

Roberts, Jr. BLACK LESBIANS: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.
See: Bibliographies.

Through an examination of DeBeauvoir, Kate Millett, Shulamith Firestone, and Mary Daly, the author discusses racism and ethnocentrism in feminist theory.

Excerpts from a series of four conversations between three Black and two Jewish lesbians. Topics include feminism, friendship, lesbianism, and similarities/differences between Black and Jewish women.

Stetson, Erlene. "Black Women In and Out of Print."
See: Bibliographies.

A controversial view of Black sexual politics.

2. Women of Color: Comparative Perspectives

A summary of the available literature (through 1979) on U.S. minorities in the labor force, with specific attention given to each individual group (American Indians, Blacks, Spanish-heritage minorities, and Asian minorities), and to women within each group. Name and subject indexes.

Non-fiction, letters, short stories, poetry, and excerpts from longer works by Asian-American, Black, Hispanic-American, Jewish, American Indian, and white ethnic women. Sixteen Black women are represented.

Part I looks at women in developing countries, part II at minority women in the United States. The merit of the volume is its comparative perspective; the section on Black women is brief.
See: Literature.


This anthology is stirring testimony to the coming together of U.S. women of color in the '80s. Chicanas, Black, Asian-American, American Indian and Puerto Rican women -- lesbian and "straight" -- contribute poems, letters, and a variety of first-person accounts. A selected bibliography concludes the volume.

3. History

Aptheker, Bettina. WOMAN'S LEGACY: ESSAYS ON RACE, SEX, AND CLASS IN AMERICAN HISTORY. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1982.

Written from a Marxist-feminist perspective, Aptheker's six essays focus on important moments in the history of Black and white American women: the battle over the 15th Amendment; suffrage and the crusade against lynching; W.E.B. Du Bois and women's emancipation; Black women in the professions, 1865-1900; Black and white women's domestic labor; and the Moynihan Report.


A selection from the writings of 24 Black women leaders of the past century, grouped into four sections emphasizing: family; religion; political and reformist movements; and education.


Each volume is actually five books in one. Each section was researched and compiled by a committee of experts, and each contains a selective bibliography and an index to the names of women mentioned in the text.


4. Literature: Anthologies and Criticism


CONFIRMATION: AN ANTHOLOGY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN. Compiled by Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and Amina Baraka, with an intro. by Amiri Baraka. New York: Quill, 1983. Poetry, prose and drama by authors such as Margaret Walker, Sonia Sanchez, Gwendolyn Brooks, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and Faith Ringgold.

Poems by nine writers of the 18th and 19th centuries, and nearly 50 writers of the 20th century. Bibliography of anthologies, critical works, and works of the poets.

Includes both critical studies and imaginative literature.

Over 150 pages on black women writers, including selections which place the writing in context; traditions, narratives and fiction; and poetry. Comparable sections on American Indian, Chicana, and Asian-American women writers.


5. Social Science

Original scholarly essays by 16 Black women from the fields of sociology, social psychology, political science, demography and history. The collection "seeks to continue the process of correcting the history of Black women."

Articles on Black women in Africa, the U.S., the Caribbean, and South America. The nine selections on U.S. Black women include history, sociology, music, and literary criticism.

Volume 1 provides an overview of the conference, group reports, abstracts of papers presented, and a list of participants. Volume 2 contains research papers on such topics as socialization and education of young Black girls, Black women as heads of families, day care issues, health issues.

An early sociological study, based on the author's dissertation research on Black preadolescent and adolescent girls living in an all-Black low-income housing project in a St. Louis slum.


Wallace, a key figure in the famous discrimination case against AT&T, analyzes recent economic literature on Black women workers.

6. Special Issues of Periodicals

BLACK SCHOLAR v. 12, no. 6 (November-December 1981): "The Best of The Black Scholar: The Black Woman."

Contents: "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves" (Angela Davis); "Slave of a Slave No More: Black Women in Struggle" (F.M. Beal); "The Myth of the Black Matriarchy" (Robert Staples); "Rape, Racism and the Capitalist Setting" (Angela Davis); "The Black Woman and the Black Middle Class" (T. Jeffers); "Women in Prison: How We Are" (A. Shakur and J. Chesimard).


Ed. by Lorraine Bethel and Barbara Smith.

Poetry, fiction, journals, essays, song lyrics and reviews.

HERESIES no. 8 (v. 2, no. 4), 1979: "Third World Women: The Politics of Being Other."

Among the contributions: "Some Reflections on Black Women in Film" (Rosemari Mealy); "A Note on the Woman's Building and Black Exclusion" (Erleene Stetson); "Against Granite" (Michelle Cliff); "Three Views of Black Women--The Myths, the Statistics, and a Personal Statement" (Julianne Malveaux); "And Black Women Made Music" (Eleanor Smith); and "Black Women and Work: My Experiences" (Dawn Russell).

HERESIES #15, 1982: "Racism Is the Issue."

Includes: "Sister Outsiders" (Audre Lorde); "Some Do's and Don'ts for Black Women Artists" (Emma Amos); "Growing Up Negro, Soon to Be Black" (Sylvia Witts Vitale); "Object into Subject: Some Thoughts on the Work of Black Women Artists" (Michelle Cliff); "If the Present Looks Like the Past, What Does the Future Look Like?..." (Alice Walker); "For the White Person Who Wants to Know How to Be My Friend" (Pat Parker); and much more.

OFF OUR BACKS v. IX, no. 6 (1979): "Wimmin of Color." Ed. by the Ain't I a Woman Collective.

Articles include: "A Black Feminist Statement" (Combahee River Collective); "900 Black Lesbians Speak"; "Recovering a Literary Heritage: Black Women's Books" (Becky Birtha); and "Black Lesbian Bibliography."
QUEST v.III, no.4 (Spring 1977): "Race, Class & Culture."
Includes "Race and Class: Beyond Personal Politics" (Beverly Fisher);
"Voices on Black Feminism" (Brenda Eichelberger); "An Open Letter to the
Academy" (Michele Russell).

SOJOURNER v.8, no.5 (January 1983): "Women of Color: Our Visions for Our
Lives."
Includes: "New Notes on Lesbianism" by Black poet Cheryl Clarke;
"Minority Women's Studies: The Real Story" (Michelene Ridley Malson);
interviews with Alice Walker and Audre Lorde; reviews.

7. Bibliographies

Davis, Lenwood G. THE BLACK WOMAN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY: A SELECTED
Includes books, articles, periodicals and government documents, along
with listings of major library collections, Black women's organizations,
newspaper publishers and editors, elected officials, and selected statistics.
The annotations greatly add to the value of this bibliography. Author/
subject index. Davis is also author of Black Women in the Cities, 1872-

Compiled by Phyllis Rauch Klotman and Wilmer H. Baatz. New York: Arno
A bibliography of holdings in the Indiana University Library, supplemented
by more than 600 additional books and journal articles. Very selectively--
and briefly--annotated. Entries arranged in groupings by broad topic.
No index.

McKay, Nellie. "A Rising Tide: A Review of Selected Books By and/or
FEMINIST COLLECTIONS: WOMEN'S STUDIES LIBRARY RESOURCES IN WISCONSIN v.3,
no.3 (Spring 1982), pp. 1-17; v.3, no.4 (Summer 1982), pp.15-21.
A review of 17 books from the last decade.

Richardson, Marilyn. BLACK WOMEN AND RELIGION: A BIBLIOGRAPHY. Boston,
Partially annotated bibliography including books and articles, literature,
music, art, audio-visual materials, reference works, autobiography and
biography. Author/title index.

Roberts, JR. BLACK LESBIANS: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY. Tallahassee, FL:
341 annotated entries make sources on Black lesbians accessible for the
first time. Subject/author index.

Sims, Janet L. THE PROGRESS OF AFRO-AMERICAN WOMEN: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY
19th and 20th century materials on Afro-American women, including books,
articles, dissertations and theses, and audiovisual materials. Author and
limited subject indexing. No annotations. See also the author's Black

In this far-ranging survey of materials for Black Women's Studies, Stetson calls for the rediscovery and reprinting of works by "lost" Black women and suggests many new avenues for research.


Brief overview of available sources.


Part I is an unannotated listing of writings about (and primarily by) Black women in the arts and social sciences (writings by non-Blacks are clearly identified). Part II offers individual bibliographies for 17 notable Black women. Name index.

Compiled by Cathy Loeb, 3/83