

And Not Just Because It's Black History Month

Based on an unfinished work by legendary writer James Baldwin, "I Am Not Your Negro" is the new race-relations documentary that should be required viewing for all Americans.

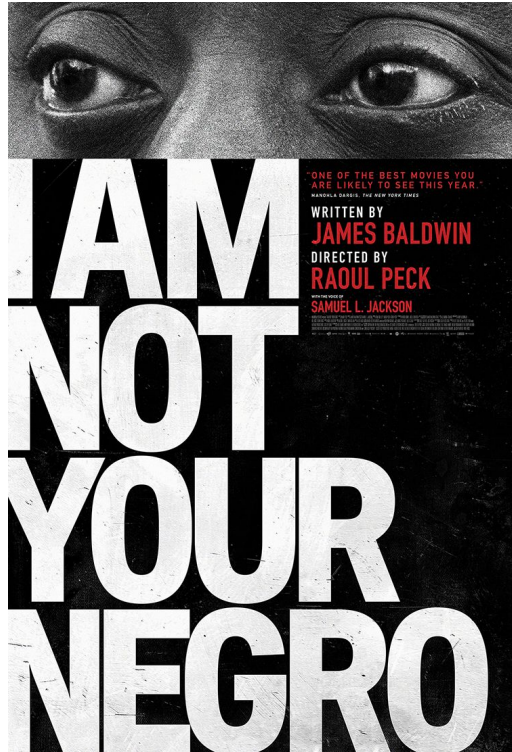
By Chanel Parks. Photographs courtesy of Magnolia Pictures



Look familiar?

30-Second Synopsis: Back in 1979, writer and activist James Baldwin began working on a manuscript written from the perspective of deceased Civil Rights leaders, Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, and Malcolm X. Titled *Remember This House*, the project never came to fruition, as Baldwin died before finishing any type of manuscript.

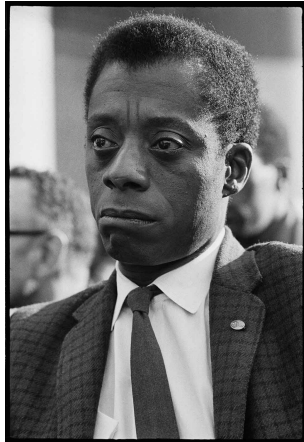
In *I Am Not Your Negro*, we get a read of this letter and, with it, insight into the racial wars of America that are very much alive today. The documentary is interlaced with lectures, TV appearances, and photographs from Baldwin's era, as well as visuals from today, including multiple Black Lives Matter protests.



The doc opens in theatres today, February 3.

James Baldwin 101: If this is your introduction to James Baldwin, you're in for an especially powerful ride. As a writer, Baldwin boldly tackled race and sexuality with nuance in the middle of the 20th century, a time heated with civil rights activism and the sexual revolution. He notably made France his secondary home, and yet encapsulated the depth of what being black in the US meant (and, wildly, still means today).

Baldwin wrote intellectual essays for *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times Magazine*, communicating the reality black people in the South were facing to a much wider audience. He also held lectures on the plight of racial tensions, met with then-attorney general Robert F. Kennedy, and participated in both the Civil Rights March on Washington in 1963 and the walk from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. As a writer, social critic, and constituent, Baldwin sought equality through communication over violence.



A candid portrait of James Baldwin.

Standout Quote: “That's part of the dilemma of being an American Negro; that one is a little bit colored and a little bit white, and not only in physical terms but in the head and in the heart, and there are days—this is one of them—when you wonder what your role is in this country and what your future is in it.” —James Baldwin in an interview on Boston’s WGBH program *The Negro and the American Promise* in 1963

How You’ll Feel When Watching: Enraged yet inspired.



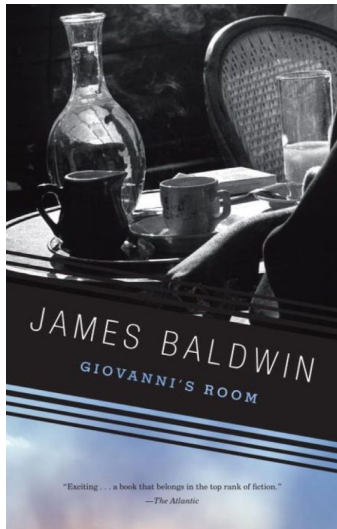
Mood.

Why It’s Relevant Today: Race relations in the US have improved since the '60s, but it’s imperative to be aware that racism still exists in a significant way. Police brutality, imprisonment rates, the failings of the education system, and the presence of unadulterated hate alter and impair black people’s experience in America, and that is as unjust as it ever was, plain and simple.

I Am Not Your Negro is exactly the film we need right now, with the role models we should strive to emulate. The documentary is a well-timed reminder that we need to continue to enact resistance through protest, writing, and plausible action to ensure racial supremacy and fear mongering doesn't undo—or, worse, deepen—our country's existing divide.

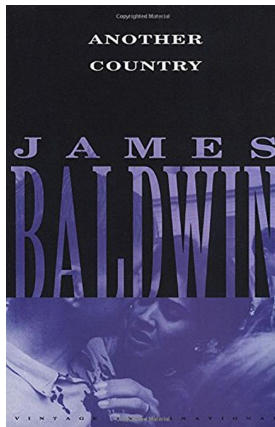
Required Reading

For When You're Going Through Heartbreak



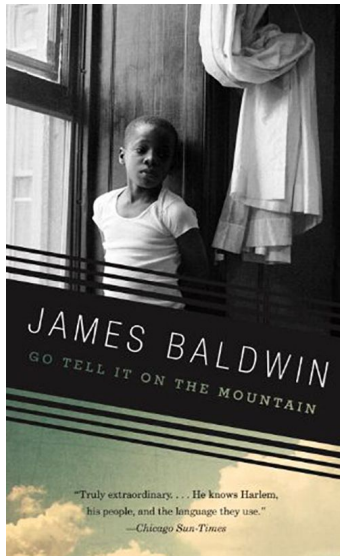
"Giovanni's Room," \$11, [barnesandnoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com).

For a Different View of New York City



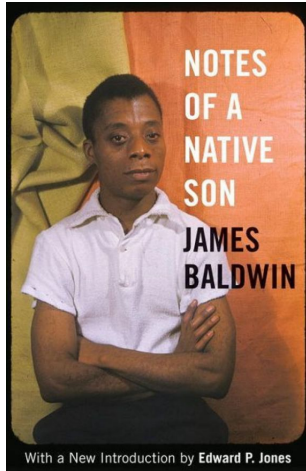
"Another Country," \$13, [booksamillion.com](https://www.booksamillion.com).

For Another Teen Experience



“Go Tell It on the Mountain,” \$8, play.google.com.

For When You’re Questioning America



“Notes of a Native Son,” \$13, barnesandnoble.com.

.....

***I Am Not Your Negro* opens today in a limited release.**