

African American Feminisms 1828-1923



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The black women's club movement is frequently seen as definitive of "first-wave" African American feminism. However, this six-volume collection from the History of Feminism series draws together key documents that show the varied political work African American feminists were undertaking well before the turn into the 20th century. African American Feminisms brings together writings that document distinctly African American feminist organizing from as early as the late 1820s through female benevolent and literary societies, as well as writings that document African American feminist participation in black political concerns such as emigration and colonization, discrimination in public transportation, and anti-lynching. African American women also negotiated competing demands within interracial reform movements like abolition, woman's rights, temperance and suffrage, as well as within organizations like the black church, making documents that offer insight into those unique demands key to understanding black feminist arguments and rhetoric. Pursuing a varied feminist rhetoric that ranged from advocating domestic and maternal feminism to defending

black womanhood, African American feminists focused on larger social reforms as well as agitating for material changes in the lives of African American women and girls. African American feminists were also keenly attuned to opening useful venues to black feminist voices, from the pulpit to the press, and urged the women that followed them to continue this work. This collection, which includes a variety of genres from the spiritual autobiography to the platform speech and the pamphlet, goes beyond the more common focus on the "greats" of black feminism to include lesser known black feminists and some unidentified women who contributed to black feminist debate on a variety of topics. African American Feminisms, edited and with an introduction by Teresa Zackodnik, is destined to be welcomed by those interested in women's studies, feminism, and African American history as an invaluable reference resource.

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