

## The First Black Superhero: Black Motherhood

Amongst the many images of the black experience, there is one image that stands the test of time. Whether caricatured as a syrup-making, Aunt Jemima mammy archetype or the oversimplification of black womanhood— concepts like the Madonna-whore complex, hyper-sexualization of black female children and commercialized Eurocentric standards of beauty, historically confine expressions of black motherhood, and femininity.

Black motherhood is a representation of womanhood. Historical female archetypes are utilized to articulate black womanhood, and femininity, in mainstream media and in non-people of color circles. These clichéd archetypes are dehumanizing; yet, consistently and globally circulated. They, also, serve as fictionalized versions of black motherhood. Communities of women of color have raised and are invited into the homes of non-people of color as doulas, wet nurses and nannies; yet, the fundamental understanding, self-expressions and appreciation of black womanhood is yet to be made a priority of American histories, and communities. Recently, social and political movements like the *Me Too Movement*, *Black Girl Magic*, *Bring Back Our Girls*, and *Black Lives Matter* provide an avenue of effortless and enlightened expression and narratives.

This listing provides works of non-fiction that examines historical stereotypes of black motherhood. Feminist theory, womanist interpretations and overviews of political and literary movements and major authors is incorporated. Other works of fiction, memoirs and personal narratives by major authors are amongst the latter of the listing. Film-adaptations of chronicled motherhood and bouts of womanhood are within the listing.

Resources include call numbers, for patrons to easily inquire and obtain resources. Auburn Avenue Research Library maintains non-circulating policies of its collection; however, patrons are able to utilize materials in-house. Suggested search terms and keywords are provided to further guide patron's research amongst Auburn Avenue Research Library and the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library catalog and digital libraries. The below Boolean Operators (AND, OR, also NOT) are simple words used to maximize search results.

**Forrest R. Evans**

**Librarian II, Reference and Research**

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**Audio/Visual Collection:**

**Mother of the River**

Author: Davis, Zeinabu Irene      Pub Date: 1995      Call #: VHS 791.43 MOTHER

**The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother**

Author: McBride, James      Pub Date: 1996      Call #: CAS B MCBRIDE

**The Women of Brewster Place**

Author: Winfrey, Oprah      Pub Date: 1988      Call #: VHS 791.45 WOMEN V.1  
VHS 791.45 WOMEN V.2

**Waiting to Exhale**

Author: Terry McMillian      Pub Date: 1995      Call #: DVD 791.43 WAITING

**A Raisin in The Sun**

Author: Hansberry, Lorraine      Pub Date: 1985      Call #: VHS 791.43 RAISIN

**The Street**

Author: Petry, Ann Lane      Pub Date: 1998      Call #: CAS 813.54 PETRY

**For Colored Girls**

Author: Jackson, Janet      Pub Date: 2011      Call #: DVD 791.43 FOR

**Dark Girls**

Author: Duke, Bill      Pub Date: 2013      Call #: DVD 305.48 DARK

**The Return of Sarah Bartman**

Author: Maseko, Zola      Pub Date: 2003      Call #: DVD 305.48 DARK

**Siren Spirits**

Author: Onwurah, Ngozi      Pub Date: 1994      Call #: VHS 791.436 SIREN

**And Still I Rise**

Author: Onwurah, Ngozi      Pub Date: 1993      Call #: VHS 305.4 AND

**Black Mother, Black Daughter**

Author: Hamilton, Sylvia      Pub Date: 1989      Call #: VHS 305.8 BLACK

**On becoming a woman mothers & daughters talking together : a film**

Author: National Black Women's Health Project  
Pub Date: 1987      Call #: VHS 613.9 ON

**Books:**

**Guidebook to Relative Strangers: Journeys into Race, Motherhood, and History**

**Author:** Dungy, Camile T.

**Pub Date:** 2017

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** B DUNGY

**U.S. Women's History: Untangling the Treads of Sisterhood**

**Author:** Brown, Leslie

**Pub Date:** 2017

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.40973 UNITED STATES

**Maternal Metaphors of Power in African American Women's Literature: from Phillis Wheatley to Toni Morrison**

**Author:** Moore, Geneva Cobb

**Pub Date:** 2017

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.9 MOORE

**Lost in the USA: American identity from the Promise Keepers to the Million Mom March**

**Author:** White, Deborah G.

**Pub Date:** 2017

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:**

**Raising the Race: Black Career Women Redefine Marriage, Motherhood, and Community**

**Author:** Barnes, Riche J. Daniel

**Pub Date:** 2016

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.488 BARNES

**When Momma Speaks: The Bible and Motherhood from A Womanist Perspective**

**Author:** Crowder, Stephanie R. Buckhanon

**Pub Date:** 2016

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 220.6 CROWDER

**Black Women's Portrayals on Reality Television: The New Sapphire**

**Author:** Allision, Donnetrice

**Pub Date:** 2016

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 791.45 BLACK

**Brown Bodies, White Babies: The Politics of Cross-racial Surrogacy**

**Author:** Harrison, Laura

**Pub Date:** 2016

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 306.8743 HARRISON

**Know the Mother: Stories**

**Author:** Cooper, Desiree

**Pub Date:** 2016

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813.6 COOPER

**Things I Should Have Told My Daughter: Lies, Lessons & Love Affairs**

**Author:** Cleage, Pearl

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** B CLEAGE

**Child, Please: How Mama's Old-school Lessons Helped me Check Myself Before I wrecked Myself**

**Author:** Caviness, Ylonda Gault

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 649.1 CAVINESS

**Unraveling and Reweaving Sacred Canon in Africana Womanhood**

**Author:** Amenga-Etego, Rose Mary

**Pub Date:** 2015

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 200.82 UNRAVELING

**Reading Contemporary African American Literature: Black Women's Popular Fiction, Post-Civil Rights Experience, and the African American Canon**

**Author:** Bragg, Beauty

**Pub Date:** 2015

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.9 BRAGG

**Witches, Goddesses, and Angry Spirits: The Politics of Spiritual Liberation in African Diaspora Women's Fiction**

**Author:** Marouan, Maha

**Pub Date:** 2015

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813.5409 MAROUAN

**Engaging the Diaspora: Migration and African Families**

**Author:** Uwakweh, Paulina Ada

**Pub Date:** 2014

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 331.626 ENGAGING

**What the Village Gave Me: Conceptualizations of Womanhood**

**Author:** Davis-Maye, Denise

**Pub Date:** 2014

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.48 WHAT

**Black Women and Popular Culture: The Conversation Continues**

**Author:** Goldman, Adria Y.

**Pub Date:** 2014

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.48 BLACK

**African Diasporic Women's Narratives: Politics of Resistance, Survival, and Citizenship**

**Author:** Alexandar, Simone A. James

**Pub Date:** 2014

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.9 ALEXANDER

**Women, Gender, and Sexualities in Africa**

**Author:** Falola, Toyin

**Pub Date:** 2013

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.3 WOMEN

**Black Women in Management: Paid Work and Family Formations**

**Author:** Farmer, Diane Chilangwa

**Pub Date:** 2013

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 331.481658 FARMER

**I Dare to Say: African Women Share Their Stories of Hope and Survival**

**Author:** Twongyeirwe, Hilda

**Pub Date: 2012**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.42 I

**Prove it on Me: New Negroes, Sex, and Popular Culture in the 1920s**

**Author:** Chapman, Erin D.

**Pub Date: 2012**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.48 CHAPMAN

**Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships, and Motherhood among Black Women**

**Author:** Moore, Mignon R.

**Pub Date: 2011**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 306.848 MOORE

**Radical Spiritual Motherhood: Autobiography and Empowerment in Nineteenth-century African American Women**

**Author:** Haynes, Rosetta Renae

**Pub Date: 2011**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 269.2 HAYNES

**Motherlove in Shades of Black: The Maternal Psyche in the Novels of African American Women**

**Author:** Pillowm, Gloria Thomas

**Pub Date: 2010**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813 PILLOW

**Born Southern: Childbirth, Motherhood, and Social Networks in the old South**

**Author:** Kennedy, V. Lynn

**Pub Date: 2010**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 362.1982 KENNEDY

**Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States**

**Author:** Solinger, Rickie

**Pub Date: 2010**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 365.43 INTERRUPTED

**Something Akin to Freedom: the Choice of Bondage in Narratives by African American Women**

**Author:** Li, Stephanie

**Pub Date: 2010**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.9 LI

**On the Outskirts of Normal: Forging a Family Against the Grain**

**Author:** Monroe, Debra

**Pub Date: 2010**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** B MONROE

**Black Sexualities: Probing Powers, Passions, Practices, and Policies**

**Author:** Battle, Juan

**Pub Date: 2010**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.896 BLACK

**Is that Your Child?: Mothers Talk about Rearing Biracial Children**

**Author:** Kilson, Marion

**Pub Date:** 2009

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 306.846 KILSON

**Queen of the Virgins: Pageantry and Black Womanhood in the Caribbean**

**Author:** Oliver, M. Cynthia

**Pub Date:** 2009

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 306.4613 OLIVER

**Something like Beautiful: One Single Mother's Story**

**Author:** Bandele, Asha

**Pub Date:** 2009

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 306.8743 BANDELE

**The Specter of Sex: Gendered Foundations of Racial Formation in the United States**

**Author:** Kitch, Sally

**Pub Date:** 2009

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.8 KITCH

**Reclaiming Home, Remembering Motherhood, Rewriting History: African American and Afro-Caribbean women's Literature in the Twentieth Century**

**Author:** Theile, Verena

**Pub Date:** 2009

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.9 RECLAIMING

**Black Woman's Burden: Commodifying Black Reproduction**

**Author:** Rousseau, Nicole

**Pub Date:** 2009

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.896 ROUSSEAU

**Women, Work, and Family in the Antebellum Mountain South**

**Author:** Dunaway, Wilma A.

**Pub Date:** 2008

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.489624 DUNAWAY

**Women in the Church of God in Christ: Making a Sanctified World**

**Author:** Butler, Anthea D.

**Pub Date:** 2007

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 289.94 BUTLER

**Cultural Sites of Critical Insight: Philosophy, Aesthetics, and African American and Native American Women's Writings**

**Author:** Cotton, Angela L.

**Pub Date:** 2007

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.99287 CULTURAL

**Uncertain Honor: Modern Motherhood in an African Crisis**

**Author:** Johnson-Hanks, Jennifer

**Pub Date:** 2006

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 306.8743 JOHNSON-HANKS

**Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South**

**Author:** Schwartz, Marie Jenkins **Pub Date:** 2006  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 618.20089 SCHWARTZ

**Mother: A Cradle to Hold Me**

**Author:** Angelou, Maya **Pub Date:** 2006  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 811.54 ANGELOU

**I'm Every Woman: Remixed Stories of Marriage, Motherhood, and Work**

**Author:** Parker, Lonnae O'Neal **Pub Date:** 2005  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.48 BLACK

**The Black Woman: An Anthology**

**Author:** Bambara, Toni Cade **Pub Date:** 2005  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.48 PARKER

**Rise Up Singing: Black Women Writers on Motherhood**

**Author:** Berry, Cecelie S. **Pub Date:** 2004  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 810.8 RISE

**Toni Morrison and Motherhood: A Politics of the Heart**

**Author:** O'Reilly, Andrea **Pub Date:** 2004  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813.54 MORRISON

**Beads and Strands: Reflections of an African Woman on Christianity in Africa**

**Author:** Oduyoye, Mercy Amba **Pub Date:** 2004  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 276.082 ODUYOYE

**Not My Mother's Sister: Generational Conflict and Third-Wave Feminism**

**Author:** Henry, Astrid **Pub Date:** 2004  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.42 HENRY

**Critical Race Feminism: A Reader**

**Author:** Wing, Adrien Katherine **Pub Date:** 2003  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.48 CRITICAL

**The Archaeology of Mothering: An African-American Midwife's Tale**

**Author:** Wilkie, Laurie A. **Pub Date:** 2003  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 618.20089 PERRYMAN

**Appropriating Blackness: Performances and the Politics of Authenticity**

**Author:** Johnson, E. Patrick **Pub Date:** 2003  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 305.896 JOHNSON

**Maternal Body and Voice in Toni Morrison, Bobbie Ann Mason, and Lee Smith**

**Author: Eckard, Paula Gallant**

**Pub Date: 2002**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813 ECKARD**

**The Freedom to Remember: Narrative, Slavery, and Gender in Contemporary Black Women's Fiction**

**Author: Mitchell, Angelyn**

**Pub Date: 2002**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813 MITCHELL**

**Stepping Forward: Black Women in Africa and the Americas**

**Author: Higgs, Catherine**

**Pub Date: 2002**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 305.48896 STEPPING**

**Mother imagery in the novels of Afro-Caribbean women**

**Author: Alexander, Simone A. James**

**Pub Date: 2001**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813.5 ALEXANDER**

**Motherhood in Black and White: Race and Sex in American Liberalism, 1930-1965**

**Author: Feldstein, Ruth**

**Pub Date: 2000**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 306.8743 FELDSTEIN**

**Women in Chains: The Legacy of Slavery in Black Women's Fiction**

**Author: Pattopn, Venetria K.**

**Pub Date: 2000**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813.5 PATTON**

**Medicalized Motherhood: Perspectives from the Lives of African-American and Jewish Women**

**Author: Litt, Jacquelyn S.**

**Pub Date: 2000**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 305.42 BERKOVITCH**

**Redefining Motherhood: Changing Identities and Patterns**

**Author: Abbey, Sharon**

**Pub Date: 1998**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 306.8743 REDEFINING**

**Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment**

**Author: Hill Collins, Patricia**

**Pub Date: 2000**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 305.42 COLLINS**

**Womanist and Feminist Aesthetics: A Comparative Review**

**Author: Allan, Tuzyline Jita**

**Pub Date: 1995**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 823.91 ALLAN**



**The Politics of (M)othering: Womanhood, Identity, and Resistance in African Literature**

**Author: Nnaemeka, Obioma**

**Pub Date: 1997**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 809.8896 POLITICS**

**Not Our Kind of Girl: Unraveling the Myths of Black Teenage Motherhood**

**Author: Kaplan, Elaine Bell**

**Pub Date: 1997**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 306.8743 KAPLAN**

**Marching Together: Women of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters**

**Author: Chateaufort, Malinda**

**Pub Date: 1998**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 331.4 CHATEAUVERT**

**The Other Within Us: Feminist Explorations of Women and Aging**

**Author: Pearsall, Marilyn**

**Pub Date: 1997**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 305.26 OTHER**

**Motherlands: Black Women's Writing from African, the Caribbean, and South Asia**

**Author: Nasta, Sushelia**

**Pub Date: 1992**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: WR 820.99287 MOTHERLANDS**

**You Can't Keep A Good Woman Down: Short Stories**

**Author: Walker, Alice**

**Pub Date: 1981**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: WR 813.54 WALKER**

**Zora Neale Hurston: Collected Plays**

**Author: Hurston, Zora Neale**

**Pub Date: 2008**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 812.52 HURSTON**

**Spunk: The Selected Stories of Zora Neale Hurston**

**Author: Hurston, Zora Neale**

**Pub Date: 1985**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: WR 813.52 HURSTON**

**Hush Now, Baby: The Help Becomes Family**

**Author: Williams, Angela W.**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813.6 WILLIAMS**

**When Washington was in Vogue: A Love Story: A Lost Novel of the Harlem Renaissance**

**Author: Williams, Edward Christopher**

**Pub Date: 2003**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813.52 WILLIAMS**

**Suggested Works of Fiction and Memoirs, by Black Women Writers:**  
**Romance with voluptuousness : Caribbean women and thick bodies in the United States**  
**Author: Gentles-Peart, Kamille**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 305.4 GENTLES-PEART**

**Heads of the Colored People**  
**Author: Thompson-Spires, Nafissa**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813.54 THOMPSON-SPIRES**

**Ella Baker: Community Organizer of the Civil Rights Movement**  
**Author: Moye, J Todd** **Pub Date: 2016**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: B Baker**

**Indigo: In search of the Color that Seduced the World**  
**Author: McKinley, Catherine E.** **Pub Date: 2011**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 391.0966 MCKINLEY**

**Mami Wata: Arts for Water Spirits in Africa and Its Disaporas**  
**Author:Frewel, Henry John** **Pub Date: 2008**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 704.947096 DREWAL**

**Letter to My Daughter**  
**Author: Angelou, Maya** **Pub Date: 2008**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 818.5409 ANGELOU**

**When We Were Colored: A Mother's Story**  
**Author:Rutland, Eva** **Pub Date: 2007**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 306.8743 RUTLAND**

**I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women who Changed America**  
**Author: Lanker, Brian** **Pub Date: 1999**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 305.48896 LANKER**

**Mama Knows Best: African-American Wives' Tales, Myths, and Remedies for Mothers and Mother-to-be**  
**Author: Coleman, Chrisena** **Pub Date: 1997**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 398.082 COLEMAN**

**Blessed is the Fruit: A Novel**  
**Author: Antoni, Robert** **Pub Date: 1997**  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library: 813.54 ANTONI**

**The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa**

**Author:** Oduyoye, Mercy Amba **Pub Date:** 1992  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** WR 261.8344 WILL

**The Tradition**

**Author:** Brown, Jericho  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:**

**The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother**

**Author:** McBride, James **Pub Date:** 1996  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** B MCBRIDE-JORDAN

**Nervous Conditions: A Novel**

**Author:** Dangarembga, Tsitsi **Pub Date:** 2016  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 823 DANGAREMBGA

**Your Blues Ain't Like Mine**

**Author:** Campbell, Bebe Moore **Pub Date:** 1982  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813.54 CAMPBELL

**The Women of Brewster Place**

**Author:** Naylor, Gloria **Pub Date:** 1982  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813.54 NAYLOR

**Maud Martha**

**Author:** Brooks, Gwendolyn **Pub Date:** 1953  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** WR 813.54 BROOKS

**One Day My Soul Just Opened Up: 40 Days and 40 Nights Toward Spiritual Strength and Personal Growth**

**Author:** Vanzant, Iyanla **Pub Date:** 1998  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 291.44 VANZANT

**A Raisin in the Sun**

**Author:** Hansberry, Lorraine **Pub Date:** 1988  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 812.54 HANSBERRY

**Americanah**

**Author:** Ngozi Adichie, Chimamanda **Pub Date:** 2019  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 823.92 ADICHIE

**Mama**

**Author:** McMillan, Terry **Pub Date:** 1987  
**Auburn Avenue Research Library:** 813.54 MCMILLAN

**The Street**

**Author: Petry, Ann**

**Pub Date: 1946**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: WR 813.54 PETRY**

**Black Girls Must Die Exhausted: A Novel for Grown Ups**

**Author: Walker, Tabitha**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library:**

**In Love and Trouble: Stories of Black Women**

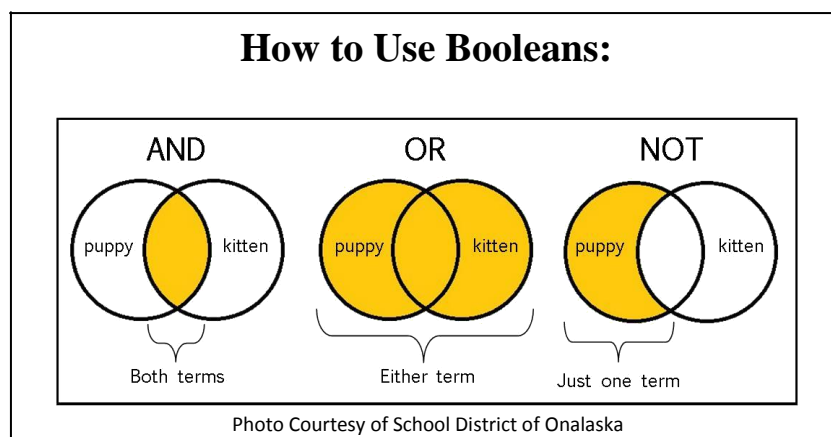
**Author: Walker, Alice**

**Pub Date: 1973**

**Auburn Avenue Research Library: WR 813.54 WALKER**

## Suggested Search Terms and Keywords:

- Black Feminism AND womanhood
- Black womanism
- Women of color (WOC)
- Women of color AND black feminist
- “Black Girl Magic”
- “Black Girl Joy”
- Intersectionality
- Marginalization
- Melanin Magic AND Black Girl Magic
- Black motherhood AND womanism
- Black womanhood and motherhood
- Black womanhood AND socioeconomic
- Gender roles/ identity or limitations
- Sterilization AND black womanhood AND motherhood
- American injustices AND black womanhood AND 21<sup>ST</sup> century -Queer woman of color (QWOC)
- Hetero-normative AND black motherhood
- Queer anti-urbanism
- Colorism AND black womanhood
- “Bring Back Our Girls”
- Colorism NOT caste system
- Eurocentric standard of beauty
- The Black Madonna
- Madonna-whore complex



Boolean Operators are simple words to maximize search results.