Angela Davis: A Life Committed to Liberation Praxis

Joy James

I first met Angela Davis in the mid 1980s when she spoke at a Manhattan high school in a benefit for WREE. A graduate student at the time, I was active in Women for Racial and Economic Equality (WREE), a multiracial women's group which organized against violence, sexism, and racism in U.S. domestic and foreign policies. WREE's strong critique of capitalism and imperialism during the rise of neoconservative Republicans countered the emergence of a hegemonic right dismantling gains from the civil rights, antiwar, and feminist movements.

When introduced to Davis later that night, I remember thinking that this was the first time I had met the power, courageous insight, and particular beauty and grace of a black woman who remained committed to social justice despite the costs that radicals were, and are, made to pay in this society. Over the next decade I would meet "Angela": in Nairobi, Kenya at the 1985 UN Conference for the Decade on Women. There we organized to collect over 2000 signatures from U.S. women, demanding more funding for social programs and an end to U.S. support for South African apartheid, militarism, and covert wars, and several years later, we would march in Birmingham, Alabama, protesting police brutality; and, months after we would reconnect in Moscow at an international women's conference for disarmament, supported by Mikhail Gorbachev's government.

Human Rights internationalism was always central in Angela Davis's political praxis. "Reading" her political activism and literary interventions has taught me immensely. When offered the opportunity to edit Blackwell's **Angela Davis Reader** *(1998), I accepted. It seemed to be a logical extension of my commitment to highlighting the intellectual and political contributions of progressive, radical African-American women such as Davis. The following essay is taken from the "Introduction" to the forthcoming* **Angela Davis Reader**. *Having learned so much in the process of this wôrk, I hope to communicate what Angela Y. Davis exemplifies—the rich resources we share that enable us to critique, confront, and shed eviscerating racial, sexual and economic constraints.*

> **The Janus Head**
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> I felt an almost unbearable tension—it was as if I were two persons, two faces of a Janus head. One profile stared disconsolately into the past—the fretful, violent, confining past broken only by occasional splotches of meaning. . . . The other gazed with longing and apprehension into the future—a future glowing with challenge, but also harboring the possibility of defeat.
>
> —Angela Davis
> ***Angela Davis: An Autobiography***[1]

In her memoir, Angela Davis introduces Janus—the Roman god of doors or beginnings.[2] Depicted with two visages facing, like portals, in opposite directions, Janus serves as a metaphor for the past and future directions of Davis's political and intellectual life: the past manifests in the violent repression of blacks in the U.S., the future reflects the possibility of an international movement for a socialist, nonracialist democracy. Janus, like Eleggua, the yoruba orisha of the crossroads, marks awakenings, polarities, and contradictions. In the autobiography, it references the possibilities of choice and realization within struggles for class, race, and sexual liberation. It also symbolizes simultaneous existence in the seemingly exclusive social worlds of black disenfranchisement and poverty, and white privilege and education. Representing a dialectic of theory and resistance in Davis's political and intellectual development, Janus signifies transitional stages that foster feelings of alienation from the familiar yet open new avenues. Life is set by a series of decisions, paths taken and paths avoided; the existential dilemmas described in ***Angela Davis: An Autobiography*** reflect a tension magnified by the heightened expectations and fears characteristic of revolutionary social and political movements. In the U.S., during the era of militancy depicted in the memoir, radical choices courted triumphs for liberation or disasters and the possibility of imprisonment and death. Shaping Davis's future as a black radical, communist, and international feminist, the past and present profiles of the Janus head denote revolutionary thought. Such thought, scanning both directions to avoid stagnation, considers the past from which movements originate in order to maintain momentum for the future. For activist-intellectuals, such as Davis, who struggled with exclusionary but overlapping worlds shaped by race, class, gender, and violence, Janus represents the opportunity to confront the contradictory existence of abrogated freedom within the world's most powerful nation-state. In its negative sense, it represents hypocrisy and denial, a "two-facedness" manifested when states or political systems claim democratic principles while systematically disenfranchising marginalized peoples or political minorities.

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The Early Years: The Making of an Intellectual Activist

Angela Yvonne Davis was born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1944, near the close of the Second World War and the emergence of the United States as heir to British hegemony (a dominance which the U.S. militarily retains, despite its slippage in the global cultural and intellectual marketplace). She grew up in the southern United States under Jim Crow segregation and codified racial discrimination. During the late 1940s, her family integrated a neighborhood that subsequently became known as "Dynamite Hill" because of Ku Klux Klan terrorism against black families integrating the previously all-white community. Although the Davis home was never targeted by white arsonists, houses across the street were bombed. Bombings and burnings continued for several years, "miraculously," recalls Davis, no one was killed.[3]

Racial segregation had created an apartheid-like America in which African-American students, regardless of their economic status, attended the same (underfunded) schools. As a child, Davis was considered an elite among impoverished peers. Because of her family's financial security and the extreme poverty of some classmates, the grade schooler stole from her father, giving money to children to buy their school lunch. Partly to escape the social roles defined by her middle-class standing in the black community and the educational limitations of local schools bound by Jim Crow and inequitable state funding, Davis left the South in 1959 for Manhattan where, under the auspices of a Quaker educational program, she lived with a progressive white family and attended a private high school, the Little Red School House. There she studied Karl Marx and Frederick Engels's ***The Communist Manifesto***, and at age fifteen she became active in a youth organization associated with the Communist Party. Familiarity with the Party was part of her family history. Since her birth, Davis's parents had been close friends with black members of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA). Although neither ever joined the Party, they were black middle-class educators who organized as "communist sympathizers." Her mother, Sallye Bell Davis, was a national officer and leading activist in the Southern Negro Youth Congress, which was associated with the CPUSA which had campaigned to free the Scottsboro Nine.[4] Anti-Communist repression during the McCarthy era forced the elder Davis's friends— the parents of young Angela's playmates—underground.

Despite the prevailing repressive anti-communism, Davis was profoundly affected by Marxism, and sought a disciplined, antiracist movement against racialized economic exploitation. Like Janus, Marxism with one profile surveyed economic, political, and social oppression while the other provided a glimpse of a possible future without the inequities of capitalism.

Upon high school graduation and with a scholarship in hand, Davis left New York for Massachusetts to attend Brandeis University. There she studied with philosopher Herbert Marcuse and spent her junior year in France at the Sorbonne. This was the height of the civil rights movement emanating from the 1955 Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycotts that had destabilized U.S. racism and white supremacy. Her memoir describes the young Davis's dissonance as she embarks for Europe to develop as a formally-trained intellectual, and yet desires to remain connected to black liberation struggles in the U.S.: "The Janus head was still fixed—one eye full of longing to be in the fray in Birmingham, the other contemplating my own future. It would be a long time before the two profiles came together and I would know the direction to both the past and the future."[5] Janus would continue to haunt Davis politically during the civil rights movement as she furthered her academic studies in France and Germany. Like

other influential, progressive writers, especially the black "public intellectuals," Davis's educational and economic privileges both distanced her from the most marginalized and infused her theories of (black) liberation with an internationalist perspective. Parisian anti-Algerian racism had a strong impact on her understandings of international racism and colonialism and their connections to U.S. antiblack racism (European racism also had a marked influence on another black American intellectual living in Paris during that era, James Baldwin.) Torn between the desire to learn from different national cultures and political systems, and the need to join "the movement," Davis decided not to pursue a doctorate at Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, choosing instead to return to the States to work with Marcuse at the University of California at San Diego.

Terrorist acts against black activists provided the radicalizing impetus to end her European studies in the late 1960s. In fact, the racist murders of childhood acquaintances in her hometown during her first study abroad, in the early 1960s, profoundly affected her. In both the autobiography and a 1993 essay, "Remembering Carole, Cynthia, Addie Mae and Denise,"[6] Davis recounts how, while in France, she learned of the September 15, 1963 bombing of Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. In that foray by white extremists, fourteen-year-olds Carole Robertson, Cynthia Wesley, and Addie Mae Collins, and eleven-year-old Denise McNair died. The bombing occurred soon after the historic 1963 March on Washington, D.C. and Martin Luther King Jr.'s eschatological "I Have a Dream" speech. Davis reminisces that if she had declined the scholarship to the private school in Manhattan, New York, she would have likely been nearby at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, at the time of the bombing. It was during her own absence in France, far from family ties and a society schooled in surviving and confronting white violence, that Davis learned of, and became deeply disturbed by the girls' deaths: "If I had not been in France, news would not have been broken to me about the deaths . . . in the 'objective journalism' of the ***International Herald Tribune***. . . . I was in Biarritz, living among people so far removed from the civil-rights war unfolding in the South that it made little sense to try to express to them how devastated I felt. I wrestled in solitude with my grief, my fear and my rage."[7] The absence of public mourning in France for the slain youths—an absence put into sharp relief several months later when French nationals collectively mourned the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy—was strongly felt:

> "I carried around in my head for many years an imagined representation of the bombing's aftermath that was far more terrifying than any cinematic image of violence I have ever encountered: the fixed eyes of Carole's and Cynthia's bloody decapitated heads and their dismembered limbs strewn haphazardly among the dynamited bricks and beams in the front yard of the stately church. My own private imagination of what happened that day was so powerful that years would pass before I felt able to listen to the details of my mother's story."[8]

Three decades later, Davis extensively discussed the tragedy with her mother, Sallye Davis. In 1963, upon hearing the explosion from her home, the elder Davis had contacted Alpha Bliss Robertson. She drove her to the Sunday School class at the church to find her daughter, Carole. Instead, the women found debris and parts of the children's bodies. In the collective remembrance of this tragedy, Angela Davis notes erasure:

> The time in the country my mother and I spent remembering that terrible day three decades ago— Bloody Sunday, she calls it—was both healing and frustrating. As we spoke about the girls as we had known them, it occurred to me that the way the memory of that episode persists in popular imagination is deeply problematic. What bothers me most is that their names have been virtually erased: They are inevitably referred to as 'the four Black girls killed in the Birmingham church bombing.' Another traumatic moment occurred in 1964 when James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman were killed in Mississippi. A decade earlier, Emmett Till was found at the bottom of the Tallahatchie River. These boys, whose lives were also consumed by racist fury, still have names in our historical memory. Carole, Denise, Addie Mae and Cynthia do not.[9]

Davis indicates that few people remember the girls as young activists, who at the time of their deaths were preparing to speak about civil rights at the church's annual Youth Day program.[10] For most, the four "function abstractly in popular memory as innocent, nameless black girls' bodies destroyed by racist hate."[11] All four girls shared political commitments with other youths who had in that volatile year confronted police commissioner Eugene "Bull" Conner's high-powered fire hoses and "filled the jails in Birmingham in a way that reenergized the Civil Rights Movement like nothing since the Montgomery Boycott."[12]

SNCC and the Black Panther Party

Missing the courageous confrontations with repressive state laws waged by youths, particularly girls and young women, Davis spent most of her years between 1959 and 1967 outside of the South and therefore outside of the southern civil rights movement (as did other black radical women such as Black Panther leaders Elaine Brown, Kathleen Cleaver, and Assata Shakur). However, Davis periodically "touched base" with the movement. For instance, testing voter disenfranchisement of blacks, in 1965 when she became twenty-one, she attempted to register to vote in Birmingham and was denied that right because of her race. Years later, in a National Women's Studies Association address, Davis recalled this negation of her civil rights to illustrate the political repression of women. Examining the repressive legacy of continuing voter disenfranchisement in the post-movement era, her speech cited the case of Julia Wilder and Maggie Bozeman of the Black Belt of Alabama who were convicted in January 1982 of voter fraud. Both women had "assisted older people and people who, as a result of the racist educational system that is particularly acute in the South, never managed to learn how to read and write well enough to fill out a ballot . . . . [consequently] they were tried and convicted by an all-white jury and sentenced to four and five years, respectively, in the state penitentiary."[13] With the de jure right to vote (reinforced by the "second reconstruction" and the 1964 Voting Rights Act), the de facto abrogation of rights continued. Paradoxically, as repression continued, the definition of rights expanded (particularly for the most dispossessed) beyond that of civil rights to the more encompassing human rights.

The search for human rights, more far-reaching than the electoral powers supposedly guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution, led Angela Davis to the Black Panther Party. The Black Panther logo of the Lowndes County, Alabama, Freedom Democratic Party was propelled into the national spotlight in 1966 by television broadcasts of a Greenwood, Mississippi march where, with Martin Luther King, Jr. in attendance, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's (SNCC) Stokely Carmichael galvanized the black gathering to chant for "Black Power!" It became the contested namesake for several organizations. Huey Newton's Black Panther Party for Self-Defense emerged in Oakland, California in 1966 and later expanded into Los Angeles where Davis was a member of the Black Panther Political Party. At the demands of Oakland's leadership for exclusive claim to the title and SNCC national leadership Carmichael and James Forman's suggestion, in 1967 Davis's Black Panther Political Party became "Los Angeles SNCC." The organization was short-lived. In California, SNCC women ran the office but men dominated as official spokespersons and media figures. According to Davis, Los Angeles SNCC dissolved as a result of women's refusal to accept the sexism and masculinist posturing of male leadership. Other factors leading to the demise of the organization were SNCC's anti-Communism, and attempts by the New York-based national SNCC office (under the leadership of H. Rap Brown, but over the protests of Forman) to dictate policy to chapters, including an aborted attempt to merge with Newton's Panthers.

Upon leaving the SNCC, Davis simultaneously joined the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and the Communist Party. Her relationship with the Black Panther Party was always problematic. She describes her affiliation with the Panther organization as a "permanently ambiguous status" that fluctuated between "'member' and 'fellow-traveler'." Active in community organizing—temporarily in charge of political education in the West Side office (which she helped to open) and formulating political education for the entire Los Angeles branch—Davis was always on the fringes of the Panthers' internal contestations. Years later, she recalls doubts about the Party's militarist posturing: "I thoroughly respected the BPP's visible defiance and principally supported the right to self-defense . . . . I also found myself using funerals and shootings as the most obvious signposts of the passage of time. However, sensing ways in which this danger and chaos emanated not only from the enemy outside, but from the very core

of the Black Panther Party, I preferred to remain uninformed about the organization's inner operations."[14] Part of the contradictions of internal operations revolved around sexual politics. The Black Panther Party as a masculinist, radical organization operated in ways that encouraged both males and females to perceive women "as objects of male sexual desire."[15] No matter how close a woman came to approximating the contributions of the most esteemed male leader, states Davis, the respect granted a Panther woman, even those in high-ranking leadership, could and was "reversed with the language and practice of [male- or female initiated] sexual seduction." Although some African-American women in revolutionary organizations "detested the overt sexism of male leaders," they also associated feminism with middle-class white women: "In failing to recognize the profoundly masculinist emphasis of our own struggles, we were all at risk. We often ended up affirming hierarchies in the realm of gender relations that we militantly challenged in the area of race relations."[16] Of her romanticism of the Panthers, Davis writes: "I cannot deny the attraction that the Panther representations of Black militant masculinity held for me at a time when precious few of us had begun thinking about the politics of sexism and compulsory heterosexuality."[17] The construction of the revolutionary, of the militant leader with transformative agency for social justice, was masculine: "Revolutionary practice was conceived as quintessentially masculinist. The Party's imagined power was too often conflated with power over the means of violence, wielded both against the 'enemy' and in the ranks of the Party itself. This power was sexualized so that women's place was always defined as unalterably inferior. It articulated notions of revolutionary democracy with gang-inspired, authoritarian organizational principles. It sexualized politics and politicized sexuality in unconscious and dangerous ways."[18] The Black Panther Party, as "part of our historical memory" provides a contested terrain, one often navigated with blinders of romanticized or demonized iconography.

The "confusion" prevalent in the black liberation movement of the 1960s, typified by the limitations of the Panther Party, was partly tied to the urgency and immediacy of struggle in which people attended funerals of slain activists and survivors attempted to continue in their commitments for radical social change despite state repression. Although the revolutionary movement of that era was derailed, according to Davis, contemporary progressive or left intellectuals have "achieved a measure of lucidity, based on those experiences . . . . There is much more extensive consciousness of that dialectic between the concrete work that we do, the activist work, and the international context . . . . [the challenge is to make] the transition from consciousness to action, from theory to practice."[19] In contradistinction to the construction of the theorist or philosopher as the disengaged, nonactivist, Davis adds, "while theoretical work, intellectual work, is extremely important, the work of the activist will determine whether or not we will move to a new stage. . . . everyone should learn how to become an activist on some level, in some way. Everyone who considers herself or himself a part of this overall progressive movement must establish some kind of organizational ties, and must definitely participate in one or more movements."[20] For Davis those organizational ties were deeply embedded in the CPUSA—at least until 1991.

The Communist Party

Initially Davis joined the CPUSA because of her commitments to internationalist struggle. Like W.E.B. Du Bois, who after the Second International War, incorporated Marxist theory into his analyses of oppression, Davis felt that black liberation was unobtainable without an international workers' movement against capitalism, imperialism, and racism. Her understanding that a mass liberation struggle needed to be class-based in order to confront the racist foundations of capitalism was strengthened by a 1969 trip to Cuba. (In 1959, Cuba waged a successful revolution against the U.S.-sponsored Batista dictatorship, and in 1963 again successfully defended itself against a U.S.-sponsored invasion, the Bay of Pigs). Joining the Communist Party was also Davis's response to the deficiencies she found in the black liberation movement's nationalism. According to Davis, black nationalism inspired African-Americans by emphasizing the collective African past and a "black aesthetic," but its dominant culturalist outlook lacked comprehensive economic and political analyses for black equality and human rights. In fact, in her view, nationalist ideology's construction of "race," distilled from economic, gender, ethnic, and class considerations, erased the connections between oppressed blacks, other racially marginalized peoples, and the exploitation of white workers. The limitations of cultural nationalism in the 1960s led Davis, by now a Marxist for over a decade, to other ideologies such as those espoused by the Che-Lumumba Club of southern California, one of the CPUSA's few all-black collective, which

conducted successful campaigns against police executions and repression in black neighborhoods. Davis found Che-Lumumba unhampered by the reactionary gender and sexual politics undermining radical organizations such as the West Coast Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party. The BPP remains the national political/cultural symbol for black militancy and resistance.

Having joined the Communist Party in 1968, for twenty-three years of active leadership, she served on the Party's Central Committee and twice ran for Vice President on its national ticket. In 1991, seeking with other long-time party members to democratize the internal life of the CPUSA, Davis and approximately eight hundred activists and intellectuals formulated, signed, and disseminated an internal document, "The Initiative to Unite and Renew the Party," designed to open avenues of debate. During the elections that followed, Communist Party leaders who signed the paper were refused placement on the official slate. Consequently, none of the "Initiative" signatories were re-elected to national office. Later that year, along with most of the eight hundred, including leaders such as Charlene Mitchell, Herbert Aptheker, and James Jackson, Davis left the Communist Party. The following year, at a Berkeley, California conference, the reformers created the Committees of Correspondence (CoC), on whose National Coordinating Committee Davis briefly served.

What constituted liberation praxis in the radical and revolutionary movements and moments of previous decades, and what constitutes it today, when both the Black Panther Party and the Communist Party are considered anachronistic? In a 1997 course at the University of California at Berkeley, discussing the distinctions between radical and revolutionary politics, and intellectual critique and political engagement, Davis recounted how black militant activists would define "radicals" as bourgeois whites who had political critiques and intellectual commitments to opposing racism and economic exploitation but little experiential confrontation with the state. "Revolutionaries," on the other hand, were those whose philosophical ideals about a just society and democratic state manifested in their risk-taking political acts against oppressive state apparatuses. A younger Davis had offered insights into revolutionary liberation praxis in the 1970 ***LIFE Magazine*** profile published while she was underground. ***LIFE's*** cover superimposed the caption "The Making of a Fugitive" over her photograph, while the feature article reprinted the following quote taken from one of Davis's speeches for the Soledad Brothers:

> Liberation is synonymous with revolution . . . . A revolution is not just armed struggle. It's not just the period in which you can take over. A revolution has a very, very long spectrum . . . . Che made the very important point that the society you're going to build is already reflected in the nature of the struggle that you're carrying out. And one of the most important things in relationship to that is the building of a collective spirit, getting away from this individualistic orientation towards personal salvation, personal involvement. . . . One of the most important things that has to be done in the process of carrying out a revolutionary struggle is to merge those two different levels, to merge the personal with the political where they're no longer separate.[21]

Davis's political work and personal life, as a revolutionary, within organizations such as the Communist Party and the Black Panther Party made her vulnerable to attacks by university administrations. While a graduate student in philosophy at the University of California-San Diego, her first major political project was a campaign on behalf of a young African-American Navy enlisted man who faced court-martial charges during the Vietnam War for having circulated a petition accusing President Lyndon Baines Johnson of racist policies. Working in this campaign as a member of the Black Student Alliance, in 1967/68, she met Elaine Brown, who like Davis, later joined the Panthers (Brown also served as Chairman of the Black Panther Party).[22] By 1969, as a new assistant professor in philosophy at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), Davis was recognized in the university system as a radical antiracist and a Communist. Although it had no formal punitive measures to oust antiracists (as did schools in the South which criminalized membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), the university administration codified persecution of communists. In 1949, in the advent of McCarthyism, the University of California Regents had passed a bylaw banning the hiring of communists. Twenty years later, it terminated Davis's contract under the leadership

of then California Governor Ronald Reagan—who as head of Hollywood's Screen Actors Guild had provided the FBI with names of film artist/artisans suspected of "communist leanings." (Today, the Regents continue to denounce Davis, an influential academic and Professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California at Santa Cruz, as they demonize past liberation movements in order to oppose contemporary progressivism.[23]) While defending her right to teach, Davis began organizing a mass defense for the Soledad Brothers—George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo, and John Clutchette, three African-American prisoners falsely charged with killing a prison guard in January 1970 (and acquitted of those charges in 1972). All three were leaders in the state's prisoners' rights movement. Through the Soledad Brothers' Defense Committee she met George Jackson, who was a prison intellectual, liberation theorist, and author of ***Blood in My Eye*** and ***Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson***.[24] At the age of eighteen, Jackson had been sentenced to an indeterminate sentence of one-year to life for driving a car involved in a gas-station robbery which netted $70. Jackson, who had served ten years at the time Davis visited him in prison, maintained that he was unaware of his acquaintance's robbery as he sat in the car. On August 21, 1971, at the age of thirty, this Soledad prison leader and Minister for the Black Panther Party was shot and killed by a guard, in what many activists viewed as a political assassination.

The People of the State of California vs. Angela Y. Davis

Before Davis met Jackson, she became friends with his family----mother, Georgia, sisters, Penny and Frances, and seventeen-year-old brother, Jonathan, who eventually became one of her bodyguards. The activist-academic received multiple death threats daily. Campus police provided some measure of protection as she taught classes and met with students; friends and co-activists provided off-campus security, often with guns legally purchased by the twenty-six-year old assistant professor and kept in her apartment. Attempting to publicize state abuses against the Soledad Brothers and dehumanizing prison conditions, in August 1970, Jonathan Jackson, part of Davis's security, carried the guns into a courtroom in Northern California's Marin County, and, with three prisoners, James McClain, William Christmas, and Ruchelle McGee, took the judge, district attorney, and some members of the jury hostage. The high school student and inmates brought the hostages to a van in the parking lot. San Quentin guards fired on the parked vehicle, killing Judge Haley, Jonathan Jackson, and prisoners McClain and Christmas, and seriously wounding the District Attorney, several jurors, and prisoner McGee who later became Davis's codefendant.[25] Although she was not in Northern California at the time, because the guns were registered in her name, Davis was designated by police as an accomplice. In that era of COINTELPRO—the FBI's counterintelligence program to destabilize the civil rights and black freedom movements—police or federal agents killed or assassinated over twenty black radicals in the Black Panther Party.[26] Rather than turn herself into the authorities, Davis went underground and for two months was on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's "Ten Most Wanted List." She was captured in Manhattan on October 13, 1970.

On January 5, 1971, in the case ***The People of the State of California vs. Angela Y. Davis***, the state arraigned Angela Davis in a small Marin County Courtroom on charges of murder,[27] kidnapping, and conspiracy. Circulating Davis's opening defense statement for the trial, University of California activist-academics published "Frame Up," a March 29, 1972, pamphlet which argues that Davis was prosecuted because of her effective leadership in mobilizing African-Americans to support political prisoners: Black support for the Soledad Brothers, they argued, created a public defense which inhibited the state's efforts to "eliminate" the Brothers and derail a radical movement. Throughout 1971, various judges denied more than 30 pre-trial motions made by the defense counsel. Responding to the defense team's motion for a change of venue—the defense hoped that the trial would be moved to the more racially mixed Alameda county—the state moved the case to Santa Clara County, guaranteeing the likelihood of an all-white, conservative jury. Nevertheless, the case was closely monitored by activists and intellectuals who petitioned for a fair trial. California Assistant Attorney General Albert Harris, who was specially appointed to prosecute Davis, would later complain about the "international conspiracy to free the defendant" when Santa Clara County jail authorities were flooded with calls, telegrams, and letters from all over the world protesting the conditions under which Davis was housed. President Richard Nixon, Attorney General John Mitchell, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (architect of the illegal and violent counterrevolutionary COINTELPRO), and Governor Reagan were also deluged with millions of pieces of mail objecting

to inadequate resources hampering Davis's defense team.

The trial took place in a time of intense government repression of radicals and revolutionaries that included the use of state juries to tie up black activists in court on falsified criminal charges or to falsely incarcerate them.[28] Expos'es on COINTELPRO, state malfeasance, and flimsy evidence, coupled with educational campaigns and demonstrations to end repressive policing and judiciaries, led juries to throw out cases or rule in favor of activists. In New Haven, New York, New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, and Detroit, juries exonerated defendants such as the Harrisburg 7, Erika Huggins and Bobby Seale, the New York 21, and Huey Newton. In fact, at the time of Davis's trial, jurors in a San Rafael court acquitted the Soledad Brothers of all charges (George Jackson did not live to see his exoneration), with some jurors embracing the defendants after the reading of the verdict. In February 1972, the state Supreme Court—after intense and lengthy lobbying by activists about dehumanizing prison conditions and judicial racism in sentencing—abolished the death penalty in California.[29] This decision facilitated Davis's release on bail. Yet, bail was granted only after she had spent sixteen months in prison and activists had effectively mobilized a massive, (inter)national protest, inundating the trial judge with demands for immediate bail including a telegram signed by all thirteen U.S. Congressmen who were members of the Congressional Black Caucus. On February 23, 1972, noting the magnitude of the public demands, the presiding judge granted bail. Given that her release undermined the presumption of guilt, which had been propogated in most media, prosecutors sought, and were denied, a delay in the trial proceedings. The trial progressed throughout 1971 and into the following year. Like the Soledad Brothers, Angela Yvonne Davis was acquitted of all charges when the trial ended in a "not guilty" verdict on June 4, 1972.

The Writings of Angela Davis (1969 - present)

The written work of Angela Davis can be divided into four areas: prison and human rights; intersectional analysis of Marxism, feminism, and antiracism; aesthetics and popular culture; and interviews on organizing.

Her autobiography recounts the conditions under which she was held while awaiting trial, describing the prison environment and key moments leading to the trial. Despite adverse conditions while in prison, she served as co-counsel, preparing her defense with movement attorneys. Davis also managed to produce scholarly literature while incarcerated. For instance, "Political Prisoners and Black Liberation" was written in prison and first appeared in ***If They Come in the Morning: Voices of Resistance***, an anthology of essays—also edited by Davis in her cell—by U.S. radicals and political prisoners such as respectively, Bettina Aptheker and Huey Newton. This essay is perhaps the first authored by an African-American woman within the genre of prison literature of the contemporary black liberation movement, a genre which emerged in 1955, with Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail." In 1971, Davis wrote that "the entire apparatus of the bourgeois democratic state, especially its judicial system and its prisons, is disintegrating. The judicial and prison systems are to be increasingly defined as instruments for unbridled repression, institutions which may be successfully resisted but which are more and more impervious to meaningful reform."[30] Two years earlier, teaching in UCLA's philosophy department, she designed the course "Recurring Philosophical Themes in Black Literature" as a corrective to the department's lack of classes on black philosophy and as a vehicle to encourage philosophical reflections on black enslavement and freedom. Collecting her 1969 philosophy lectures on the Hegelian dialectic and the slave-turned-abolitionist Frederick Douglass, the New York-based Committee to Free Angela Davis printed them as the pamphlet ***Lectures on Liberation*** in 1971. Later edited into "Unfinished Lectures on Liberation," this became her first published theoretical piece, appearing in the groundbreaking anthology on African-American philosophy, ***Philosophy Born of Struggle***.[31] Davis's analysis of enslavement and freedom, developed prior to her own incarceration, proves relevant to both the postbellum and postmodern U.S. where law codifies slavery. The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution legalizes "involuntary servitude" within penal institutions, while U.S. politics and social racism create a racialist legal system and sentencing disparity so that the majority of the incarcerated are African-American, Chicano Latino, and Native American. The desire for freedom on the part of the enslaved in the nineteenth-century reflects the rights—or abrogation of rights—of those incarcerated in the twentieth (and twenty-first) century. In "From the Prison of Slavery to the Slavery of Prison: Frederick Douglass and the Convict Lease System," Davis discusses how "blackness is

ideologically linked to criminality in ways that are more complicated and pernicious than Douglass ever could have imagined." In addition to her analysis of Douglass's work, writing about the racialization of crime in "Racialized Punishment and Prison Abolition," she provides a critique of Michel Foucault's ***Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison***.[32] Davis's analysis of contemporary imprisonment in "Race and Criminalization: Black Americans and the Punishment Industry" details the racialization and rationalization of punishment, and militarism and industrialism within prisons. Arguing for a new "abolitionism," she writes that raising "the possibility of abolishing jails and prisons as the institutionalized and normalized means of addressing social problems in an era of migrating corporations, unemployment and homelessness, and collapsing public services, from health care to education, can hopefully help to interrupt the current law-and-order discourse that has such a grip on the collective imagination, facilitated as it is by deep and hidden influences of racism."[33]

In the intersectional analyses of Marxism, antiracism, and feminism, exists the body of work for which Davis is best known. Activist women's contributions to Marxism and communism are often easily overlooked, according to Davis. In the development of communist theories and practice, one finds the intersections of Marxist, antiracist, and feminist praxes. Citing women such as Lucy Gonzales Parsons and Claudia Jones, Davis notes that many women who devoted their lives to organizing for a revolutionary, socialist society produced neither theoretical nor autobiographical writings. In the absence of such writings, their intellectual and political agency has often "disappeared" or been dismissed. The reappearance of and recognition for the contributions of radical female activists characterizes much of Davis's work.

Her writings also examine the contradictions and contributions of contemporary women to radical and feminist politics. For instance, she asserts that the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s held little attraction for black female militants and other progressive Chicana, Puerto Rican, Asian- and Native American women, despite the gender hierarchies within their respective antiracist or nationalist movements (she notes exceptions, citing the Black or Third World Women's Alliance which grew out of SNÆC chapters on the east coast to focus on a tripartite struggle against racism, sexism and imperialism). In the nascent movements, the bifurcation of antiracist and antisexist struggles took curious turns:[34] (middle-class) white women struggled with learned passivity and a hyper-femininity; black women were castigated for being too assertive and aggressive, or not feminine (passive) enough. For Davis, the work of radical black women and antiracist white women altered the nature of feminist theory and feminist practice, expanding praxes and ideologies, and leading to differentiations of feminisms. Feminists seeking "to open the executive suites of the corporations to women, regardless of the fact that these corporations are exploiting people" present an alien gender politics, writes Davis, who maintains that when women "oppressed not only by virtue of their gender but by virtue of their class and their race win victories for themselves, then other women will inevitably reap the benefits of these victories"; asserting the value of Marxism for feminism, she continues, "it is possible to be a Marxist, emphasize the central role of the working class, but at the same time participate in the effort to win liberation for all women."[35] A theory that accepts the overlapping interests of different groups reflects the present range of social and political repression. Drawing on the intersections of racist, sexist, and heterosexist repression, Davis contends that sexism has a "racist component which affects not only women of color but white women as well. Ku-Klux-Klan-instigated violence against Black people incites, for example, violence against women who attempt to use the services of abortion clinics. Low wages for women of colour establishes a standard which leads to low wages for white women. So that white women are the victims of any upsurge in racism."[36] For Davis, it is "not coincidental that the same forces" attacking "abortion clinics and their personnel have also tried to prevent integrated schools." Likewise, decrying the lack of a *mass* effort to challenge homophobia, and the "ghettoization" of the gay and lesbian political movements, Davis writes that the roots of homophobia are intertwined with the roots of racism, sexism, and economic exploitation. Reactionary intellectuals and activists, including extremists, have promoted violence against gays and lesbians, and a "fraudulent analysis holding homosexuals responsible for the so-called breakdown of the family." Linking the repression of heterosexuals' sexuality and that of their gay, lesbian, bi- and transgender counterparts, Davis maintains that racism has played a central role in creating the repressive sexual environment.[37] Describing how African-American women's work in black liberation organizations constituted a form of feminist consciousness-raising, she

marks the developing feminisms that presented an alternative to the women's circles in the emerging (white) feminist movement: "Black women and women of colour were making important contributions to the effort to elevate people's consciousness about the impact of sexism. While we didn't define ourselves as women's liberationists, we were in fact fighting for our right to make equal contributions to the fight against racism."[38] Making an equal contribution often entailed confronting the sexism both within the movement and embedded in literature and academic discourse about black women.

Davis's leadership in the Soledad Brothers' Defense Committee led to correspondence with George Jackson whose letters included analyses of the social function of prisons, but also a gender politics antithetical to liberation praxis. According to Davis, "He seemed to have internalized the notions of Black women as domineering matriarchs, as castrating females, notions associated with the Moynihan Report. I could detect this in the comments he made in his letters, especially comments about his mother."[39] To challenge Jackson's perspective, she began investigating the role of African-American females during slavery; her response to Jackson eventually developed into the essay, "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves."[40] At the time, little had been written on enslaved black women from a feminist perspective. As an inmate, Davis was able to research this article only with great difficulty, obtaining books by stating that they were pertinent to her case: "I informed the jail authorities that I had the right to whatever literature I needed for the preparation of my defense. In a larger sense this research really was very helpful for the preparation of my defense because in my trial I focused a great deal on the misogynist character of the prosecution's case. The theoretical work I did on Black women actually assisted me to develop a strategy for my own defense."[41] Sexist imagery was a pillar in Prosecutor Harris's March 27, 1971, opening argument which depicted Davis as a "'student of violence', the 'woman of uncontrollable passions', the vicious conspirator blinded by love."[42]

In her essay on the black woman's role in slavery, Davis traces the thesis of black matriarchy to various theories, including E. Franklin Frazier's writings in the 1930s, that argue that black women "remained the only real vestige of family life" because slavery had destroyed the black family and consequently created hybrid black women, overwhelming creatures that oppressed or emasculated black males. Senator Daniel Moynihan's 1965 government report, ***The Negro Family - A Case for National Action***, codified this image as it portrayed black mothers as matriarchs who pathologized the black family through their subversion of gender roles. Davis's critique of the ***Moynihan Report*** addresses labor exploitation of black women and men in the community of slaves. Responding to the pervasive depiction of black women as domineering matriarchs, Davis offers one of the earliest analyses on the intersections of racism, sexism, and capitalism within the slave economy and one of the earliest essays on antiracist feminist theory contextualized in the black experience in the Americas. She also provides a corrective to biased historiography that marginalizes or caricatures the realities of enslaved women. Exploring the concept that equal exploitation tended to disrupt gender hierarchies for black women and men, the essay challenges not only common misperceptions of black female life under slavery, but the manner in which historical stereotypes shape contemporary perspectives and scholarship. Precisely because it demystified historical stereotypical images of enslaved black women and emphasized the historical specificity of women in struggle and resistance, "Reflections of the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves" became a widely circulated piece of literature influential within feminist/black studies. The essay, authored in prison, was significantly shaped by Davis's encounters with sexism in her political experiences.

Unique to mainstream feminist thought of the early 1970s (and still somewhat of a novelty in postmodern feminism) were analyses of the intersections of racist and sexual-sexist violence. Addressing the simultaneous and intersectional appearances of sexism and racism, and by extension sexual and racist violence, Davis's early work presented a critique of feminist theory that erased racist violence, and antiracist theory that masked sexist violence. Accounting for the role of class in racial-sexual violence, she constructs the critique presented in "Rape, Racism, and the Capitalist Setting,"[43] which first appeared in ***The Black Scholar's*** 1978 special issue on "The Black Woman." Likewise, "Violence Against Women and the Ongoing Challenge to Racism,"[44] issued as a 1985 pamphlet by Kitchen Table Press, a New York-based African-American women's press, investigates the function of racist and sexist violence in a racialized, patriarchal society. Nowhere were the intersections of race and gender

so volatile as in the antirape movement within the Women's Liberation Movement, which in the late sixties or early seventies tended to represent rape only as a gender issue of male dominance of females, ignoring the impact of race and class on state prosecution and "protection." As Davis notes, the black community bore the brunt of white women's demands for more police and longer prison sentences. In the early days of the feminist movement, the disparity of perspectives promised few possibilities for coalitions between black and white women. Yet they did coalesce, for instance in antirape/antiracist organizing around the 1975 Joanne Little case. "Joanne Little: The Dialectics of Rape"[45] reflects on the North Carolina case of the young black woman incarcerated for petty theft who in 1973 killed the white prison guard who was raping her. The Little case highlighted the intersections of racial-sexual violence, and the role of the state in such violence. Little's act of self-defense, and subsequent flight, led to charges of murder and a "shoot to kill" edict from authorities. Her extradition from New York and subsequent trial in North Carolina were marked by effective mass mobilization and a legal defense which led to her acquittal. After the trial, according to Davis, Little issued a call for women who had supported her to organize around the Florida case of a young black man fraudulently charged with raping a white woman, yet most white feminist groups initially refused (some later changed their position) to assist in a defense committee for an accused rapist. The possibilities of multiracial women's alliances against violence are a recurring theme in Davis's discourse on freedom.

The issues of women's emancipation are tied not only to countering violence but also economic exploitation. Explorations of women's freedom or liberation appear in "Women and Capitalism: Dialectics of Oppression and Liberation."[46] Exploitation in the workforce coupled with exploitation in nonwaged labor or reproductive labor for the household is the focus of "The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working Class Perspective"[47] which formulates a strategy for the reconstruction of domestic labor, based in part on the Italian feminist movement's "Wages for Housework," which was influential in Europe in the 1970s. Davis's economic proposal for the liberation of women from domestic labor exploitation argued for restructuring domestic work as government-subsidized wage labor; this suggests that the deprivatization of labor coupled with attractive salaries and generous benefits liberates domestic work from its debased status as women's "free" contribution to familial and social units, and national and international economies. However, the select group licensed to perform this labor may remain alienated given that the repetitive and isolated nature of the work is not necessarily altered through higher wages.. Another form of women's unpaid labor addressed by Davis is that of biological reproduction. In "Outcast Mothers and Surrogates: Racism and Reproductive Politics in the Nineties,"[48] she discusses the medical ethics, health hazards, and social stigmatism associated with black women's fertility and reproduction in the late twentieth century. "Black Women and the Academy,"[49] also raises the issues of women's rights, this time, in connection with representation and education, and their responsibilities as educators with respect to social justice struggles.

Conclusion

Davis chronicles progressive movements in philosophy and radical politics, emphasizing prison intellectualism, Marxism, antiracism, and feminism, cultural studies and activism. Her work mirrors and documents intersectionality in the phenomenal critiques and confrontations (and the countervailing force of state repression) that flared at the height of revolutionary struggles in the U.S. only to mutate and eventually become muted in progressive academic writings. Transformative American intellectualism and political culture can be marked, and in some ways measured, by Davis's integrative analyses of capitalism, racism, sexual oppression and the commodification of (black) political culture. These themes contextualize the human condition as bound by repression and resistance, reflecting the desire and demand for human freedom. Challenging mainstream analytical and political discourse to illuminate a doorway in liberation praxis, her analyses have deeply influenced democratic theory and political struggles. Even for those readers who primarily know Angela Davis as a revolutionary of the late 1960s and early 1970s (or as a political icon for militant activism), she has greatly expanded the scope of social philosophy and political theory. Progressive thinkers expanding the borders of critical theory and the boundaries of justice struggles will invariably find their thought influenced by, and in no small measure indebted to, the liberation legacy which Angela Y. Davis embodies.

Notes

1. Angela Davis, ***Angela Y. Davis: An Autobiography***, New York: Random House, 1974.

2. I thank Heather Davis, Loretta Wahl, Kristen Seldon, and Kristi Most for sharing their insights about the Janus head in Davis's autobiography.

3. Angela Davis, "Remembering Carole, Cynthia, Addie Mae, and Denise," ***Essence***, February 1993, p. 92.

4. The Scottsboro Nine were African-American male youths falsely accused of raping two white women. Tried and sentenced in Scottsboro, Alabama, they were incarcerated for decades before their pardon.

5. Davis, ***Angela Davis: An Autobiography***, p. 113

6. Davis, "Remembering Carole, Cynthia, Addie Mae, and Denise, p. 92.

7. Ibid., p. 122

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 123

10. Carole Roberston had contacted Sallye B. Davis days before the bombing to ask for a ride to a "Friendship and Action" meeting, a new organization formed by black and white parents and teachers to develop grass-roots antiracist activism amid school desegregation and allow Birmingham school children to meet each other. Davis, "Remembering Carole, Cynthia, Addie Mae, and Denise," p. 123.

11. Davis, "Remembering Carole, Cynthia, Addie Mae, and Denise," p. 123

12. Ibid., p. 123

13. Angela Y. Davis, "Women, Race and Class: An Activist Perspective," ***Women's Studies Quarterly*** X:4, Winter 1982, 5. This keynote address was first delivered at the Fourth National Women's Studies Association Convention at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, June 17, 1982, 5.

14. Angela Y. Davis, "The Making of a Revolutionary," Review of Elaine Brown's ***A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story***, ***Women's Review of Books***, June 1993.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. ***LIFE Magazine***, 11 September 1970, Vol. 69, No. 11, p. 26. The quote, taken from a June 27, 1970, interview with Maeland Productions who were filming a documentary on Davis, stems from a speech she made for the Soledad Brothers.

22. See Elaine Brown, ***A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story***, New York: Pantheon Books, 1993.

23. Davis was designated University of California Presidential Chair (1994-1997). In his March 18, 1996 correspondence to Davis, University of California Regent Ward Connolly, who is Chairman of the conservative Civil Rights Initiative that spearheaded California's anti-affirmative action legislation, castigated her for campus speeches to defeat the Initiative. He wrote: "Your record as a revolutionary is not merely disturbing but it may impair your effectiveness as a member of the faculty of one of this nation's most highly respected academic institutions." Along with other conservative state officials, Connolly had opposed Davis's 1995 appointment at the University of California Presidential Chair, and her sharing the Chair's research funds with the UC- Santa Cruz "Women of Color Research Cluster" to support graduate and undergraduate research and teaching in multicultural, antiracist feminist studies. (Correspondence, author's papers)

24. See George Jackson, ***Blood in My Eye***, New York: Random House, 1972 and George Jackson, ***Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson***, New York:, Lawrence Hill Books [New York: Coward-McCann, 1970].

25. Ruchelle McGee remains imprisoned. The autobiography records trial testimony including the defense cross-examination of an officer concerning prison policy on escapes. To defense attorney Leo Branton's query if standard prison policy requires guards to prevent escapes (where prisoners use hostages as shields) "even if it means that every hostage is killed?—San Quentins Sergeant Murphy responded: "That is correct." Davis, ***Angela Davis***, p. 370.

26. See Joanne Grant, ***Black Protest: History, Documents and Analyses 1619 to Present***, New York: Ballantine, 1968; Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, ***Agents of Repression: The FBI's War Against AIM and the Black Panther Party***, Boston: South End Press, 1989; Clayborne Carson, ***Malcolm X: The FBI File***, ed. David Gallen, New York: Carroll and Graf, 1991; FBI director J. Edgar Hoover designated the Black Panther Party as one of the leading threats to national security.

27. Although all deaths were a result of police shootings, under U.S. law the defendants were charged with the killings.

28. Elmer "Geromino" Pratt is one such case. After spending twenty-seven years in prison for the murder of Mrs. Olson, he was released on a $25,000 bail in June 1997 when a California judge ruled that his incarceration was based on perjured testimony by felon and FBI and LAPD informer Julio Butler, and that the District Attorneys office withheld that information from the jury concerning Pratt's innocence.

29. The death penalty was reinstituted in California in 1977.

30. Angela Davis, ***If They Come In the Morning: Voices of Resistance***, NY: Third Press, 1971, p. 3.

31. Leonard Harris, editor, ***Philosophy Born of Struggle***, Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt, 1981.

32. Michel Foucault, ***Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison***. Translation by Alan Sheridan, New York: Random House, 1979.

33. Angela Davis, "Race and Criminalization: Black Americans and the Punishment Industry," ***Angela Davis Reader***, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, forthcoming. According to Davis, "It is hypocritical to attack migrating working class people [from Mexico and the south] and to exonerate migrating transnational corporations . . . . immigrant corporations in search of nations providing cheap labor pools" that abandon communities and destablize their economic base, turning workers "into perfect candidates for welfare and for prison." These corporations simultaneously, and cyclically, "create an economic demand for prisons, which stimulates the economy, provides jobs for people who have been left without work." Angela Davis, Address for Defensa de Mujeres Benefit, keynote address, Santa Cruz, California, June 9, 1995, author's papers.)

34. When Davis was imprisoned, a member of the National United Committee to Free Angela Davis informed her that a feminist organization approached for support declined with the rationalization that "Angela Davis is not associated with the women's movement, she's associated with the Black movement. Paradoxically, the treasurer of Davis's legal defense fund was Gloria Steinem. The radical feminist organization, Redstockings, reported that in the late sixties and early seventies, Steinem had ties with the CIA. See Barbara Leon, "Gloria Steinem and the CIA," ***Feminist Revolution***, New York: Redstockings, 1975.

35. Angela Davis, "COMPLEXITY, ACTIVISM, OPTIMISM: An Interview with Angela Y. Davis," ***Feminist Review***, Fall 1988 (Interviewer Kum-Kum Bhavani, July 1988, Berkeley, California.).

36. Ibid., p. 71.

37. Coalition-building is a central theme in Davis's writings and political work. Concerning a multiracial feminist formation, she states in the 1988 Bhavani interview: "To shed the attitudinal forms of racism and class bias inevitable in any racist society, white middle-class women cannot continue simply to work among themselves . . .. [antiracist politics] will not happen as a result of white women attending workshops . . . white women must learn in activist contexts how to take leadership from women of colour . . . ."

The political function of that leadership sharing was recounted in an address, "Women, Race and Class: An Activist Perspective," for the National Women's Studies Association. Referring to the 1851 women's conference in Akron, Ohio, Davis cites the speech "Ain't I a Woman," attributed to Sojourner Truth (historian Nell Painter's biography questions this common assumption): "The important dynamic for us to understand is that while Sojourner Truth spoke from her own experiences as the voice of black women during that era, as a matter of fact she could speak more effectively for all of the [middle-class white] women there than those women could speak for themselves, because of the political experiences that she had accumulated. She had had to fight for her own

survival, as a slave: she had had to struggle for her children—she speaks about the fact that practically all of her children were sold off to slavery. By virtue of her activist experiences, there were lessons that could have been learned from her that would perhaps have assisted the women's rights movement to progress more rapidly."

38. Davis, "COMPLEXITY, ACTIVIST, OPTIMIST," p. 69.

39. Ibid., p. 75.

40. Angela Davis, "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," ***The Black Scholar***, December 1971, pp. 3-15.

41. Ibid.

42. Davis, ***Angela Davis: An Autobiography***, pp. 359-364.

43. Angela Davis, "Rape, Racism and the Capitalist Setting," ***The Black Scholar***, April 1978, pp. 24-30.

44. Angela Davis, "Violence Against Women and the Ongoing Challenge to Racism," ***The Freedom Organizing Pamphlet Series***, Latham, NY: Women of Color Press, 1985.

45. Angela Davis, "Joanne Little: The Dialectics of Rape," ***Ms.***, June 1975, pp. 74-108.

46. Angela Davis, "Women and Capitalism: Dialectics of Oppression and Liberation," ***Marxism, Revolution and Peace***, Howard Parsons and John Sommerville, eds, Amsterdam: B.R. Gruener, B.V., 1977.

47. Angela Davis, "The Approaching Obsolescence of Housework: A Working-Class Perspective," ***Women, Race and Class***, New York: Vintage, 1981.

48. Angela Davis, "Outcast Mothers and Surrogates: Racism and REproductive Politics in the Nineties," ***"It Jus' Ain't Fair": The Ethics of Health Care for African Americans***. Westport, CT: Paeger, 1994.

49. Angela Davis, keynote address, January 1995, "Black Women and the Academy," Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.

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Editor's note: In regard to terminology and points of style, we lowercase "black" and hyphenate "African-American." If these terms are within quotes, we retain the writer's usage of them.