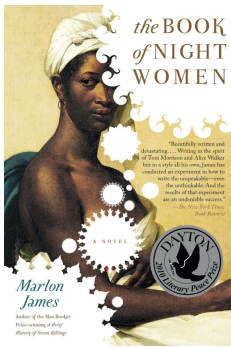
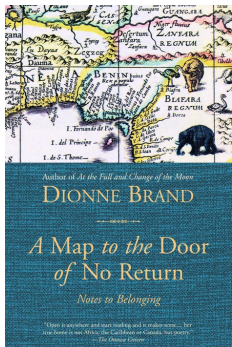
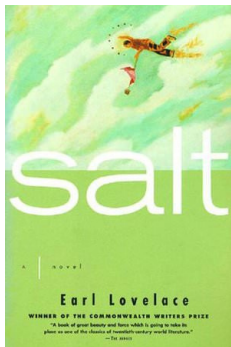
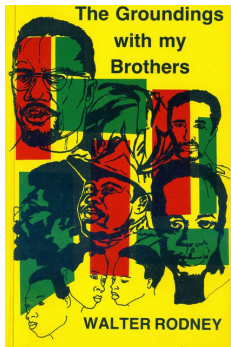
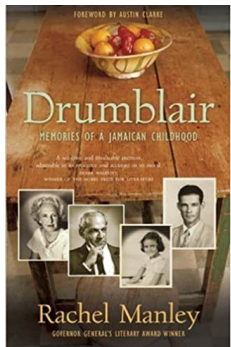
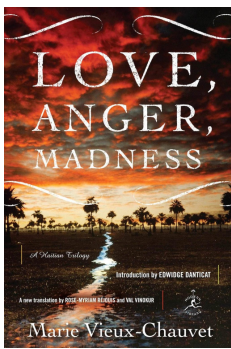
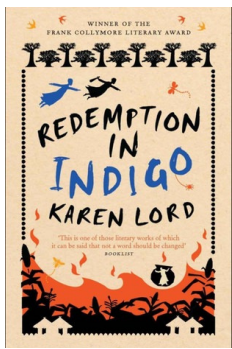
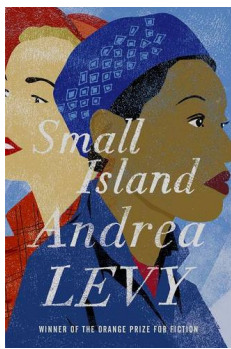
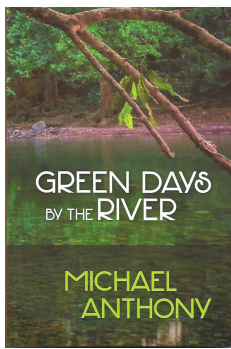
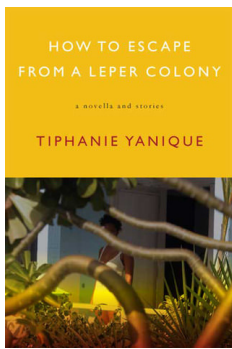
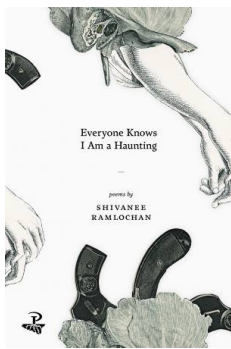
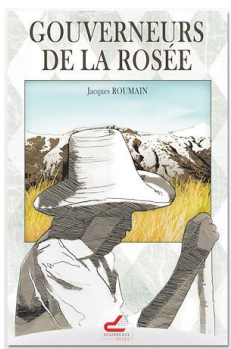
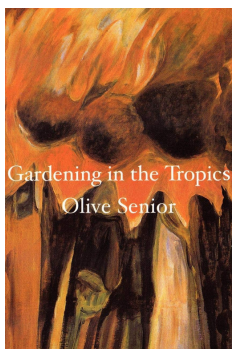
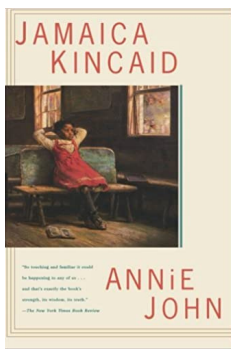
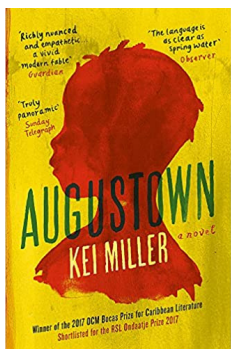


The 100 Caribbean Books That Made Us



The Bocas Lit Fest turned to their social media channels to attempt to answer the question: what might a Caribbean list of 100 defining reads look like? The result is 100 Caribbean Books That Made Us - an unranked, expansive list as wide-ranging as the Caribbean Sea and its diaspora, spanning multiple genres, generations, styles, languages, settings and themes – a timeless reading list for the Caribbean reader, by the Caribbean reader.

Inside these book covers are a range of concerns – class division, colourism, colonialism, development, exile, belonging, identity formation, and love and the challenges of love.

www.bocaslitfest.com/books-that-made-us

The majority of these titles are available for loan and can be reserved free of charge on our online catalogue:

<https://capitadiscovery.co.uk/islington>

If you are not already a library member you can join to borrow books and other items, as well as use eBooks, eAudiobooks, online magazines, newspapers, comics and other online resources.

You can join online at:

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/libraries/join-islington-libraries>

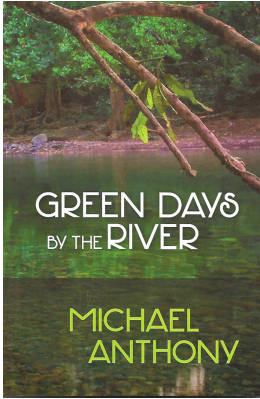
by emailing **library.informationunit@islington.gov.uk**
or phoning **020 7527 6952**



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Michael Anthony Green Days by the River

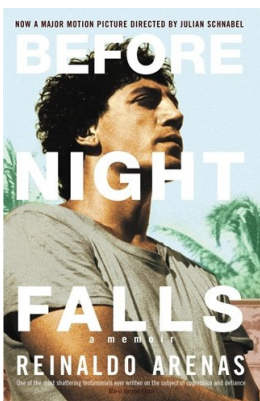
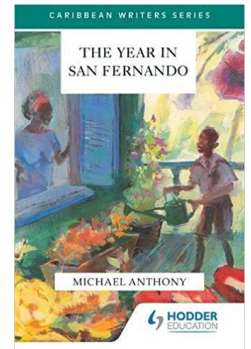
Fiction

A coming of age story about Shell, who quickly matures against the backdrop of lush Mayaro village life and learns about love, friendship and responsibility.

Michael Anthony The Year in San Fernando

Fiction

Twelve year old Francis goes to work as a servant companion in the city of San Fernando, where he learns lessons that change his outlook on love, hope and death.



Reinaldo Arenas Before Night Falls

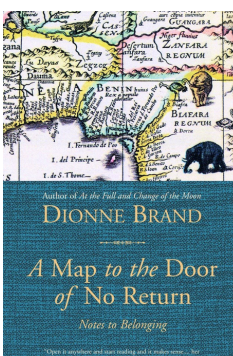
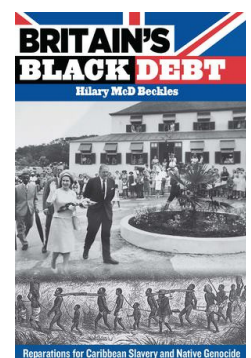
Non-fiction

This autobiography describes his early life in Cuba, his time in prison, and his escape to the United States in 1980.

Hilary Beckles Britain's Black Debt

Non-fiction

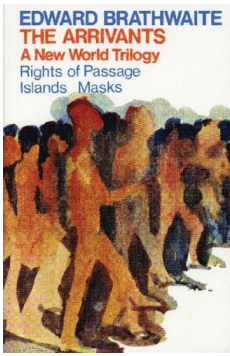
Looks at the origins and development of reparations in the Caribbean as a regional and international process.



Dionne Brand A Map to the Door of No Return

Non-fiction

Explores the relevance and nature of identity and belonging in a culturally diverse and rapidly changing world.



Edward Kamau Brathwaite The Arrivants

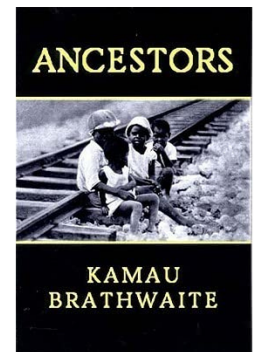
Poetry

This work interweaves the state of the Caribbean homeland, its natural beauty, its violent history, the values that sustain its people, into a poetic statement through the tension of jazz/folk rhythm, through historical flashbacks, and more.

Edward Kamau Brathwaite Ancestors

Poetry

These poems explore the author's family and childhood in Barbados and his experiences with slavery and colonialism.



Erna Brodber Myal

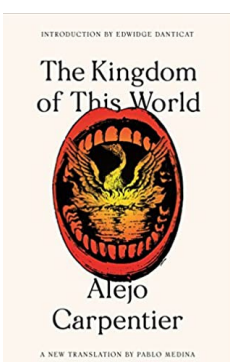
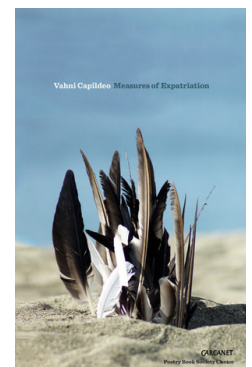
Fiction

The story of women's cultural and spiritual struggle in colonial Jamaica.

Vahni Capildeo Measures of Expatriation

Poetry

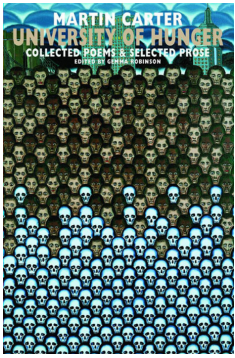
These poems and prose-poems speak of the complex alienation of the expatriate, and address wider issues around identity in contemporary Western society.



Alejo Carpentier The Kingdom of This World

Fiction

Tells the story of Haiti before, during, and after the Haitian Revolution, as seen by its central character, Ti Noel.



Martin Carter University of Hunger

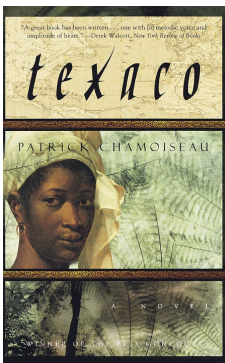
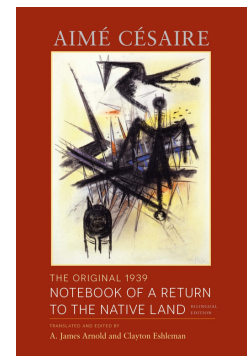
Poetry

This helpfully annotated collection includes key essays on race, colonialism, political action and the role of the poet in a postcolonial society.

Aimé Césaire Notebook of a Return to My Native Land

Poetry

A masterpiece that reaches the powerful and overlooked aspects of black culture.



Patrick Chamoiseau Texaco

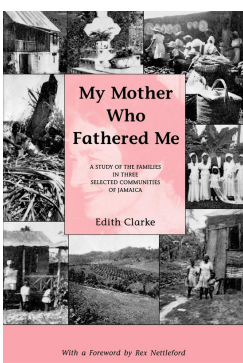
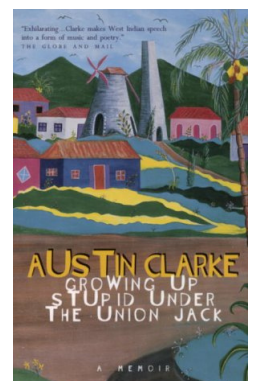
Fiction

A novel that traces one hundred and fifty years of post-slavery Caribbean history.

Austin Clarke Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack

Non-fiction

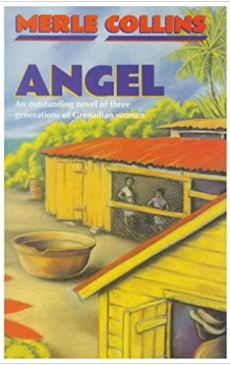
A delightful memoir about the trials, joys, and ultimate disillusionment of a small Barbadian boy experiencing British colonialism in the 1940s.



Edith Clarke My Mother Who Fathered Me

Non-fiction

This ground-breaking anthropological study on Jamaican family patterns has been highly influential in Caribbean Studies for decades.



Merle Collins Angel

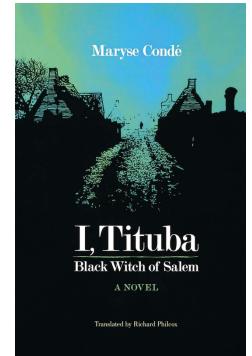
Fiction

Covers the turbulent years during which Grenada both found and lost itself.

Maryse Condé I, Tituba: Black Witch of Salem

Fiction

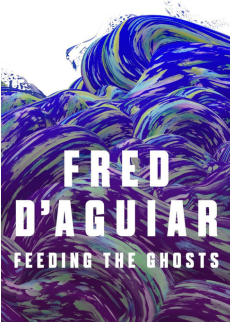
As history and fantasy merge, this is the richly imagined life of a fascinating woman.



Fred D'Aguiar Feeding the Ghosts

Fiction

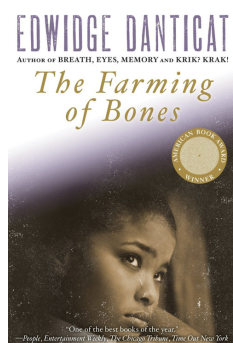
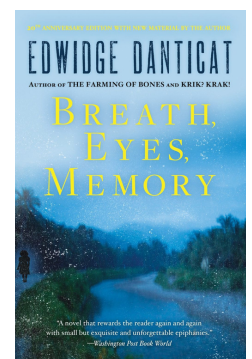
A literary venture into the economic shadow that slavery cast, which lays bare the raw business of the slave trade.



Edwidge Danticat Breath, Eyes, Memory

Fiction

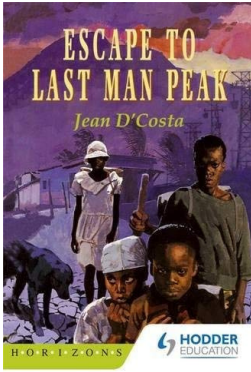
A textured portrayal of the complexities of familial bonds and cultural ties, told through a young Haitian girl's eyes.



Edwidge Danticat The Farming of Bones

Fiction

A work of historical fiction, bringing to life the 1937 Parsley genocidal massacre in the Dominican Republic.



Jean D'Costa
Escape to Last Man Peak

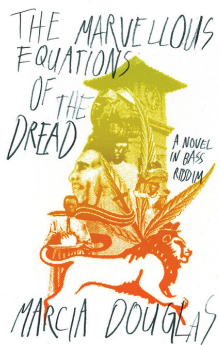
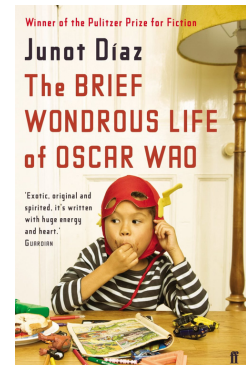
Fiction

Ten children are left to fend for themselves when the matron of their orphanage dies during the pneumonia epidemic that is raging through Jamaica.

Junot Diaz
The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

Fiction

An astonishing vision of the contemporary American experience and explores the endless human capacity to persevere—and risk it all—in the name of love.



Marcia Douglas
The Marvellous Equations of the Dread

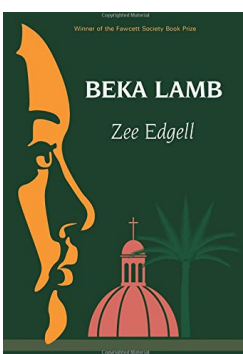
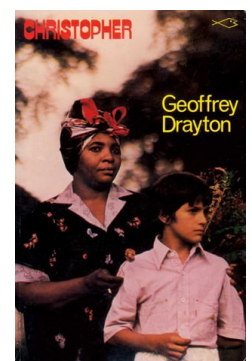
Fiction

Tells the twin stories of Jamaica's nihilistic violence and its wondrously creative humanity and does truthful justice to both.

Geoffrey Drayton
Christopher

Fiction

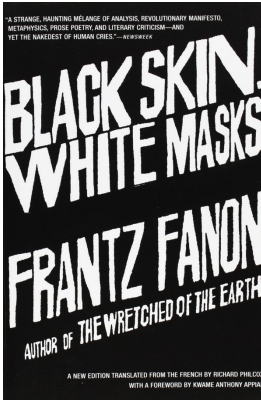
Set in Barbados, the novel follows a young boy named Christopher, home for the school holidays at his family's stately plantation house.



Zee Edgell
Beka Lamb

Fiction

The beautifully narrated story of a short time in the life of 14-year-old Beka Lamb.



Frantz Fanon Black Skin, White Masks

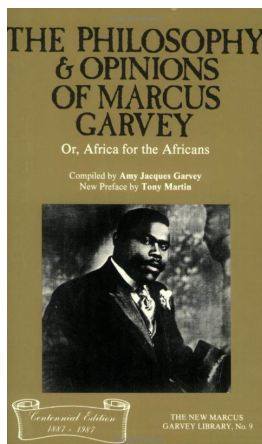
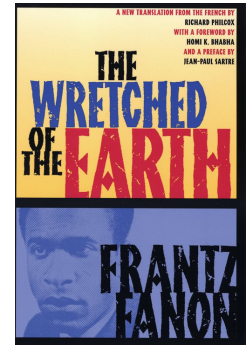
Non-fiction

A major influence on civil rights, anti-colonial, and black consciousness movements around the world, this is the unsurpassed study of the black psyche in a white world.

Frantz Fanon The Wretched of the Earth

Non-fiction

The work that established Fanon as a leading intellectual in the international decolonization movement.



Marcus Garvey The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey Or, Africa for Africans

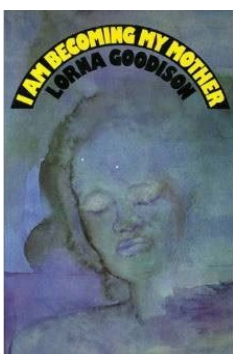
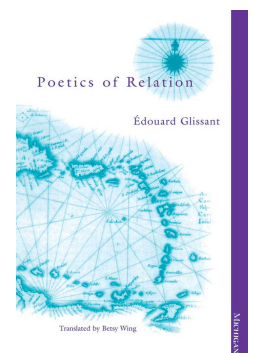
Non-fiction

This book was compiled by his wife, Amy Euphemia Jacques Garvey, mainly from his speeches.

Édouard Glissant Poetics of Relation

Fiction

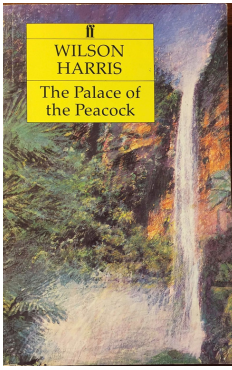
Turns the concrete particulars of Caribbean reality into a complex, energetic vision of a world in transformation.



Lorna Goodison I am Becoming My Mother

Poetry

This poetry collection focuses on the “The Mother”, the female element evoked in the title.



Wilson Harris Palace of the Peacock

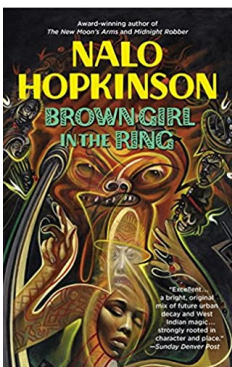
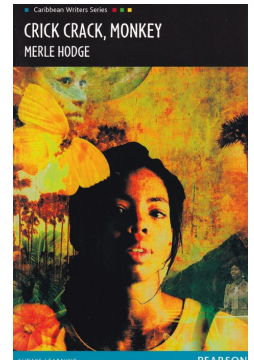
Fiction

A tale of a doomed crew beating their way up-river through the jungles of Guyana.

Merle Hodge Crick Crack, Monkey

Fiction

A revealing novel of childhood about Tee who is being made socially acceptable by her Aunt Beatrice so that she can cope with the caste system of Trinidad.



Nalo Hopkinson Brown Girl in the Ring

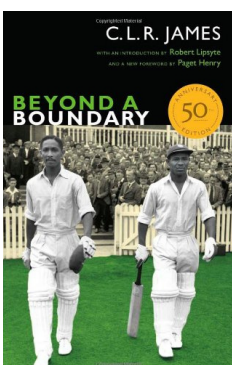
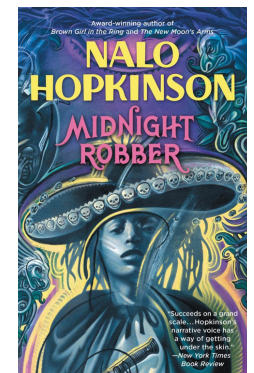
Fiction

A post-apocalyptic novel that contains Afro-Caribbean culture with themes of folklore and magical realism.

Nalo Hopkinson Midnight Robber

Fiction

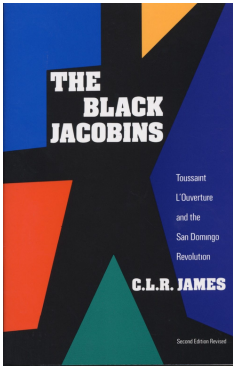
It's Carnival time, and the Caribbean-colonized planet of Toussaint is celebrating with music, dance and pageantry.



C L R James Beyond a Boundary

Non-fiction

Beyond a memoir, beyond a sports commentary, this prolific account of cricket merges political and historical and literary genius.



C L R James The Black Jacobins

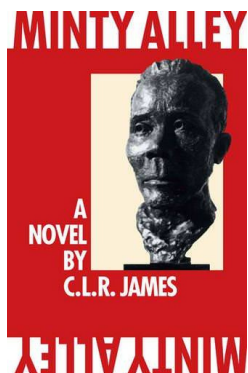
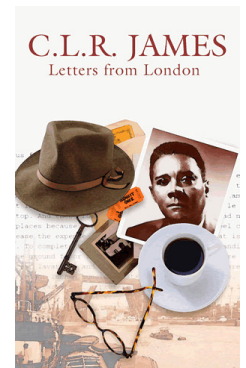
Non-fiction

The narrative on the agency of the slaves who fought to overthrow the French colonial forces, led by L'Ouverture and Dessalines.

C L R James Letters from London

Non-fiction

These essays are an essential record of a crucial period in James's life.



C L R James Minty Alley

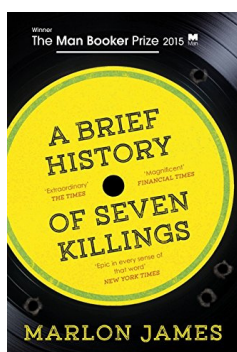
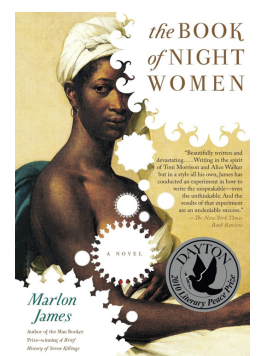
Fiction

A gloriously observed portrayal of class, community and the ways in which we are all inherently connected.

Marlon James The Book of Night Women

Fiction

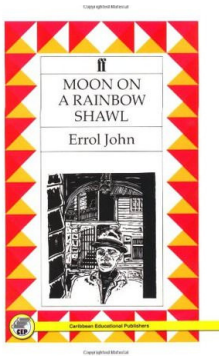
This novel follows Lilith, a slave girl whose coming into her own strengths mirrors the complexity of the slavery plantation and feminine power.



Marlon James A Brief History of Seven Killings

Fiction

This novel explores the attempted assassination of Bob Marley, "the singer", in Jamaica and the country's aftermath.



Errol John Moon on a Rainbow Shawl

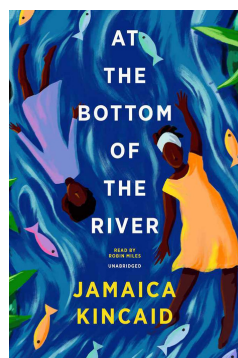
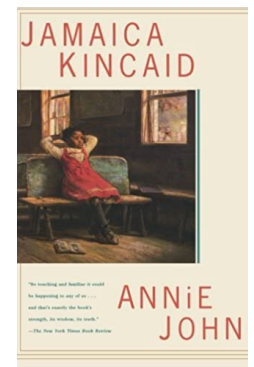
Play

This play centres on a group of characters living close to the poverty line in a shared tenement yard in Port of Spain, Trinidad.

Jamaica Kincaid Annie John

Fiction

A portrayal of a young Antiguan woman leaning into adolescence and herself with uncertainty and urgency.



Jamaica Kincaid At the Bottom of the River

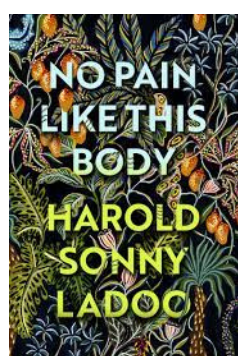
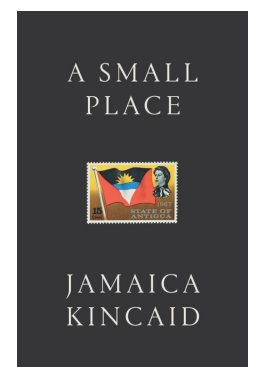
Fiction

A collection of short stories that were published in 1983.

Jamaica Kincaid A Small Place

Non-fiction

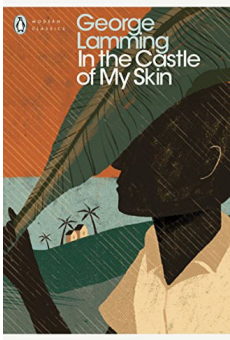
A biography that is also an essay critique of Antigua's political corruption, the chokehold of tourism and the glorifying of its colonial legacy.



Harold Sonny Ladoo No Pain Like This Body

Fiction

Set in a turn-of-the-century Hindu community in the Eastern Caribbean, the novel describes the perilous existence of a poor rice-growing family during the August rainy season.



George Lamming In the Castle of My Skin

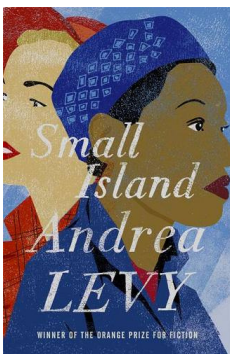
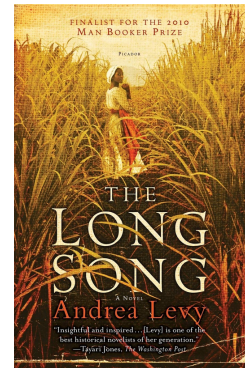
Fiction

The story of the mundane events in a young boy's life that take place amid dramatic changes in the village and Barbadian society in which he lives.

Andrea Levy The Long Song

Fiction

The child of a field slave on a sugar plantation in Jamaica, July lives with her mother until an English widow decides to move her into the great house and rename her "Marguerite." Together they live through the bloody Baptist War and the violent and chaotic end of slavery.



Andrea Levy Small Island

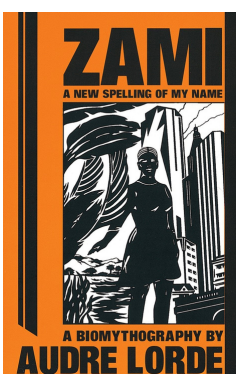
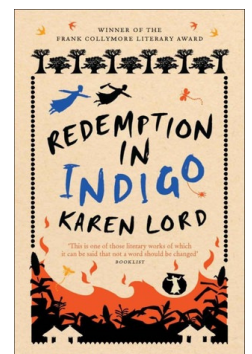
Fiction

This has been called the definitive fictional account of the experiences of the Empire Windrush generation.

Karen Lord Redemption in Indigo

Fiction

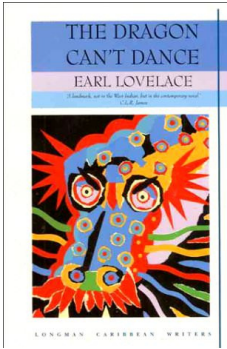
An intricately woven tale of adventure, magic, and the power of the human spirit.



Audre Lorde Zami: A New Spelling of My Name

Fiction

A fast-moving autobiographical novel covering Lorde's vivid childhood memories in Harlem to her coming of age in the late 1950s.



Earl Lovelace The Dragon Can't Dance

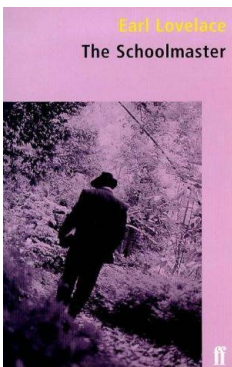
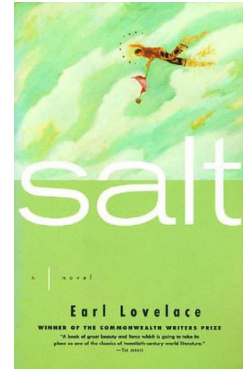
Fiction

The people of the shantytown Calvary Hill, usually invisible to the rest of society, join the throng and flaunt their neighbourhood personas in masquerade during Carnival.

Earl Lovelace Salt

Fiction

An unforgettable cast of men and women strive with wit and passion to make sense of life in an evolving homeland.



Earl Lovelace The Schoolmaster

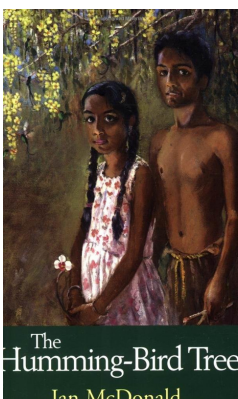
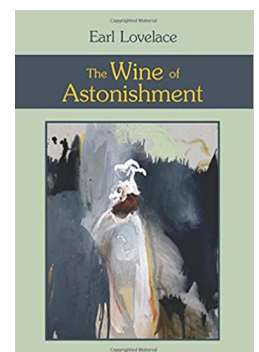
Fiction

Paints the bittersweet picture of progress for Cumaca, a rural village in Trinidad.

Earl Lovelace The Wine of Astonishment

Fiction

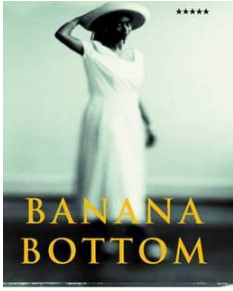
Set in the remote Trinidad village of Bonasse, and depicting the trials of a Spiritual Baptist community in the wake of the Prohibition Ordinance banning their religious expression.



Ian McDonald The Hummingbird Tree

Fiction

A fictional story of adolescence and growing up in pre-independence Trinidad.



Claude McKay Banana Bottom

Fiction

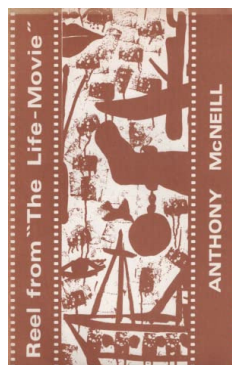
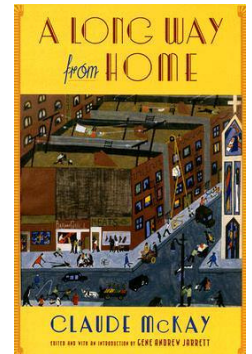
Bitia Plant is adopted and sent to England from Jamaica by white missionary benefactors and returns to her home village of Banana Bottom seven years later a beautiful, cultured young lady.

CLAUDE MCKAY
CLAUDE MCKAY'S MELLOWEST BOOK... HIS RICH, ROBERT HUMOR IS
ENDURINGLY TRUE TO HIS OWN

Claude McKay A Long Way from Home

Non-fiction

This 1937 autobiography explains what it means to be a black “rebel sojourner” and presents one of the first unflattering, yet informative, exposés of the Harlem Renaissance.



Anthony McNeill Reel from “The Life-Movie”

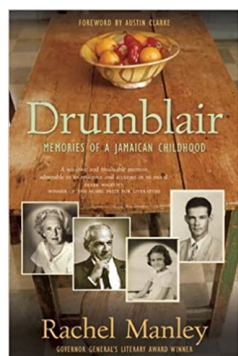
Poetry

This second poetry collection (1972) established McNeill’s reputation as one of the most promising Jamaican poets of his generation.

Roger Mais Brother Man

Fiction

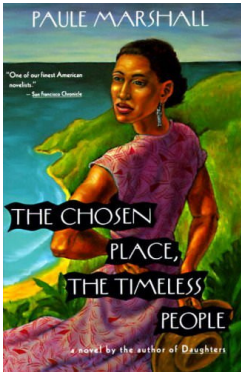
The tragic story of an honest Rastafarian healer caught up in a web of intrigue and betrayal in Jamaica’s tough West Kingston slums.



Rachel Manley Drumblair: Memories of a Jamaican Childhood

Non-fiction

Tells the story of the brilliant and artistic Manleys, Jamaica’s most prominent and glamorous political family, and the house in which they lived, Drumblair.



Paule Marshall

The Chosen Place, The Timeless People

Fiction

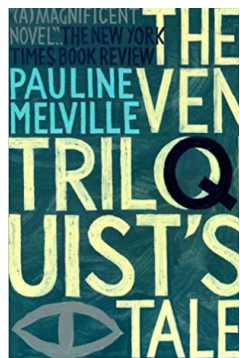
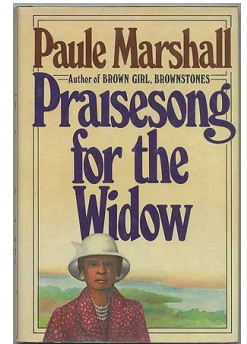
The chosen place is Bourneville, a remote, devastated part of a Caribbean island; the timeless people are its inhabitants - black, poor, inextricably linked to their past enslavement.

Paule Marshall

Praisesong for the Widow

Fiction

Avey Johnson is on a cruise to the Caribbean with friends. She senses her life beginning to unravel and in a panic packs her bag and abandons her friends at the next port of call.



Pauline Melville

The Ventriloquist's Tale

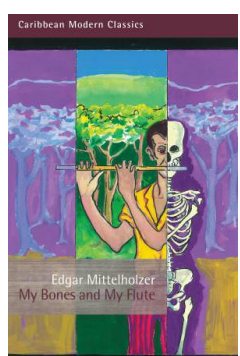
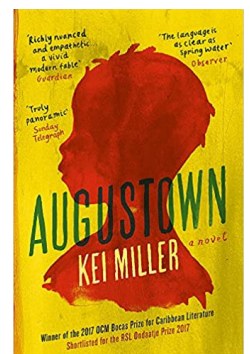
Fiction

This ambitious and richly realized debut novel is set in modern-day Guyana, where religious, social and philosophical tensions beset all the characters.

Kei Miller
Augustown

Fiction

When Ma Taffy's six-year-old nephew returns home from school with his dreadlocks shorn, she realises that trouble won't be far behind. And so she tells him the story of Alexander Bedward, the flying preacherman.

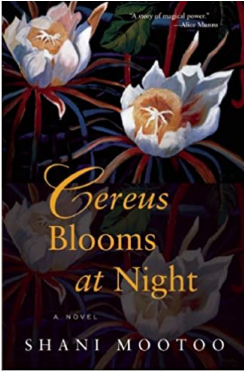


Edgar Mittelholzer

My Bones and My Flute

Fiction

There is more than a hint of tongue-in-cheek in this thoroughly entertaining work, though it rises to a pitch of genuine terror and has serious things to say about the need to exorcise the crimes of slavery that still echo into the present.



Shani Mootoo Cereus Blooms at Night

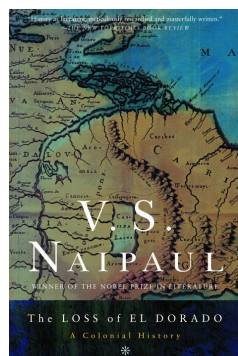
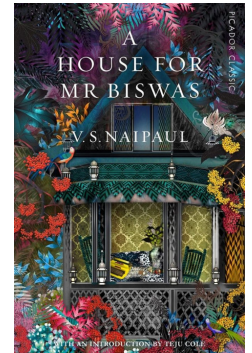
Fiction

Unveils the mystery surrounding Mala Ramchandin and the tempestuous history of her family.

V S Naipaul A House for Mr. Biswas

Fiction

This is the story of Mohun Biswas' dreams, despair and destiny.



V S Naipaul The Loss of El Dorado

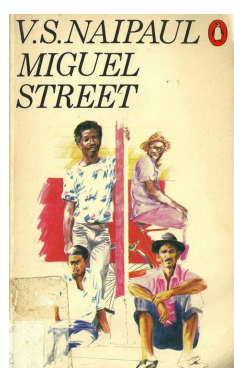
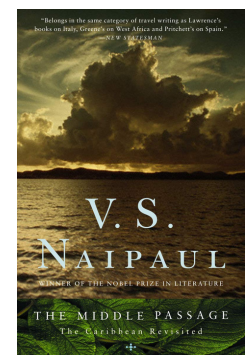
Non-fiction

The history of Trinidad begins with a delusion: the belief that somewhere nearby on the South American mainland lay El Dorado, the mythical kingdom of gold.

V S Naipaul The Middle Passage

Non-fiction

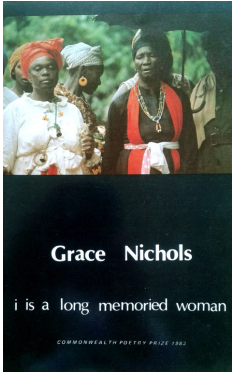
In this classic of modern travel writing Naipaul has created a deft and remarkably prescient portrait of Trinidad and four adjacent Caribbean societies.



V S Naipaul Miguel Street

Fiction

Seventeen short stories, linked by characters who live on Miguel Street in Port of Spain, Trinidad.



Grace Nichols I is a Long Memored Woman

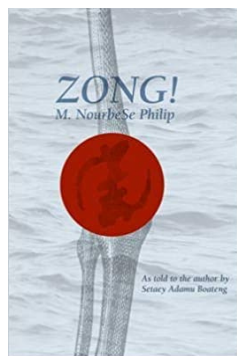
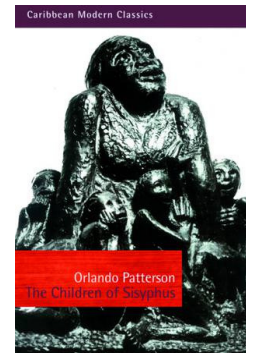
Poetry

First published in 1983 to gain the distinction of being the first book of poetry written by a Caribbean woman to have won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize.

Orlando Patterson The Children of Sisyphus

Fiction

A portrayal of Jamaica's Rastafarian community that depicts the lives of those trapped in the poverty, crime, and religious extremism of the slums of Kingston.



Marlene Nourbese Philip Zong!

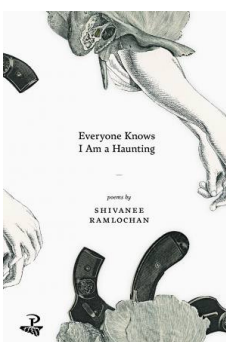
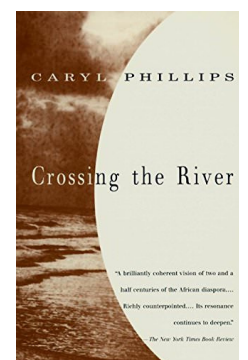
Poetry

In November, 1781, the captain of the slave ship Zong ordered that some 150 Africans be murdered by drowning so that the ship's owners could collect insurance monies.

Caryl Phillips Crossing the River

Fiction

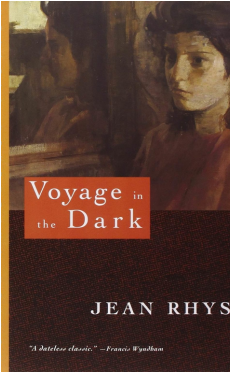
A historical novel that explores the abandonment and misery of slavery.



Shivane Ramlochan Everyone Knows I am a Haunting

Poetry

In this first collection of poems, Trinidad and Caribbean poetry finds an exciting new voice, one that displays a sharp intelligence, and iconoclastic spirit and fertility of imagination.



Jean Rhys Voyage in the Dark

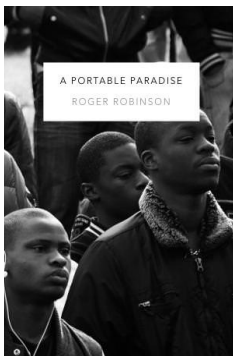
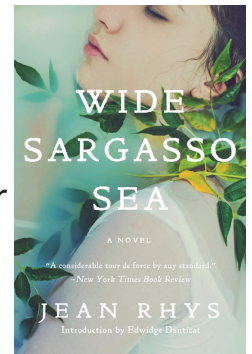
Fiction

The story of an unhappy love affair, a portrait of a hypocritical society, and an exploration of exile and breakdown.

Jean Rhys Wide Sargasso Sea

Fiction

Imagines a trajectory to Bertha, the 'mad' wife of Mr Rochester in Charlotte Brontë's novel Jane Eyre on grounds that go directly to the West Indian heart.



Roger Robinson A Portable Paradise

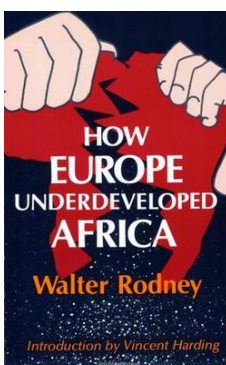
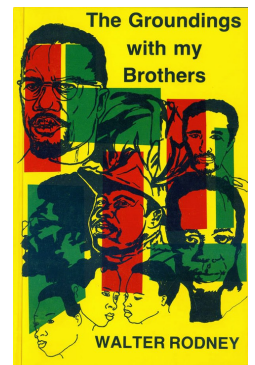
Poetry

These finely crafted poems reveal Robinson's capacity to tell involving stories and capture the essence of a character in a few words.

Walter Rodney The Groundings With My Brothers

Non-fiction

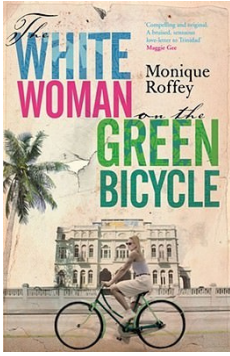
Details the global circulation of emancipatory ideas and also offers first-hand reports of Rodney's mass movement organising.



Walter Rodney How Europe Underdeveloped Africa

Non-fiction

Charges Europe with the role of extractor from the African continent, directly responsible therefore, in the past and present, for its stunted development.



Monique Roffey
The White Woman on the Green Bicycle

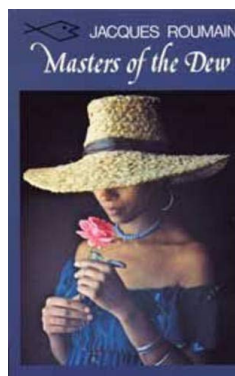
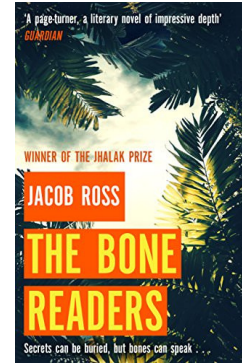
Fiction

A beautifully written, unforgettable novel of a troubled marriage, set against the lush landscape and political turmoil of post-colonial Trinidad.

Jacob Ross
The Bone Readers

Secrets can be buried, but bones can speak...

Fiction



Jacques Roumain
Masters of the Dew

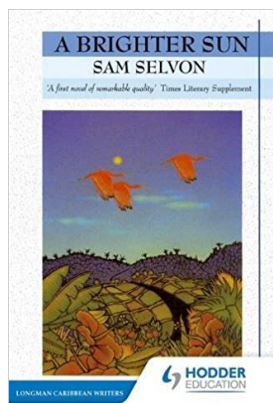
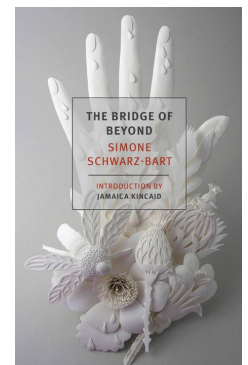
Fiction

Set in a small Haitian village called Fonds-Rouge, this classic of Caribbean literature was first published in French in 1944.

Simone Schwarz-Bart
The Bridge of Beyond

An intoxicating tale of love and wonder, mothers and daughters, spiritual values and the grim legacy of slavery on the French Antillean island of Guadeloupe.

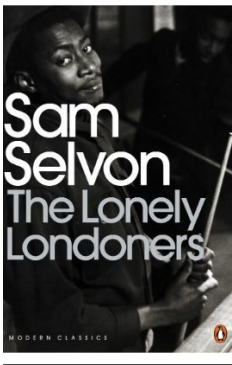
Fiction



Sam Selvon
A Brighter Sun

Fiction

This coming of age story casts the ordinary man in the glow of the extraordinary, by detailing the struggles and aspirations of the working class in a prejudiced society.



Sam Selvon The Lonely Londoners

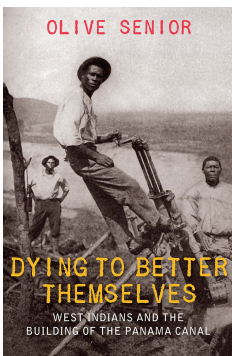
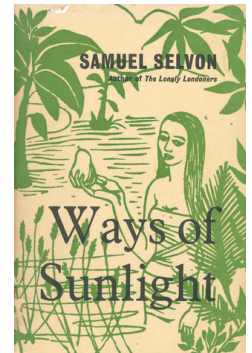
Fiction

Paints several pictures of West Indian immigrant life in London in the 1950s through a series of loosely connected vignettes.

Sam Selvon Ways of Sunlight

The master-storyteller turns his pen to rural village life.

Fiction



Olive Senior Dying to Better Themselves: West Indians and the Building of the Panama Canal

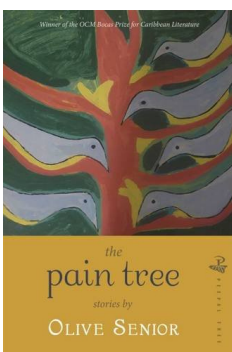
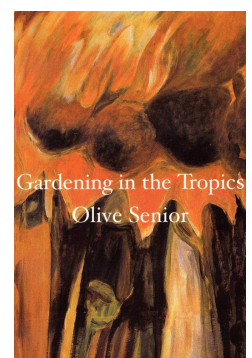
Non-fiction

Examines the neglected post-emancipation generation of the 1850s who were lured to Panama by the promise of lucrative work.

Olive Senior Gardening in the Tropics

A rich Caribbean world in poems offered to readers everywhere.

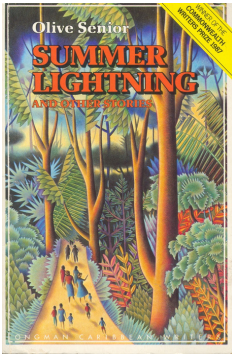
Poetry



Olive Senior The Pain Tree

Fiction

The stories in collection range over almost a hundred years, from around the time of the second world war to the present.



Olive Senior Summer Lightning and Other Stories

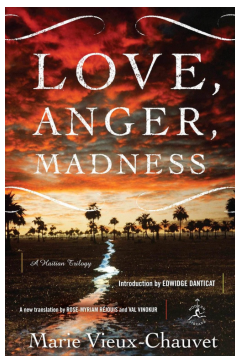
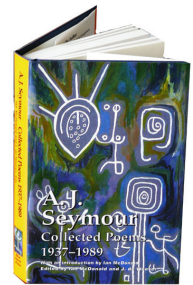
Fiction

These short stories, told through the eyes of children, remind us that child-like vision expose some of the harsh truths to which systems and society have become blind.

A J Seymour Collected Poems, 1937-1989

A collection of published and unpublished works.

Poetry



Marie Vieux-Chauvet Love, Anger, Madness: A Haitian Trilogy

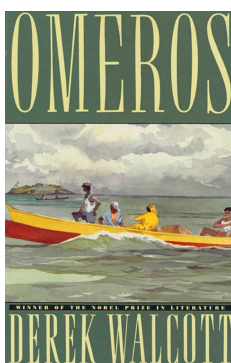
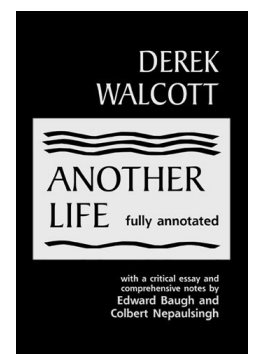
Fiction

A scathing response to the struggles of race, class, and sex that have ruled Haiti.

Derek Walcott Another Life

An evocative portrayal of Walcott's native West Indies that creates a moving elegy on himself and on man.

Poetry



Derek Walcott Omeros

Poetry

An epic poem, divided into seven “books”, which makes reference to Homer and some of his major characters from the Iliad.



Derek Walcott The Star-Apple Kingdom

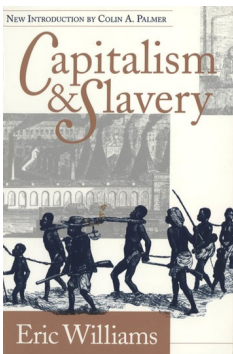
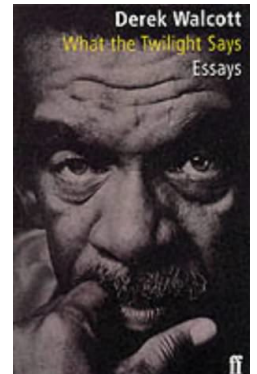
Poetry

Most of the poems in this collection follow the arc of the Caribbean archipelago from Trinidad to Jamaica.

Derek Walcott What the Twilight Says

Non-fiction

The first collection of essays by the Nobel laureate.



Eric Williams Capitalism and Slavery

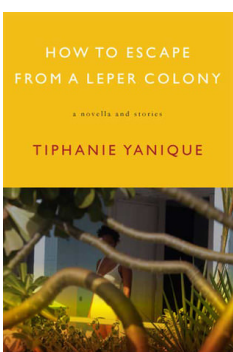
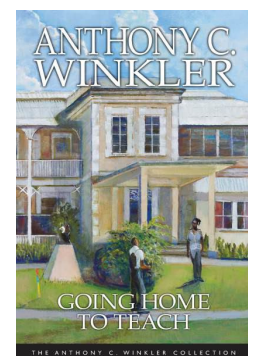
Non-fiction

This work establishes a direct causal relationship between slavery and the advancement of Industrial Revolution, and by extension global capitalism.

Anthony C Winkler Going Home to Teach

Non-fiction

This account of the year spent in Jamaica teaching at a rural teacher training college is a rich combination of autobiography and incisive social commentary.



Tiphonie Yanique How to Escape from a Leper Colony

Fiction

A debut collection of stories set mostly in the US Virgin Islands.

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