

# Introduction

## *Black Women's Educational Philosophies and Social Justice Values of the 94 Percent*

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Black women's intellectual history is inextricably linked to peace studies. As outlined in *Black Women in the Ivory Tower, 1850–1954: An Intellectual History* (2007), Black women's scholarship and pedagogies exemplify empowerment education and represent four central characteristics: applied research, cultural standpoint, critical epistemology, and moral existentialism. In the 1800s and 1900s, women like Maria Stewart, Frances E. W. Harper, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Anna Julia Cooper wrote that the disadvantaged position of Black women based on race and sex was one that allowed for and required Black women activists to lead the country into the true possibilities inherent in liberal, progressive, and radical ideals of democracy.<sup>1</sup>

Noted scholar Anna Julia Cooper argued that African American women have a peculiar perspective, as we reside at the intersection of racial and gender oppression. In the foreword to this book, Love and Jiggetts reimagine this social location as jumping double-dutch. This edited volume synthesizes critical discussion of justice and education from our unique, intersectional, racial, and gendered position. Authors define experiences of justice, injustice, and scholar-activism from an insider perspective of a demographic most often sequestered on the bottom rung of society.

Our work exemplifies action toward a more perfect union and resistance to the status quo. There is a reason that CNN exit polls after the November 2016 Presidential election estimated that 94% of Black women voted for Hillary

Clinton as an alternative to the Republican candidate. This phenomenon of Black women forming an unmatched progressive voting block was replicated in the December 2017 election of Doug Jones over the Republican candidate in the Alabama Senate. However, as soon as Jones claimed victory, he indicated he was on board with conservative agendas—turning his back on the body of voters that got him elected. Black women love American democracy, but American democracy does not seem to love us back.

In February 2017, a cartoonist equated protesters barring school entry to billionaire Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos with racists barring school entry to 6-year-old Ruby Bridges attempting to desegregate a New Orleans elementary school in 1960. This false equivalency illustrates the glaring misunderstanding of race and equality in educational access. Monique Morris's *Push Out: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* (2015) demonstrated the conditions that must be changed if education in the United States is to reach its fullest potential. Evidence abounds regarding the lack of social justice knowledge, values, and practices in school systems from K–12 to higher education that readily contribute to “conservative” and essentially regressive social policies.

Moreover, policies at national and state levels are bolstered by a vapid curriculum that teaches hatred of anyone deemed other than White, male, heterosexual, Christian, and born in the United States. Education that does not include fundamental investigation of inclusive democracy and that reinforces exclusivity is miseducation. This collection of authors serves as corrective measures to discuss historical and contemporary issues in education as they relate to achieving goals of justice.

Foundational texts in social justice education such as *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice (TDSJ)* analyze and synthesize identity within educational contexts. In a closing chapter of *TDSJ* titled “Knowing Ourselves as Social Justice Educators,” Bell, Love, Washington, and Weinstein discuss the imperative to be mindful of cultural differences that might exist between the facilitator-educators and students in the classroom (Adams & Bell, 1997, 382). The collection of chapters in *Black Women and Social Justice Education* offers an expansion of educational discussions by centering Black women's identity in order to broaden extant curriculum. By decentering maleness and whiteness, questions of justice at once solidify intersectional analyses and moves discussion out of locations traditionally represented as normative. When difference is taught as divisiveness and diversity devalued, the result is often deadly, as can be seen with incidences as personal as bullying to events as globally impactful as World War II.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) set a benchmark in world history. Drafted by a representative leadership team

from nine nations, the United Nations General Assembly formalized the UDHR in Paris on December 10, 1948.<sup>2</sup> The Second World War created conditions of unprecedented destruction, and the Declaration became a pact to ensure the devastation was not repeated.<sup>3</sup> Eventually, however, the United Nations realized rights were not sufficient to ensure peace, and a document in 2006 acknowledged the need to actively advocate social justice implementation as supplemental to human rights language.<sup>4</sup> The committee conceded:

The concept of *social justice* and its relevance and application within the present context require a more detailed explanation. . . . The concept first surfaced in Western thought and political language in the wake of the industrial revolution and the parallel development of the socialist doctrine. It emerged as an expression of protest against what was perceived as the capitalist exploitation of labour and as a focal point for the development of measures to improve the human condition. It was born as a revolutionary slogan embodying the ideals of progress and fraternity. Following the revolutions that shook Europe in the mid-1800s, social justice became a rallying cry for progressive thinkers and political activists. (11–12)

A decade before this embrace of social justice with human rights within the United Nations, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* (1997) was published, grounding a pioneer program in social justice and higher education at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. All of these resources are important to bring to bear in order to facilitate a full understanding of the breadth of contribution that Black women's narratives can bring to human rights and social justice literature and to reinforce foundational concepts such as inclusion, oppression, privilege, and power. Black women authors and educators show that all human beings have what Anna Julia Cooper called a "right to grow," and a close reading of writing from theory and policy to memoirs and pedagogical praxis reveals legacies, lessons, and guides for social regeneration.<sup>5</sup>

Like social justice, the term social regeneration also originated in the Progressive Era, based in Reconstruction-era demands for public healing that foreshadowed post-world war language of reconciliation. W. E. B. Du Bois argued the concept of social regeneration was a fundamental goal of Black education. Black women's educational philosophies and pedagogical values provide primary source material to advance education about social justice, human rights, and civil rights that can be useful inside and out of the classroom. In 1892, Anna Julia Cooper used the terms "regeneration" and "progress" to identify the need to look backward to find wisdom, to look

inward to find strength, and to look forward with hope. Both Cooper and Du Bois recognized injustice based on economic, gendered, racial, and cultural identity. As Tania Mitchell explicates in the following chapter, these scholars recognized justice as a process, equitable recognition, and access to resources. In the tradition of Cooper and Du Bois, we define this collaborative body of work to fight for justice as a project in social regeneration.<sup>6</sup>

As with regenerative medicine, Black women's writing can be used to restore, repair, and replace failing or unhealthy aspects of society. Regenerative writing combines the past, present, and future tense to facilitate growth. Growth can include spiritual, individual, communal, social, political, or global health. In the late 20th century, researchers developed regenerative medicine. Medical doctors are now pushing boundaries of exploration in order to repair cells, tissues, and organs and to restore functionality to bodies. Much advancement, such as in the case of Henrietta Lacks, has been at the unethical expense of Black bodies. Still, Black women's traditions of purposeful healing proves all-the-more indispensable, particularly when we are primarily concerned with healing ourselves.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, we argue Black women's regenerative writing serves to repair, replace, restore, and regenerate health in individual lives, communities, educational institutions, societies, and nations.

In *Black Women in the Ivory Tower*, Evans observed, "Anna Cooper, Mary Bethune, and their contemporaries articulated educational philosophies that had four central themes: demand for applied learning; recognition of the importance of social standpoint and cultural identity in scholarship; a critical epistemology that both supported and resisted mainstream American ideals; and moral existentialism grounded in a sense of communal responsibility" (Evans, 2007, 8). *Black Women and Social Justice Education* builds on the legacies of Black women who articulate educational values that investigate identity and demand moral accountability in ways that directly upset and undermine systems of inequality. This effort simultaneously deconstructs systems of oppression and constructs liberatory pedagogical principals. These principles should be taught, studied, and institutionalized.

Many Black women authors have taken the time to collect their life stories, posit frameworks for education, and share reflections from the far reaches of their souls and intellects. Only a small number are represented in this edited volume, but the collection of narratives, theories, case studies, and paradigms adequately demonstrates we have only begun to tap available resources in this area.

First, reading Black women's intellectual history and educational philosophy demonstrates potential gains if we study history not only to identify the seeds of oppression, but that we also appreciate historic educators and their insights into the "process and goals" of how to solve social problems.

Second, by looking at the intersection of race and gender, educators can visualize conversion and diversion of experience useful when learning and teaching about diversity and social justice.

Historical and contemporary Black women's educational writing provides insights from which to teach the matrix of individual, social, and institutional oppression. This body of work offers a deeper inquiry into questions of instruction, solutions to curricular challenges, and opportunities for strength-based assessments of oppressed communities—identifying effective practices by marginalized groups. Studying Black women's writing expands our understanding of how to better comprehend identity, society, oppression, and equity, the four major themes in social justice education.<sup>8</sup>

### Democratic Praxis as Social Justice Education

A focus on activism and democratic engagement are central to Black women's contributions to social justice education. Definitions of social justice often emphasize full participation of all (and especially those most marginalized); therefore, Black women's work to enact more just conditions are often centered on engagement in and with communities. Work for social justice begins with acknowledgment and recognition of inequitable conditions. Efforts to remedy these conditions, then, become pivotal to the work. As social justice is comprised of both process and goal orientations (Bell, 2007), it is not surprising that social justice education often combines consciousness-raising work that makes plain the realities of oppression with engaged action that seeks to bring this nation closer to a democratic ideal.<sup>9</sup>

We can trace this legacy of awareness and action to Sojourner Truth, who named herself as she traveled the union states speaking in support of abolition and women's rights. Her truth aimed to educate the masses about the worth of Black women and the evils of slavery. Simultaneously, Sojourner Truth recruited Black soldiers for the union army and rode street cars in Washington, DC, to force their desegregation (*The Sojourner Truth Biography*, n.d.). As a public speaker, Truth, like Harriet Tubman, was a public educator. Anna Julia Cooper integrated her roles as high school teacher and university professor with that of activist: “[S]he co-founded and assumed significant leadership roles in community improvement organizations and ‘racial uplift’ advocacies” focused on the advancement and empowerment of Black communities.<sup>10</sup> Their work made transparent that social justice education comprises both work to build knowledge and work to build action.<sup>11</sup>

Barbara Ransby (2003) in her biography of activist and educator Ella Baker describes Baker's service as a “patchwork quilt.” She notes Ella Baker's

teaching style as more facilitative than conventional. She sought to build and advance knowledge by recognizing examples and experiences that already existed in the group. Recognizing democracy as a process of participation and inclusion, her praxis required “tapping oppressed communities for their own knowledge, strength, and leadership in constructing models for social change.” In this quilting fashion, Ransby describes Baker’s activism as one that “saw enormous beauty and potential” in those who were discarded, dismissed, and considered inconsequential and that she worked collectively to bring and hold those individuals together in working on a movement for change.<sup>12</sup>

Baker’s recognition that root causes of injustice must be revealed and transformed in order to bring about justice is an underlying contention that shapes much current social justice education practice. Mitchell’s (2008) operationalizing of a critical service learning pedagogy reflects this process and goal orientation of social justice by bringing attention to social change, working to redistribute power, and developing authentic relationships. Baker’s attention to root causes is reflected in Mitchell’s contention that community engagement must “investigate and understand the root causes of social problems and the courses of action necessary to challenge and change the structures that perpetuate those problems.”<sup>13</sup>

Cohen’s (2011) work to queer ethnic studies brings forward Cooper’s contention of education as an “equalizing tool”<sup>14</sup> with Baker’s focus on those most oppressed and marginalized. Cohen’s queer politics “grounds our work squarely in the lives of folks of color who are clearly not subjectless, but instead are subjected to the post-identity veneer of white supremacy” (131). She insists on efforts that interrogate how power is structured along axes of identity and what that means for our efforts to transform society. This work, Cohen maintains, reaches “beyond the academy” and requires “creating and protecting spaces where liberatory thought, discourse, and action can be explored and rehearsed.”<sup>15</sup>

We concur that, in the tradition of Baker in the Civil Rights Movement and educators like Septima Clark, our work must go “beyond the academy” to engage those most marginalized. In collective efforts to build knowledge and transform structures of injustice, we recognize social justice education as democratic praxis.

### Black Women’s Narratives and Social Justice Education

Since the 1773 publication of Phillis Wheatley’s *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, Black women artists, activists, and intellectuals have provided critical insight into issues of national

and global importance. Shaped by lives lived at the crossroads of race, gender, and justice, their ideas have been distinctive but often ignored.<sup>16</sup>

Social justice education is a core part of Black women's educational philosophy. Educators such as Fanny Jackson Coppin, Anna Julia Cooper, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Septima Clark, who were all engaged in community work in their capacity as administrative leaders, clearly articulated educational philosophies that presumed a goal of justice. It is no coincidence that their writing was highly reflective, as their understanding of injustice was grounded in personal experience of enslavement (Coppin and Cooper), unequal access (Bethune), and political persecution (Clark).<sup>17</sup>

Searching the online library *Africana Memoirs* (a comprehensive database of over 500 Black women's autobiographies), several narratives expose ample opportunities to connect Black women's intellectual history to social justice education. This encourages a deeper consideration of both form and function of teaching and learning.<sup>18</sup> Over 118 Black women's narratives in the *Africana Memoirs* database mention social justice (about half of the searchable books). Within this group, there is significant overlap of terms. Beyond this larger set of social justice narratives, 25 solely reference human rights and 18 mention civil rights. Thus, neither human rights nor civil rights as terms were referenced as often as "social justice," which is most likely a function of the timing of the terms: "social justice" was in use as an early 20th-century term, whereas "human rights" came into wide use after World War II and "civil rights" most notably in the 1950s and 1960s. Further, the term "human rights" was found in more international settings, whereas "civil rights" was largely in reference to a movement in the United States. Search terms, included from all three areas, appear in 161 Black women's memoirs that reference "social justice, human rights, and civil rights." Clearly, these values are central to Black women's lives, which explains the pervasive presence in educational philosophies that are embedded in personal narratives.<sup>19</sup>

As scholar-activist Dr. Cooper argued, service must go beyond social change—it must advance social justice. Without understanding African American history and acknowledging Black presence, oppression, and creative resistance, justice work in America will be incomplete, and education will fail to be "higher" in significant ways. It is no wonder, then, that numerous chapters in this collection carry on the tradition of educational memoir.<sup>20</sup>

Life writing is a radical act of self-care; through penning stories of struggle and growth, *Africana* authors have resisted invisibility, dehumanization, and injustice. This body of work about how to instill knowledge, skills, beliefs, and competencies into American educational systems reflects Black

women's intellectual history of looking back, inside, and forward to demand both inner peace and social justice.<sup>21</sup>

Empowerment is a central part of educational philosophies. Defining empowerment is a task that can impact evaluation and assessment of objectives inside institutions, be they college classrooms, after-school programs, or community agencies. Investing in a deeper understanding of Black women's philosophies, values, and educational imperatives is the foundation of community-based research and collaborative knowledge production for social justice.<sup>22</sup> Below are five examples from a century of educators—from Fanny Jackson Coppin, who began teaching in the 1860s, to Angela Davis, who began teaching in the 1960s—who locate social justice at the center of their life's work.<sup>23</sup>

*Fannie Jackson Coppin (1913, Reminiscences of School Life and Hints on Teaching)*

Therefore we feel that resolutely and in unmistakable language, yet in the dignity of moderation, we should strive to make known to all men the **justice** of our claims to the same employments as other men under the same conditions. We do not ask that any one of our people shall be put into a position because he is a colored person, but we do most emphatically ask that he shall not be kept out of a position because he is a colored person.

*Anna Julia Cooper (1930, The Voice of Anna Julia Cooper)*

For, after all, **Social Justice**, the desired goal, is not to be reached through any panacea by mass production. . . . As I see it then, the patient persistence of the individual, working as Browning has it, "mouth wise and pen-wise" in whatever station and with whatever talent God has given, in truth and loyalty to serve the whole, will come as near as any other to proving worthwhile.

*Mary McLeod Bethune (1935, Building a Better World)*

And with this happiness comes humble gratitude for the distinguished approval of this organization [NAACP] dedicated to the cause of **social justice** and human welfare. To be worthy of being included in the illustrious group of Spingarn medalists, who by their intelligence, courage, devotion, faith, and work have helped to shape and build a better world, one must respond to the stimulus of this occasion with a spirit of rededication to service, of reconsecration to the needs of the people.

*Septima Poinsette Clark (1962, Echo in My Soul)*

I was director of the Highlander workshops, I am Septima Clark, a Negro school teacher on Johns Island off the coast of my native Charleston, South Carolina. Forty years later my contract with the Charleston city schools was not renewed due, I think, to my activities and work for my own people for **social justice**. [Describing a 1959 raid on Highlander in Monteagle, Tennessee.]

*Angela Davis (1994, "Black Women in the Academy")*

. . . [I]f the presence of increasing numbers of Black women within the academy is to have a transformative impact both on the academy and on communities beyond the academy, we have to think seriously about linkages between research and activism, about cross-racial and transnational coalitional strategies, and about the importance of linking our work to **radical social agendas**.



Political philosopher Joy James, who edited the *Angela Davis Reader* (1998), pointed out that Davis's article, "Black Women in the Academy," presented a treatise of challenges for the 1994 conference In Defense of Ourselves, after the political persecution of Anita Hill. James wrote that the essay "raises the issues of women's political work, responsibilities, and rights in connection with representation and education for social justice" (87). Angela Davis published her autobiography in 1974, after winning her freedom from being a political prisoner while she was a faculty member at UCLA. Her persistence and consistency of message can be seen in her 2017 National Women's March speech, which shared the themes of critical thinking, intersectional activism, and solidarity for all justice movements.

Between the historical accounts and contemporary educators lie the Civil Rights and Women's Rights Movements, chock-full of manuscripts worthy of discussion and instruction. Black women educators and scholars have written about social justice long before and long after the much-cited Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). Recent narratives on the 20th century and beyond written by Black women university professors offer a highly visual syllabus for race, gender, and justice in higher education:

1. Trudier Harris, University of Alabama. *Summer Snow: Reflections from a Black Daughter of the South* (2007).

2. Saidiya Hartman, Columbia University. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (2008).
3. Lani Guinier, Harvard Law School. *Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice* (1998).
4. Nikki Giovanni, Virginia Technical University. *Racism 101* (1995).
5. Toi Derricotte, University of Pittsburgh. *The Black Notebooks: An Interior Journey* (1999).
6. Marita Golden, Fairfield University. *Migrations of the Heart: An Autobiography* (2005)
7. Carole Boyce Davies, Cornell University. *Caribbean Spaces: Escapes from Twilight Zone* (2013).
8. Angela Davis, University of California-Santa Cruz. *Angela Davis: An Autobiography* (1974; 2013).
9. Dolores Cross, Chicago State University President, Morris Brown College President. *Beyond the Wall: A Memoir* (2010).
10. Lorene Cary, University of Pennsylvania. *Black Ice* (1988).
11. Theresa Cameron, Arizona State University. *Foster Care Odyssey: A Black Girl's Story* (2002).
12. Yvonne Bobb-Smith, University of West Indies. *I Know Who I Am: A Caribbean Woman's Identity in Canada* (2003).
13. Dr. Bertice Berry, Kent State University. *I'm on My Way but Your Foot Is on My Head: A Black Woman's Story of Getting Over Life's Hurdles* (1997).
14. Elizabeth Alexander, Yale University. *The Light of the World: A Memoir* (2015).
15. Jan Willis, Wesleyan University. *Dreaming Me: Black, Baptist, and Buddhist—One Woman's Spiritual Journey* (2012).
16. Patricia J. Williams, Columbia University Law. *Open House: Of Family, Friends, Food, Piano Lessons, and the Search for a Room of My Own* (2005) and *Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor* (1992).
17. Jesmyn Ward, Tulane University. *Men We Reaped: A Memoir* (2011).

18. Gloria Wade-Gayles, Spelman College. *Rooted Against the Win* (1996).
19. Claudia Lynn Thomas, Johns Hopkins University Medical School, *God Spare Life* (2007).
20. Judy Scales-Trent, SUNY–Buffalo School of Law. *Notes of a White Black Woman: Race, Color, Community* (2001).
21. Elaine Richardson, The Ohio State University Literacy Studies. *PHD to Ph.D.: How Education Saved My Life* (2013).
22. Condoleezza Rice, Stanford University Business, Public Policy, and Political Science. *A Memoir of My Extraordinary, Ordinary Family and Me* (2010) and *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* (2011).
23. Gayle Pemberton, Wesleyan University. *The Hottest Water in Chicago: Notes of a Native Daughter* (1998).
24. Kitty Oliver, Florida Atlantic University Race and Change Initiative. *Multicolored Memories of a Black Southern Girl* (2004).
25. Colleen McElroy, University of Washington English. *A Long Way from St. Louie* (1997).
26. Jamaica Kincaid, Harvard University English. *A Small Place* (1988).
27. Layli Maparyan, Wellesley College Women’s Studies. *The Womanist Idea* (2012).
28. Estella Conwill Majozo, University of Louisville English. *Come Out the Wilderness: Memoir of a Black Woman Artist* (2000).
29. Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, Harvard University. *Balm in Gilead: Journey of a Healer* (1995).
30. Carole Ione, University of Wisconsin Theatre. *Pride of Family: Four Generations of American Women of Color* (2007).

This representative list is a powerful collection of voices to begin to unpack issues of epistemology and instruction.

Black women are not a monolith . . . there is no universal agreement on ideological or political issues, which offers an even more compelling case for collective study. However, even Condoleezza Rice, far right on the political

spectrum of most educators mentioned in this chapter, touted the value of social justice in her memoir, *No Higher Honor*, which chronicled her political career as National Security Advisor and Secretary of State to George W. Bush. On one hand, Rice derided social justice as a tactic of those who sided with those whom she viewed as radical, such as Hugo Chavez, Former President of Venezuela; on the other hand, she stated social justice was inherently connected to democracy: “When people choose their leaders they tend to expect more of them in terms of economic prosperity and social justice. That is why support for democracy must be accompanied by support for development. . . . Ultimately, good leaders will free their economies and their markets and attract private investment. . . .”<sup>24</sup> While advancing a wildly conservative and destructive definition of social justice based on “free markets,” even Rice nonetheless wrote in the tradition of positioning justice as a central value and aim of social and governmental institutions.

Notably, approximately 30 contemporary educators have penned memoirs featured in the database. Of this group, 14 mention social justice in their book title or main theme: Angela Davis, Carole Boyce, Yvonne Bobb-Smith, Jan Willis, Judy Scales-Trent, Layli Maparyan, Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, Lani Guinier, Betty Brown-Chapelle, Janet Cheatham Bell, Adele Logan Alexander, Yvonne Shorter Brown, Endesha Ida Mae Holland, and Paula C. Johnson. As a primary example, Lani Guinier’s *Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice* underscores the fundamental shift needed in those who shape American institutions, “This book is not an effort to settle scores. It’s a story of people whose voices are too often missing from public debate about issues on which they are expert” (17). Black women are expert educators, and social justice must make an increased, proactive role in educational agendas.

Clearly, Black women academics have been doing intellectual social justice work for several generations and are current leaders in the area. In addition to memoirs serving as mentors to Black women in an array of professions, educators at all levels can benefit from this body of work. Regenerative writing can directly contribute to conceptions of regenerative education recently established in many K–12 schools. In 2008, Ashley Nielson pioneered the philosophy of regenerative education in a dissertation that used terms such as “living schools,” and “holistic education” to outline parameters of educative practice dedicated to developing “self and systems.”<sup>25</sup> Theoretical approaches such as this provide a frame for the substance of narratives to be read as valuable curricular guides.

While not all chapters in this book are autobiographical, many are. Those that foreground history or theory do so from an informed and experiential perspective where there is a commitment to equality on racial and

gender terms. In order to realize “justice for all,” in a society, all voices must be heard in framing, shaping, and implementing justice models in education.

### Framework: Teaching Values in Higher Education

Toni Morrison’s “How Can Values Be Taught in the University” provides the editorial framework used to ground this volume (*What Moves at the Margin: Selected Non-Fiction*, edited by Carolyn Denard, 2008). We argue for the need to teach social justice values in higher education, and the authors each provide fundamental contributions toward this goal. An excerpt from Morrison’s essay is provided below to give a sense of how social justice as an educational value contributes to prior discussions about the goals of a university. Understanding that teachers are trained in schools of education, universities are the focal point. Re-evaluating subjectivity in educational philosophy is one of our main contributions to the theoretical framework/methodologies of social justice education in particular and higher education in general. Morrison writes:

Certain disciplines pride themselves on the value-free nature of their intellectual inquiries, and the pursuit of “objectivity” is at the heart of their claims, claims which are understood to place the stature of these disciplines far above interpretive ones. Nevertheless, explicitly or implicitly, the university has always taught (by which I mean examined, evaluated, posited, reinforced) values, and I should think it will always follow or circle the track of its origins. . . . What I think and do I already inscribed on my teaching, my work. And so should it be. We teach values by having them. . . . If the university does not take seriously and rigorously its role as guardian of wider civic freedoms, as interrogators of more and more complex ethical problems, as servant and preserver of deeper democratic practices, then some other regime or *ménage* of regimes will do it for us, in spite of us, and without us. (191–197)

This volume examines, evaluates, posits, and reinforces Black women’s values of social justice in education at all levels. Grounded in Black feminist and womanist texts, this work advances educational philosophy by engaging foundational theorists in Black women’s studies. To call the names of our predecessors, let it suffice to say chapters in this book share investigation and testimony of *The Black Woman* (Cade) and our *Brave* and creative survival (Smith, Bell-Scott, and Hull), to share *Words of Fire* (Guy-Sheftall) about our

*Black Feminist Thought* (Collins) and our *Womanist Ideas* (Maparyan). Authors in this volume consciously cite, celebrate, question, and commemorate the work of those who have written before us in the area of SJE, and we purposefully build on foremothers in social justice education literature, most notably the double-dutch professor herself, Dr. Barbara Love.

We read, write, and teach in order to pass on wisdom to the next generation of educators, students, and scholar-activists. We write to teach, guard, service, and preserve the values of social justice. As Dr. Love outlines in the foreword to this volume, “Four elements are noted in the development of a liberatory consciousness: awareness, analysis, action, and accountability/allyship.” Thus, in a text dedicated to centering Black women’s voices, Black women offer the theoretical frame (Morrison), philosophical underpinnings (Cade, Guy-Sheftall, Smith, Bell-Scott, Hull, Collins, Maparyan), as well as guidelines for practical application of these values (Love).

## Organization

Part I emphasizes theory and identity as key tenets of social justice education. The authors’ contributions in this section explore Black women in the academy and our responsibility to ourselves and others as people committed to social justice. It begins with Tania Mitchell’s exploration of the dominant paradigms of social justice theory and the elevation of white men and women’s voices as the primary architects of theorizing about social justice. The marginalization of Black women’s theorizing and practice is invoked to recognize the contributions of Black women to the redistribution, recognition, and procedural paradigms of social justice theory. In Chapter 2, Layli Maparyan introduces Luxocracy as a social justice framework that allows one to recognize the “Divine Light as reflected in all people by virtue of human connection.” Recognition of this Divine Light encourages us to see ourselves as “responsible for shepherding humanity toward well-being” and, therefore, step into our roles as educators to create opportunities and accountability structures that might bring us closer to social justice.

In Chapter 3, Eboni Turnbow, Sharee Myricks, and Jaymee Lewis-Flenaugh explore the multiple marginalizations of Black women under age 30 in student affairs roles in higher education. They emphasize the importance of recognizing the intersections of racism, ageism, and sexism in higher education as an impediment to Black women’s progression to senior student affairs roles. Judy Alston’s narrative of self as “outsider-within” in Chapter 4 provides insight into her journeys as an academic simultaneously holding identities of privilege and marginalization. Her work toward an authentic presentation of self encour-

ages reflection on our own identities to understand how we might position ourselves outside and within to be reciprocal and responsible leaders. To that end, in Chapter 5, Michele Smith and Maia Moore encourage persistence among Black women in the academy, naming how our opportunities toward self-definition are to be found in family and community. They position Black feminist thought as a response to white fragility and the white racial frame that often dominate our interactions with white students and faculty in higher education settings. In short, they interrupt reactionary responses to oppression.

Part I concludes with Natasha Howard bringing forward the global phenomena of anti-Black misogyny (what Dr. Moya Bailey termed “misogynoir”), as she explores the degradation and humiliation of Black women in popular film and music. Using examples from the United States and Brazil as primary examples of misogyny in practice, Howard reveals “gratuitous humiliation” as a “pillar of oppression” in Black women’s experiences. Advancing a transnational feminism in which women can assert their humanity becomes a central feature of Howard’s social justice education practice.

In Part II, narratives connect historical accounts of activists who fought for desegregation to millennial continuation of those struggles and in culture. “Evaluating Foundations and Generations” offers four chapters in which readers can witness the evolution of discussions about equal access to spaces of power, equal opportunity to use resources from transportation to education, as well as rights of expression to caption the next generation of struggle. The opening and closing chapters in this section both engage Solange Knowles’s song “A Seat at the Table” as a pathway to understanding justice as access.

In Chapter 7, “A Seat at the Table: Mary McLeod Bethune’s Call for the Inclusion of Black Women during World War II,” Ashley Robertson Preston outlines how educator Mary McLeod Bethune worked at the forefront of Franklin Roosevelt’s administration to create visibility and opportunity for Black women in military labor and recognition of war-time contributions. The next chapter, “The Life of Dovey Johnson Roundtree: A Centenarian Lesson in Social Justice and Regenerative Power” by Katie McCabe and Stephanie Evans, builds on Bethune’s legacy and presents the life story of Roundtree who was, coincidentally, a mentee of Bethune. Roundtree’s work as a lawyer contributed to freedom for individuals in cases such as the murder case of Ray Crump; she also impacted the nation as a head lawyer in the transportation desegregation case that overturned the precedent of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, used to make segregation legal. Roundtree’s role as minister also provides a compelling example of community-based education.

Desegregation may have ended by law in 1955, but Shennette Garrett-Scott and Dominique Scott discuss in Chapter 9 how it has yet to end in custom. “This Ain’t Yo’ Mama’s Revolution—Or Maybe It Is: #TakeBackTheFlag

and the New Student Activism” chronicles Garrett-Scott’s participation in the battle to remove the Confederate flag from the University of Mississippi campus. This chapter exemplifies the connection of scholarship to coalition activism that Angela Davis deemed a unique contribution Black women educators can make. Garrett-Scott and Scott show how we are still contending with the likes of the Ku Klux Klan, and how this is not simply a theoretical problem that must be addressed. Closing Part II, in Chapter 10 Bettina Love and Sarah Abdelaziz present “We Got a Lot to Be Mad About: A Seat at Solange’s Table,” which demonstrates the complexities of intersectionality in Knowles’s album’s lyrics. They make plain not only “what Black women teach us,” but through a dialogue with the artist they demonstrate the communal, interactive, and sisterly process in which Black women engage when learning from each other.

Part II reveals the continuity of thought and action Black women scholars offer, from the Civil Rights Movement to #BlackLivesMatter and #SayHerName, including cultural reshaping of our image and reclaiming rights to democratic participation. These chapters certainly advance our understanding of what Tania Mitchell identifies as three types of justice: distributive (equity of material resources), recognition (equity based on perceived difference), and procedural (the process of gaining equity).

Part III, “Positing Pedagogy,” focuses on educational approaches and facilitation of social justice content in an emerging politically charged climate. This section brings attention to the positionality of Black women as educators and how these social identities inform approaches to teaching and leadership. The first four chapters offer deeply reflective narratives by Black women educators in college classroom and campuses, while the fifth chapter provides highlights from a research study on mentorship needs among diverse higher education professionals.

In Chapter 11, “Black, Female, and Teaching Social Justice: Transformative Pedagogy for Challenging Times,” Robin Brooks shares her evolution of pedagogical choices teaching in literary studies courses during a time of increasing racial tensions in the United States. Through media, personal dress, storytelling, and intentional facilitation, the author discusses how these strategies contribute to changed worldviews among students. In Chapter 12, “Moments in the Danger Zone: Encountering Non-Racist, Non-Racial, Non-Color-Seeing Do-Gooders,” Michelle Dunlap, Christina Burrell, and Penney Jade Beaubrun’s recall past encounters with colorblind ideology and White privileges as women of color educators. Through attention to identity development theory, these authors offer Black women educators strategies to help navigate these complex interpersonal dynamics.

The next two chapters bring attention to the pedagogical challenges and strategies of introducing social change ideas to contemporary college students.

Colette Taylor's chapter, "And the Tree is NOT ALWAYS Happy!: A Black Woman Authentically Leading and Teaching Social Justice in Higher Education" narrates her personal journey exploring ways to intersect authenticity as Black women leader more effectively educate college students on her campus. She uses Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree* as a tool for developing personal resilience and incorporating mindfulness as a social justice practitioner. In Chapter 14, "Effectively Teaching the One Course on Race and Culture: Critical Explorations from a Black, Woman Social Justice Teacher Educator," Keffrelyn Brown highlights the all-too-common scenario of a Black woman instructor teaching the sole course on race in an academic program consisting of predominantly White college students. This chapter highlights how Brown uses moments of resistance as opportunities to reevaluate assignments, readings, and discussion facilitation choices to more effectively prepare teacher education candidates on social justice issues.

This section's concluding chapter by Brenda Marina examines mentorship dynamics of Black women higher education professionals. Chapter 15, "Social Conceptions and the Angst of Mentoring Women of Diverse Backgrounds in Higher Education," discusses how mentoring differs across diverse social groups and suggests that Black women must have specific needs often addressed to better support their success as educators.

In sum, Part III highlights the unique pedagogical challenges that Black women educators face in an emerging and ever-complex U.S. political climate. Through personal awareness, analysis of oppression dynamics, and strategies for action and accountability, the authors illustrate the possibility of social change while providing contemporary examples of Barbara Love's liberatory consciousness framework.

Part IV, "Reinforcing Activism and Community Building," reflects the work of Black women as social justice educators and the ways these commitments are actualized. The authors have taken care to relate their experiences as people engaged in this work, and also to share the possibilities and opportunities so that diverse populations reading this volume might benefit from their experiences.

In Chapter 16, "Navigating the Complexities of Race-Based Activism" Cherjanét Lenzy shares an excerpt from her qualitative research: one woman's story extracted from a larger study that explores experiences of college-aged Black women engaged in race-based activism. Lenzy reveals how Nilta engages activism as a space where identity is shaped and affirmed. In the following chapter, "Storytelling: Advising Black Women Student Leaders in White Spaces," Lydia Washington builds on student narratives by focusing on her role as an advisor to Black women student leaders. She offers an advising model based on three elements of storytelling and encourages an approach that honors

racial identity and creates place for learning and development that recognizes Black women's leadership styles.

Chapter 18, Chrystal A. George Mwangi and Keisha L. Green's "Reflections on Moving Theory to Praxis: Dialectical Engagements of Black Women Faculty in Urban High School Space," fuses higher education with secondary education by reflecting on experiences of two faculty attempting to bridge several gaps—between theory and practice; between school campuses; between cultural identities of Puerto Rican students and school educators or curricula; and between expectations and project outcomes.

In Chapter 19, "Scholarly Personal Narrative of an Inaugural Chief Diversity Officer: A Primer for Municipality Leaders," Malika Carter demonstrates the power of storytelling through scholarly professional narrative (SPN). Carter recounts her experiences as the first chief diversity officer of a local municipality and affirms that social justice education happens in multiple contexts. Carter's work underscores Washington's narrative to demonstrate how Black women's physical, emotional, and intellectual labor is all too often unappreciated but absolutely necessary to realizing a more just world.

In Part V, "After Words," the concluding section of the book, authors offer two different perspectives of liberatory consciousness: one personal, one communal. In her chapter, Rhonda Williams, founder and inaugural director of the Social Justice Institute at Case Western Reserve University, offers a creative interpretation of the mindfulness that must be present for Black women's SJ work to be sustainable. In the preceding chapter, Keeanga-Yamahatta Taylor, who personifies front-line scholar-activism in her work as professor of African American Studies at Princeton University, provides a view of collective liberation in the tradition of the Combahee River Collective. Williams channels creative history and Taylor engages critical history; both harken to Black women elders as means to their liberatory pedagogies. The section closes with final reflections from Stephanie Evans and Andrea Domingue—editors who offer a Coda as we look backward, inside, and forward to Black women's educational legacies and lessons.

Reading this cohort of Black women educators provides insight via two avenues: our writing provides case studies of how intersectionality operates, while our voices offer valuable historical and cultural context to problem-solving education. In closing, we restate the practical, cultural, critical, and moral imperative to amplify Black women's voices in order to counteract violence and oppression through improved education. If the passing on of human knowledge ignores the life writing of Black women, we miss a vital opportunity to ensure that the values of social justice are communicated to future generations.

## Notes

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4. UN International Forum for Social Development, Social Justice in an Open World: The Role of the United Nations. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social Policy and Development. New York, 2006. <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/ifsd/SocialJustice.pdf>
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