

1. Fred Moten's *The Universal Machine*
  - a. Out of all of Fred's texts, this is the most immediately accessible to philosophers. Three essays on Levinas, Arendt, and Fanon that essentially deal with the question: can blackness be phenomenologized.
  - b. Useful for: history of modern philosophy, phenomenology, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, social ontology, philosophy of science and psychiatry
  - c. <https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-universal-machine>
2. Hortense Spiller's "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book"
  - a. An intricate look at the way raced gendered sex is constituted in and among discourse, and how signification works in a postmodern, racial and gendered social network.
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of gender, philosophy of language, metaphysics, social ontology
  - c. [https://people.ucsc.edu/~nmitchel/hortense\\_spillers\\_-\\_mamas\\_baby\\_papas\\_maybe.pdf](https://people.ucsc.edu/~nmitchel/hortense_spillers_-_mamas_baby_papas_maybe.pdf)
3. Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*
  - a. Low-hanging fruit, but honestly embarrassing if you're working in the following and haven't read it.
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of language, German idealism, phenomenology, philosophy of science, philosophy of emotion, philosophy of perception, philosophy of history, ethics, philosophy of gender
  - c. <https://groveatlantic.com/book/black-skin-white-masks/>
4. Saidiya Hartman's *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in 19th-century America*
  - a. Probably The Most Essential Work in black studies in the past few decades. An intricate look at how slavery and its afterlives conditions the possibility of social ontology
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of law, philosophy of history, social ontology, ethics
  - c. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/scenes-of-subjection-9780195089844?cc=us&lang=en&>
5. Cedric Robinson's *Black Marxism: The Makings of the Black Radical Tradition*
  - a. Probably one of the most comprehensive historical accounts of labor relations in Euro-America, ever. Closely digs into the material relations of white, black, and poc labor over the past near-millennium, before examining how those conditions gave rise to an intellectual tradition.
  - b. Near-essential for: Marxism, philosophy of economics, philosophy of history, political philosophy
  - c. <https://uncpress.org/book/9780807848296/black-marxism/>
6. Christina Sharpe's *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*

- a. A brilliant poetic examination of the phenomenology of living in what Hartman calls "the afterlife of slavery", through examination of art. Operates under a conceptualization of Freudian (I would say) melancholy and mourning
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of emotion, philosophy of art, social ontology, LGBTQ+ philosophy
  - c. <https://www.dukeupress.edu/in-the-wake>
7. Ashon T. Crawley's *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility*
  - a. One of my favorite books of all time. A brilliant grounding of an anarchic sociality in aesthetics and spirituality.
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of religion, philosophy of art, history of philosophy (esp. Kant and Hegel), social ontology, philosophy of mind
  - c. <https://www.fordhampress.com/9780823274550/blackpentecostal-breath/>
8. Adrian Piper's *Out of Order, Out of Sight*
  - a. Adrian Piper is one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century, and the academy's suppression of her is a Crime. Here, she writes about her own artistic work, which results in some of the most brilliant philosophical insights of her career
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of art, history of philosophy (esp. Kant), philosophy of mind, epistemology, social ontology
  - c. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/out-order-out-sight-volume-1>
9. Calvin Warren's *Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation*
  - a. A galaxy brain reading of Heidegger, which argues that blackness occupies the space of Nothingness in Heidegger's schema, an insight that (Warren argues) becomes crucial to explaining its social uses.
  - b. Near-essential for: history of philosophy (especially Heidegger and 20th century continental), philosophy of law, philosophy of science, social ontology, philosophy of language, philosophy of psychoanalysis
  - c. <https://www.dukeupress.edu/ontological-terror>
10. Glenda Carpio's *Laughing Fit to Kill: Black Humor in the Fictions of Slavery*
  - a. A deeeeeply intricate study of the tradition of black humor, with special focus on categorizing different types of humor and their social work
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of art (especially humor), philosophy of emotion
  - c. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/laughing-fit-to-kill-9780195304701?cc=us&lang=en&>
11. Stephen Best's *None Like Us: Blackness, Belonging, Aesthetic Life*
  - a. A genius intervention on black studies itself, employing queer theory, art studies, and phil of history to challenge the possibility of recuperating facts and phenomena of black historical life.
  - b. Useful for: metaphilosophy, philosophy of emotion, philosophy of art, philosophy of history

- c. <https://dukeupress.edu/none-like-us>
- 12. Marquis Bey's *Anarcho-Blackness: Notes Towards a Black Anarchism*
  - a. A brilliant intervention on political philosophy, that moves from the mysticism of recent black studies post-Moten to its earth-shattering, material-political conclusions.
  - b. Useful for: political philosophy, social philosophy
  - c. <https://www.akpress.org/anarcho-blackness.html>
- 13. Frank B. Wilderson's *Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms*
  - a. Both a long-overdue theory of black cinema and a demand for a return to structuralism as the model of social philosophy.
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of art (esp. cinema), philosophy of history, history of philosophy (esp. Lacan), philosophy of language, social ontology
  - c. <https://www.dukeupress.edu/red-white-and-black>
- 14. Sylvia Wynter's "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being"
  - a. Absolutely brilliant examination of the episteme enframing our current theorizing about social relations and social ontology.
  - b. Useful for: epistemology, philosophy of history, social philosophy, history of philosophy (esp. Foucault)
- 15. Jennifer Nash's *Black Feminism Reimagined: After Intersectionality*
  - a. A complete paradigm shift not only in how we talk about black women in academia, but how academic discourse happens and ought to happen, full stop
  - b. Useful for: metaphilosophy, philosophy of emotion, philosophy of gender, philosophy of education
  - c. <https://www.dukeupress.edu/black-feminism-reimagined>
- 16. Nahum Chandler's *X: The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought*
  - a. The most radical reading of Dubois you'll ever find, I think; tries to truly articulate why and how blackness reveals the insufficiency of historical, sociological, and philosophical analysis
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of history, social philosophy, history of philosophy (esp. Dubois and Derrida)
  - c. <https://www.fordhampress.com/9780823254071/xthe-problem-of-the-negro-as-a-problem-for-thought/>
- 17. Jared Sexton and Steven Martinot's "The Avante-garde of White Supremacy"
  - a. One of my fave essays of all time, and crucial to understanding Afro-pessimism. That aside, a radical reading of police brutality as a lynchpin to understanding the social logics of the modern state

- b. Useful for: social ontology, ethics, political philosophy, (I think, perhaps controversially) philosophy of language, (I think, even more controversially) metaphysics, esp. phil of action
  - c. <https://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~marto/avantguard.htm>
- 18. Angela Davis' *Blues Legacy and Black Feminism*
  - a. Honestly; my fave Davis, I think. Or at least, it's up there. A brilliant and, at the time, unprecedented study of women-driven blues and its aesthetic, social, political, and philosophical complexities. Also, made me fall completely in love with the genre, which is a plus
  - b. Useful for: philosophy of art (esp. music), philosophy of emotion, political philosophy, social ontology, philosophy of gender, philosophy of language
  - c. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/37351/blues-legacies-and-black-feminism-by-angela-y-davis/>
- 19. Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*
  - a. The secret weapon and manifesto of the radical underside of academia. A jawdropping analysis of and creed against the modern university and its various modes of knowledge, self, and social (re)production.
  - b. Near-essential for: philosophy of education, metaphilosophy, philosophy of economics, social philosophy, marxism
  - c. <https://www.akpress.org/the-undercommons.html>
- 20. Edouard Glissant's *Poetics of Relation*
  - a. Where do i start. ending (for now) with this, because it may be the greatest intervention in epistemology in the past 100 years; and given that a fractured and frightening epistemic situation is precisely what calls me to make this thread, it feels important to give due honor. We would not have Moten, or the current trend of black mysticism, which i hope to contribute to and further how i can, without this text and its insistence on an utterly radical model of self and other knowledge, and reproduction of that knowledge, a model akin in its radicalism to, like, Wittgenstein's. Its core concept, the right to opacity - which utterly fragments the concept of rights altogether - ought to be recognized as a conceptual apparatus on par with the greatest of philosophical models.
  - b. Absolutely essential for: epistemology, social ontology, ethics, poetics
  - c. [https://www.press.umich.edu/10262/poetics\\_of\\_relation](https://www.press.umich.edu/10262/poetics_of_relation)