

AFRICANA MEMOIRS

CHRONOLOGICAL BOOKLIST

Compiled by Dr. Stephanie Y. Evans | Published January 26, 2026

www.africanamemoirs.net

Africanamemoirs.net is an online resource to encourage research grounded in Black women's life stories. This open access database enhances narrative study and broadens the genres of autobiography, memoir, and epistolary writing. Most importantly, this website inspires the next generation of authors to read and write life stories for empowerment.

In the tradition of *Sesheta*, the Egyptian goddess known as "lady of the house of books," this library gathers together a chorus of voices from around the world and Africana women's stories are as numerous as the spots on Sesheta's leopard print dress. The main theme of these stories is what Anna Julia Cooper calls regeneration. Every woman has an epic story and through life history research, we reflect on our past, locate our inner strength, and project hope for the future.

The chronological list below offers a sample of 355 Black women's memoirs, mainly focusing on African American women. This booklist of life writing can be supplemented with the 305 books by Life Members of the Association of Black Women Historians resource [ABWH Booklist](#). Together, these two lists offer a comprehensive entry point to better understanding Black women's life and history in the United States of America. Resources to make this list are below. Enjoy!

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1600s & 1700s

De Jesus, Ursula. The Souls of Purgatory: The Spiritual Diary of a Seventeenth Century Afro-Peruvian Mystic, 1650

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Ann and Elizabeth Hart, Letters, (1993), Moira Ferguson, Ed. in The Hart Sisters: Early African Caribbean Writers, Evangelicals, and Radicals, 1804

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Maria W. Stewart, Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart, 1835

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Elleanor Eldridge and Frances Whipple, Memoirs of Elleanor Eldridge, 1838

Zilpha Elaw, Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experience, Ministerial Travels and Labours of Mrs. Zilpha Elaw, an American Female of Colour; Together with Some Account of the Great Religious Revivals in America, 1846

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