

"Black Studies Collection"

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I have great difficulty choosing the most "politically correct," yet all-inclusive title for my collection. Nevertheless, since I am forced to categorize my book collection or choose a particular unifying theme that best describes it, I will have to pick "Black Studies." I will label my collection, "Black Studies," because it covers a broad range of information dealing with the social, political, cultural, and historical experiences of various "black" people of African descent spread throughout the Diaspora. Some of the books I own cover Africa and several other locations, but the majority focus on African-Americans, particularly U.S. blacks. My books delve deep into the various regional, ethnic, generational, cultural, and gender-specific aspects of the black experience. Some focus on particular topics like blacks in urban America, or particular historical figures like Malcolm X, others cover diverse areas such as the multifaceted ideologies, belief systems and religions embraced by blacks.

Overall I have over 200 books in my personal book collection, of which less than one fourth are books that were purchased for class and close to 150 fit specifically under the category of "Black Studies." I keep all my books stacked in my room on two book shelves (actually four because I have two more shelves full of books-though most are from the library.) The types of books in my collection vary. Some types of books are history, anthropology, literature, autobiographies, cultural criticism, and anthologies. I have what I consider to be different "sections" or mini collections of books on certain topics. For instance books on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture make up a significant number of my collection, I also have a growing collection of books on the African-American experience with Islam.

One of the most astonishing aspects about my collection is that I have been collecting books for only a relatively short period of time, roughly six years. A couple of books I found around my house, a few I picked up here and there (at other relatives and friends houses.) I have a few books that were donated to me by Professors, the majority I have purchased at numerous bookstores from around the Country and State during my travels and study at places like the University of Texas, the University of Nebraska, and MSU. I have several books that are autographed. The primary reason my collection was initiated was because of a deep personal and private interest I had in the topic of black history. Over time my academic interests began to converge with this personal endeavor. Though I am a Social Relations major, by my Junior year I decided to pursue two M.S.U. specializations, one in African Studies and the other in AfricanAmerican History and Culture, this decision has helped with the rapid expansion of my library. Here are just a few of my books.