

Afro-Americana Imprints, 1535-1922: From the Library Company of Philadelphia

An unparalleled collection of early African American history, literature and culture



Quick Facts

One of the world's preeminent collections for African American studies
A vibrant record of African American life across five centuries
Available as a single complete collection, or in one or more of ten chronological segments

**“A touchstone for scholars and students alike.
To have it available online...is a dream come true.”**

—Richard Newman, Professor of History, Rochester Institute of Technology

Overview

This sweeping online resource is created from the Library Company of Philadelphia's acclaimed Afro-Americana Collection—a collection started by Benjamin Franklin that steadily increased throughout its history, ultimately encompassing more than 12,000 printed works. In addition to essential books, pamphlets and broadsides, the collection includes many lesser-known imprints. Taken as a whole, it offers an unparalleled record of African American history, literature and culture. This digital edition is available as a single complete collection, or in one or more of ten chronological segments, organized by historic era.

From colonial-era African societies to the struggle for justice in the Americas

Spanning nearly 400 years, from the early 16th to the early 20th century, this critically important resource covers a range of subjects from diverse perspectives. Among them are the discovery and exploitation of Africa by European powers; the transatlantic passage and rise of chattel slavery in the Americas; the growth and success of abolitionist movements; the evolution of racial thought and racism; descriptions of African American life—enslaved and free—throughout the Americas; and depictions of slavery and race in fiction and drama. Many works were written by African American individuals and organizations.

Fresh scholarship on African American history

The Afro-Americana Collection began to gain international renown for its size, range and significance in the late 1960s as scholars began more closely examining the role of slavery in the American story. As researchers rediscovered the importance of the long-neglected writings of African Americans, the Library Company's collection became increasingly vital to new scholarship. Today it continues to serve as a critical resource for scholars and students, offering a plethora of research and teaching opportunities.

The landmark work behind the digital edition

The magisterial bibliography *Afro-Americana 1553-1906* was first published in 1973. A second edition published in 2008, including 2,500 works acquired since 1973, now provides the bibliographic control for the Readex digital collection. *Afro-Americana Imprints, 1535-1922*, is fully integrated into *America's Historical Imprints* for seamless searching with *Early American Imprints, Series I and II*, including *Supplements from the Library Company of Philadelphia*.

About the Library Company of Philadelphia

The Library Company is an independent research library specializing in American history, society and culture from the 17th through 19th centuries. Founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin, the Library Company is America's first successful lending library and oldest cultural institution. In 2007, its influential Program in African American History was created.



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