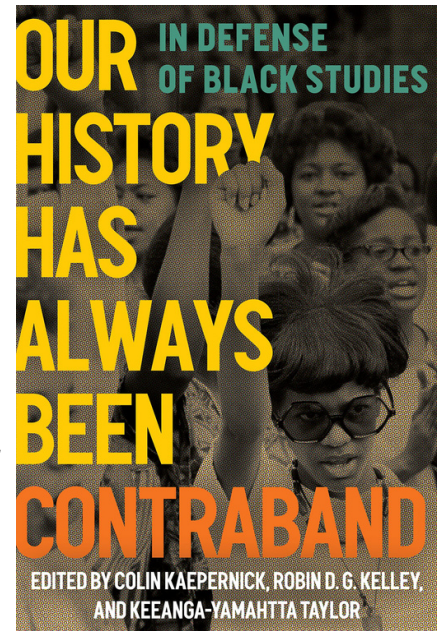


Kaepernick Publishing and Haymarket Books release "Our History Has Always Been Contraband" as a free ebook

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Edited by Robin D.G. Kelley, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, and Colin Kaepernick, "Our History Has Always Been Contraband: In Defense of Black Studies" will explain attempts to ban Black Studies as an assault on social movements fighting for a better future.

Los Angeles, CA (Wednesday, May 24, 2023) – Today, Kaepernick Publishing and Haymarket Books are releasing a free ebook *Our History Has Always Been Contraband: In Defense of Black Studies*. The book is available for free download on each publisher's website and on the website of Marguerite Casey Foundation (MCF), which is supporting the project.



The print edition will release July 4, 2023 and is available for preorder now wherever books are sold. "The centuries-long attack on Black history represents a strike against our very worth, brilliance, and value. We're ready to fight back. And when we fight, we win," Colin Kaepernick writes in his preface to the book.

Since its founding as a discipline, Black Studies has been under relentless attack by social and political forces seeking to discredit and neutralize it. *Our History Has Always Been Contraband* was born out of an urgent need to respond to the latest threat: efforts to remove content from an AP African American Studies course being piloted in high schools across the United States.

Edited by Colin Kaepernick, Robin D. G. Kelley, and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *Our History Has Always Been Contraband* brings together canonical texts and authors in Black Studies, including those excised from or not included in the AP curriculum.

Featuring writings by: David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Anna Julia Cooper, Zora Neale Hurston, W. E. B. Du Bois, C. L. R. James, James Baldwin, June Jordan, Angela Y. Davis, Robert Allen, Barbara Smith, Toni Cade Bambara, bell hooks, Barbara Christian, Patricia Hill Collins, Cathy J. Cohen, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Saidiya Hartman, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, and many others.

Our History Has Always Been Contraband excerpts readings that cut across and between literature, political theory, law, psychology, sociology, gender and sexuality studies, queer and feminist theory, and history. This volume also includes original essays by editors Kaepernick, Kelley, and Taylor, elucidating how we got here, and pieces by Brea Baker, Marlon Williams-Clark, and Roderick A. Ferguson detailing how we can fight back.

To read *Our History Has Always Been Contraband* is to be an outlaw for liberation. These writings illuminate the ways we can collectively work toward freedom for all—through abolition, feminism, racial justice, economic empowerment, self-determination, desegregation, decolonization, reparations, queer liberation, cultural and artistic expression, and beyond.

“Black studies is a crucial field that examines the history and contemporary realities of Black life throughout the world,” said Dr. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, who co-edited the book. “That search for knowledge and understanding is not for its own sake, but is a means to prepare those who oppose racism, oppression and exploitation on global scales, to contribute to movements that intend to change those conditions.”

“We are not surprised that fascists want to ban our work,” said co-editor Dr. Robin D. G. Kelley. “Black studies was born of resistance and grew up in a state of fugitivity, as a critique of a world that built counterfeit democracies on slavery, dispossession, colonialism, racism, and violence. And we remain, seeking hard truths, refusing indoctrination, and creating knowledge intended to free us all.”

“Now is the time for bold publishing that stands up to those who want to sanitize history, roll back hard won gains of past social movements, and deprive youth of vital tools to understand our history and our present,” added Anthony Arnove, editorial director of Haymarket Books.

“Political leaders across the country are introducing laws to remove work by scholars from classrooms and libraries. Marguerite Casey Foundation is working towards a country where our government prioritizes the needs of excluded and underrepresented people,” noted Carmen Rojas, president and CEO of MCF. “Offering these critical writings plants the seed in people’s minds that our government should be supporting the representation of all of us in our history books, critical examination, and literature and not picking the most privileged among us to tell our collective story.”

Haymarket Books is a radical, independent, nonprofit book publisher based in Chicago. Our mission is to publish books that contribute to struggles for social and economic justice. We strive to make our books a vibrant and organic part of social movements and the education and development of a critical, engaged, and internationalist Left.

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Founded by Colin Kaepernick in 2019, Kaepernick Publishing strives to elevate a new generation of writers with diverse views and voices through the creation of powerful works of all genres that can build a better and more just world. See www.KaepernickPublishing.com for more information.

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Marguerite Casey Foundation supports leaders, scholars, and initiatives focused on shifting the balance of power in society – building power for communities that continue to be excluded from shaping how society works and from sharing in its rewards and freedoms. Our board members, leadership, and staff are committed to building a just economy and fully realized democracy, and to providing unfettered support to the bold strategies and leadership that are required to bring about major change in our lifetime.

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