



African American Authors, 1745-1945: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook

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There has been a dramatic resurgence of interest in early African American writing. Since the accidental rediscovery and republication of Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig* in 1983, the works of dozens of 19th and early 20th century black writers have been recovered and reprinted. There is now a significant revival of interest in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s; and in the last decade alone, several major assessments of 18th and 19th century African American literature have been published. Early African American literature builds on a strong oral tradition of songs, folktales, and sermons. Slave narratives began to appear during the late 18th and early 19th century, and later writers began to engage a variety of themes in diverse genres.

A central objective of this reference book is to provide a wide-ranging introduction to the first 200 years of African American literature. Included are alphabetically arranged entries for 78 black writers active between 1745 and 1945. Among these writers are essayists, novelists, short story writers, poets, playwrights, and autobiographers. Each entry is written by an expert contributor and provides a biography, a discussion of major works and themes, an overview of the author's critical reception, and primary and secondary bibliographies. The volume concludes with a selected, general bibliography.

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