Invisible Man
by Ralph Ellison
An African-American man's search for success and the American dream leads him out of college to Harlem and a growing sense of personal rejection and social invisibility, in this monumental, award-winning novel.

Song of Solomon
by Toni Morrison
Macon Dead, Jr., called "Milkman," the son of the wealthiest African American in town, moves from childhood into early manhood, searching, among the disparate, mysterious members of his family, for his life and reality. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award.

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl
by Harriet A. Jacobs
Harriet Jacobs's 1861 autobiography was the first written narrative by a female slave in America. Using the pseudonym Linda, Jacobs recounts the horrors of her life as a slave and a mother and her eventual escape to the North.

The Portable Charles W. Chesnutt
by Charles W. Chesnutt
An icon of nineteenth-century American fiction, Charles W. Chesnutt incisive storyteller of the aftermath of slavery in the South is widely credited with almost single-handedly inaugurating the African American short story tradition and was the first African American novelist to achieve national critical acclaim.
The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness
by Michelle Alexander
Argues that the War on Drugs and policies that deny convicted felons equal access to employment, housing, education and public benefits create a permanent under-caste based largely on race.

Heavy: An American Memoir
by Kiese Laymon
An essayist and novelist explores what the weight of a lifetime of secrets, lies and deception does to a black body, a black family and a nation teetering on the brink of moral collapse.

The World According to Fannie Davis: My Mother's Life in the Detroit Numbers
by Bridgett M Davis
An homage to the author's mother relates how she cleverly played Detroit's illegal lottery in the 1970s to support the family while creating a loving, joyful home and mothering her children to the highest standards.

Arthur Ashe: A Life
by Raymond Arsenault
Recounts the life of the iconic tennis player, who became the first African American to play for the US Davis Cup team in 1963, detailing his success on the court, his career as a human rights activist, and his death of AIDS in 1993.

Invisible: The Forgotten Story of the Black Woman Lawyer who Took Down America's Most Powerful Mobster
by Stephen L. Carter
The best-selling author traces the story of his grandmother, an African-American attorney who, in spite of period barriers, devised the strategy that sent mafia chieftain Lucky Luciano to prison.

Unexampled Courage
by Richard Gergel
Documents the 1946 case of decorated African-American veteran Isaac Woodard, whose victimization by police brutality prompted Harry Truman to establish the first presidential commission on civil rights and order desegregation in the U.S. armed forces.