

# **BSAA Dominican Republic: Annotated Bibliography and Other Resources**

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Black Studies Across the Americas

## OVERVIEW

This bibliography provides a brief account of some of the available research on the following topics: racial identity formation among Dominicans; Dominican cultural forms and the cultural impact in Washington Heights; Dominican hair, beauty aesthetics and the politics of hair. You may also find a number of online sources and videos in English and Spanish.

## BSAA DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND OTHER RESOURCES

### Racial Identity Formation Among Dominicans

Howard, David. 2001. *Coloring the Nation: Race and Ethnicity in the Dominican Republic*. Oxford: Signal Books.

Howard's text is dedicated to deconstructing race and ethnicity in the Dominican Republic. Employing semi-formal interviews, the author maps the ways in which race, ethnicity and Blackness are understood and experienced in the Dominican Republic as part of the legacy of colonialism and especially as it relates to understandings of the Dominican state and identity in relation to, or in opposition to the Haitian state.

Lamb, V., & Dundes, L. (2017). Not haitian: Exploring the roots of Dominican identity. *Social Sciences*, 6(4), 132.

This article is based on interviews conducted in Miami, Florida detailing the complexities in the racial divide between Haitians and Dominicans. The article examines colorism within Dominican culture as centered upon a denying of African heritage. Utilizing interview data, the researchers examine anti-Haitianism and the ways some Dominicans have come to understand such as it relates to their racial identities.

Mayes, April J. 2014. *The Mulatto Republic: Class, Race, and Dominican National Identity*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida

In this text, Mayes interrogates the multiple ways in which Dominican national identity is constructed and defined - one which centers European ancestry, Catholicism, the Spanish language, and is culturally Hispani. The author thus questions whether such a privileging is rooted in the legacy of the Trujillo regime and maps this through an interrogation of historical events in the Dominican Republic.

Quiros, & Dawson, B. A. 2013. "The Color Paradigm: The Impact of Colorism on the Racial Identity and Identification of Latinas." *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 23(3), 287–297.

The article explores the dynamics of colorism and the effects on racial identity among Latinos and how stigmas as it regards darker skin, affect livelihood in the U.S. The author centers skin color privilege and stigma and the ways in which Latinas negotiate these in the United States.

Shoaff, Jennifer L. 2017. *Borders of Visibility: Haitian Migrant Women and the Dominican Nation-State*. The University of Alabama Press.

The author uses a multisited feminist research methodology to shed light on the opportunities and constraints that migrant Haitian women experience in the Dominican Republic. It offers timely insights into Dominican racist ideology and the ill treatment of Haitians within Dominican society.

Torres-Saillant, Silvio. 1998. "The Tribulations of Blackness: Stages in Dominican Racial Identity." *Latin American Perspectives*, 25(3), 126–146.

Here, Torres-Saillant not only maps Dominican racial identity formation as it relates to the constructions and experiences of Blackness and what is described as the rise of the mulatto in Dominican history, but the author reminds that it was the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo (present day Dominican Republic) where the first enslaved Africans arrived to the Americas. The author also interrogates Dominican identity as it pertains to Blackness among transnational Dominicans and Dominicans in the United States, and the ways that some Dominicans' racial identity had been influenced by Black liberation movements in the United States.

Uzogara, EE. 2018. "Gendered Racism Biases: Associations of Phenotypes with Discrimination and Internalized Oppression Among Latinx American Women and Men." *Race and Social Problems*, 11(1), 80–92.

This article explores the impact of colorism on Afro-Latino men and women and the effects of internalized racism. The author discusses the differences in levels of discrimination between different social statuses. An example of this idea is the notion that light skinned Latina women experienced higher internalized racism and lower discrimination while darker women experienced the opposite which shows the difference in skin tone on the treatment of the individual which has effects on mental well being.

## **Dominican cultural forms and the cultural impact in Washington Heights**

Snyder, Robert. 2014. *Crossing Broadway : Washington Heights and the promise of New York City*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

In this very important text on the history of Washington Heights and New York City, Snyder employs historical research, reporting, and oral histories so as to allow the reader great insight into how Washington Heights was formed into the neighborhood we know it as today. Furthermore, the book elucidates Washington Heights as the largest Dominican community outside of the Dominican Republic and maps this transformation.

L'Official, Peter. 2021. *Urban Legends: The South Bronx in Representation and Ruin*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

In this text, L'Official reveals the cultural history of the South Bronx that reaches beyond familiar narratives of urban ruin and renaissance, beyond the "inner city" symbol, to reveal the place and people obscured by its myths. For decades, the South Bronx was America's "inner city." Synonymous with civic neglect, crime, and metropolitan decay, the Bronx became the preeminent symbol used to proclaim the failings of urban places and the communities of color who lived in them. Images of its ruins and none more infamous than the one broadcast live during the 1977 World Series a building burning near Yankee Stadium proclaimed the failures of urbanism.

### **On Art and Culture**

Guilamo, Daly. 2016. "Gagá Pa'l Pueblo: A Critical Afro Dominican Celebration in New York City." *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*. 9(10). 31-44

Here, Guilamo introduces the reader to Gagá Pa'l Pueblo, an Afro Dominican group that hosts a summer religious musical event that takes place every Sunday afternoon in Washington Heights. At the event gagá music is performed in honor of a Dominican Vudú loa or deity. Guilamo thus argues that Gagá Pa'l Pueblo in its celebration of AfroDominicaness and Blackness, is the antithesis to Dominican national identity. In this way, it is indeed a radical celebration.

Hutchinson, Sydney. 2006. "Merengue Típico in Santiago and New York: Transnational Regionalism in a Neo-Traditional Dominican Music". *Ethnomusicology*, 50(1), 37–72.

This article centers on merengue típico, the oldest style of merengue from and still performed in the Dominican Republic. The author argues that merengue típico is a transnational music and remains popular among some Dominicans in New York City. It has however transformed and this is a result of transnational migration of Dominicans to New York City and political shifts in the Dominican Republic in the 1960s.

Valdez, E. (2017). "Writing the Feminine: The Representation of Women in Contemporary Dominican Visual Art." *Small Axe* 21(1), 126-140.

The works of visual artists, Belkis Ramirez and Raquel Paiewonsk, are analyzed in this essay so as to explore how they challenge traditional models of pictorial and sculptural art. Both artists have revolutionized the Dominican art scene both theoretically and technically while their artworks explore the deprecating effects of patriarchy, such as forced motherhood, the abortion ban, and feminicides in Dominican society.

### **Online Sources**

- *Dominican Landmarks*. 2013. Revised in 2020. CUNY Dominican Studies Institute. The City College of New York. CUNY. Accessible at: <http://www.dominicanhistoricneighborhoods.com/about.html>
- Little Dominican Republic. Accessible at: <http://littledominicanrepublic.com/>
- Chiamaka Nwosu, Jeanne Batalova. 2014. "Immigrants from the Dominican Republic in the United States." Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/immigrants-dominican-republic-united-states>
- An Economic Snapshot of Washington Heights and Inwood. <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/osdc/rpt2-2016.pdf>
- Pedro A. Regalado. 2016. "Bodegas and Colmados: Dominican Vernacular Space in Washington Heights" *The Gotham Center For New York City History*. <https://www.gothamcenter.org/blog/bodegas-and-colmados-%20dominican-vernacular-space-in-washington-heights>

### **Dominican Hair, Beauty Aesthetics and the Politics of Hair**

Badillo, Casandra. 2001. "Only my hairdresser knows for sure".(public perception of women's hair in the Dominican Republic). *NACLA Report on the Americas* (1993), 34(6), 35–.

Through interviews with nine Black Dominican women in the Dominican Republic, Badillo seeks to allow the reader an understanding as to why straight hair is sought after and naturally curly or kinky hair stigmatized. Through the interviewees' own voices, the idea of hair as social capital in Dominican society is solidified.

Candelario.G. 2000. "Hair Race-ing: Dominican Beauty Culture and Identity Production." *Meridians*. 1(1), 128–156.

In this important study, Candelario examines the importance of hair as a marker of race and beauty and thus intrinsic to Dominican notion of beauty and identity. Engaging in participant observation at a Dominican beauty shop in New York City, Candelario

interrogates the ways in which Dominican identity as culturally Hispanic has reinforced beauty practices among transnational Dominicans.

Lyon, J. 2020. "Pajón power: Styling citizenship and Black politics in the Dominican natural hair movement." *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, 43(12), 2120-2139.

This article examines how the natural hair movement is challenging anti-Black racism and exclusionary ideology of mestizaje in the Dominican Republic. It argues that Afro-descendants are breaking the silence and constructing a new narrative around race and visualizing blackness in the Dominican Republic.

### **Online sources**

- Godin, Melissa. 2017. "Rethinking Beauty and Race at Dominican-American Hair Salons." SAPIENS, Creative Commons. Accessible at: <https://www.sapiens.org/biology/dominican-hair-rethinking-beauty-race/>
- Pierre, D. 2020.. *The business of black hair*. HuffPost. Accessible at: [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/business-black-hair-care\\_1\\_5e1f77cac5b63211760d536e](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/business-black-hair-care_1_5e1f77cac5b63211760d536e)
- Yee, V. 2014. *Black women find a growing business opportunity: Care for their hair*. The New York Times. Accessible at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/09/nyregion/black-women-find-a-growing-business-opportunity-care-for-their-hair.html>
- NPR. 2010.. *Dominicans edge in on Black Salon Business*. NPR. Accessible at: <https://www.npr.org/2010/05/13/126797971/dominicans-edge-in-on-black-salon-business>
- D. W. (n.d.). *Natural hair revolution unravels racist beauty ideals in Caribbean: DW*: Accessible at: <https://www.dw.com/en/natural-hair-revolution-unravels-racist-beauty-ideals-in-caribbean/a-46931740>

### **Other Important Resources:**

#### **Videos/Documentaries/Films**

- Black in Latin America - Haiti and the Dominican Republic - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvegxdm35JU>
- Needed but Unwanted - Haitians in the Dominican Republic - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4IsKvqBLdw>
- *The business of black hair* - youtube. (n.d.). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mo1EHYkFP8I>
- First Blacks in the Americas - <http://firstblacks.org/en/>

## **En español**

- Diálogos De La Historia No Contada: Raza Y Nación -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmlHH21JzW4&t=32s>;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJE1afWDVZg&t=130s>
- Chango Prieto-  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWym5vdQvh1RnxGfwC-YgQA/videos>