

Selective Bibliography for *Delta in Diaspora: Migration and the Mississippi Delta* (for workshop entitled *Most Southern Place on Earth*; Summer 2009).

Compiled by John B. Strait (this is by no means a complete list of materials that would provide an understanding of the Southern Diaspora, but it represents stuff I'm most personally familiar with...)

Non-Fiction Works.

Daniels, Roger. 1997. *Not Like Us: Immigrants and Minorities in America 1890-1924* (The American Ways Series). Ivan R. Dee publishing. This work incorporates the northward migration of African-Americans into the larger context of immigration into the U.S. from abroad.

Gottlieb, Peter. 1996. *Making Their Own Way: Southern Blacks' Migration to Pittsburgh, 1916-30*. University of Illinois Press.

Gregory, James N. 2005. *The Southern Diaspora: How the Great Migrations of Black and White Southerners Transformed America*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. * This happens to be my favorite, if for no other reason than it offers a slightly different approach than most others focused on the subject – it also situates migration phenomena into a broad context and doesn't simply focus on African-Americans.

Grossman, James R. 1989. *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Halpern, Monica. 2005. *Moving North: African Americans and the Great Migration 1915-1930* (Crossroads America). National Geographic Children's Books (recommended ages; 9-12)

Harrison, Alferdteen. 1992. *Black Exodus: The Great Migration from the American South*. The University Press of Mississippi.

Johnson, Daniel M. and Rex R. Campbell. 1981. *Black Migration in America: A Social Demographic History* (Durham)

Lemann, Nicholas. 1991. *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How it Changed America*. Vintage Books: New York

Marks, Carole. 1989. *Farewell – We're Good and Gone: The Great Black Migration* (Bloomington)

Palmer, Robert. 1982. *Deep Blues: A Musical and Cultural History, from the Mississippi Delta to Chicago's South Side to the World*. New York, New York: Penguin Books.

Phillips, Kimberly L. 1999. *AlabamaNorth: African-American Migrants, Community, and Working-Class Activism in Cleveland, 1915-45*.

Sernett, Milton. 1997. *Bound For the Promised Land: African American Religion and the Great Migration* (The C. Eric Lincoln Series on the Black Experience) Duke University Press.

Trotter, J. W. 1991. *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective*. Bloomington Indiana: Indian University Press.

Tye, Larry. 2005. *Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class*. Holt Paperbacks.

Relevant Web-sites:

- 1) *North by South* - <http://northbysouth.kenyon.edu/main1.htm> This is an excellent web-site generated from a three-year NEH-sponsored study of the migrations of African-Americans. It includes student-created projects pertaining to effects of the migration – food, housing, etc. Portions of the web-site focus specifically on the Mississippi Delta.
- 2) *The University of Chicago Library Research Resources on Chicago and the Great Migration: Chicago, Jazz and the Great Migration*
<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/su/cja/greatmigration.html>
This site provides a great collection of primary and secondary resources, lesson-plans and other curricula material. A great resource, although it obviously strongly emphasizes the migration to Chicago.
- 3) *In Motion: The African-American migration experience*.
<http://www.inmotionaame.org/home.cfm>
- 4) *The African-American Mosaic. A Library of Congress Resource Guide for the Study of Black History & Culture* <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam008.html>
 - Site is focused on broad topic of African-American History but does include a solid collection of maps, statistics, personal stories and other resources pertaining to historical migration patterns of African-Americans
 - <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam011.html> This link will direct you directly to the portion of the site that pertains specifically to the role of Chicago as a magnet for migration.

Works of Fiction

Arnold, Harriet. 1954. *The Dollmaker*. Macmillan Publishing.

- One of my favorites - traces the tensions of the migratory experience experienced by a southern white family in Detroit

Attaway, William. 1941. *Blood on the Forge*

Baldwin, James. 1953. *Go Tell it on the Mountain*.

_____. 1955. *Notes of a Native Son*.

Ellison, Ralph. 1947. *Invisible Man*.

Petry, Ann. 1946. *The Street*.

West, Dorothy. 1948. *The Living is Easy*.

Wright, Richard. 1940. *Native Son*.

- One of the most powerful statements on society's racial inequalities, and one of the most important American novels – a fellow writer (Irving Howe) said it best “The day *Native Son* appeared, American culture was changed forever.” This novel features a migrant family in Chicago's South Side.

. 1991. *Richard Wright : Early Works : Lawd Today! / Uncle Tom's Children / Native Son.*

- *Native Son* is obviously Wright's most famous work, but these other two stories are also gems. They provide an excellent "feel" for life in Chicago during the migratory period.

Rodgers, Lawrence R. 1997. *Canaan Bound: The African-American Great Migration Novel.*

This book is not really a novel per-se, but is a study of how the different novels depicting the migration relate to one another and how they relate more broadly to the African-American experience. It has been described as a kind of "literary archaeology of the Great Migration." An interesting read.

Video Documentaries

The Promised Land. 1995. A documentary on the migration to Chicago, narrated by Morgan Freeman. It was modeled somewhat after Nicholas Leeman's book (see above) and focuses a lot on the Mississippi component of the migration. This is an excellent resource and incorporates the multifaceted dimensions of the diaspora – push & pull factors, impacts on African-Americans and American society, urban geography, music, etc. The soundtrack is one of my all-time favorite CDs. The only problem with it relates to its length – it comes in three parts – which can make it challenging to use in the classroom. Still well worth checking out.

Goin' to Chicago. PBS Documentary - In my opinion, while good, not as good as *The Promised Land*. It is only 60 minutes long – thus, it works well in a class-room environment. It is good in that it tracks the phenomena of migrants returning "home" to Mississippi for reunions.

Description: "Documentary about the "Great Migration." In the first half of the 20th century, more than five million African Americans journeyed from the cotton fields and Jim Crow environment of the rural South to the promise of a better life in the industrial cities of the North and West. The program follows a group of former migrants, who return to their Mississippi home for a reunion. Personal experiences are woven together with archival film and photographs, and a soundtrack containing blues, R&B and gospel."