

African-American History Month

February 2009

The 2009
Black History
Theme:
"The Quest for
Black
Citizenship in the
Americas "



On the Front Cover:



William Greaves has done it all — actor, director, producer and writer. One of his recent notable projects is a film for PBS about Ralph Bunche — the first African-American to win the Nobel Peace Prize.



Robert Pelham was born on the eve of the Civil War. He earned a law degree from Howard University. Pelham worked for the U.S. Census Bureau for 30 years and earned a patent for a machine which tallied statistical totals.



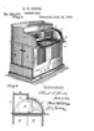
Evelyn Ashford became one of the world's fastest sprinters. In four Olympic games, Evelyn Ashford won five medals, four of them gold.



Maurice Ashley —chess player
He earned the rank of national master in 1986 and became an international grand master — one of only 470 in the world and the first African-American --in 1999.



Barack H. Obama is the 44th President of the United States and the first American president of Afro-American origin. See Page 12.



(no photo)

Sarah Goode was freed from slavery and moved to Chicago, where she started a furniture store. She received the first patent ever granted to an African-American woman, for a bed that folded up into a cabinet, which then served as a desk .



Dorothy West was one of the members of the creative outburst in the 1920s among young African-American artists and writers known as the Harlem Renaissance.



Rosa Parks
See Page 5.



Bobby Short, great New York café society pianist and vocalist. His love was the great American song — the durable work of Rogers and Hart, Cole Porter and the Gershwins.



Fannie Lou Hamer was often called "the spirit of the civil rights movement." Her best-known quote was "I am sick and tired of being sick and tired."



Captain **Frederick Branch**, U.S. Marine Corps—the first African-American to wear the uniform of a Marine officer. On the photo his wife Peggy is pinning on his bars late in 1945.



Martin Robinson Delany— doctor, editor, author, politician, judge and Army officer. During the Civil War he attained the rank of major, becoming the first African-American with a regular Army commission.



Condoleezza Rice— the first African-American woman to be Secretary of State.



John H. Johnson— publisher, owner of the highly influential "Ebony" magazine, profiling rising African-American figures in business, politics and the arts, and weekly magazine "Jet".



Tony Dungy, now in his fourth season with the Indianapolis Colts and in his 10th year as an NFL head coach, is widely respected for his knowledge of the game and his calm demeanor.



Lorraine Hansberry — the first African-American woman to have a play produced on Broadway. Her play "A Raisin in the Sun" won the drama critics' Circle Award, making her the youngest American and the first black to receive it.



Sidney Bechet's large, warm tone and rapid vibrato on the soprano saxophone is a unique sound, and his virtuosity on the difficult instrument helped it to be recognized in the jazz world.



(no photo)

Miriam Benjamin, a Washington, D.C., school teacher invented a chair she called the "gong and signal chair for hotels", a predecessor of the system universally used on airliners around the world.



Ernest Just, a research biologist specialized in the study of cells, hoping that learning about healthy cells could lead to understanding diseases such as cancer. He was awarded the first Spingarn Medal from the NAACP.



Arna Bontemps, poet, novelist, historian, writer of children's books and short stories, editor and librarian, helped shape modern African-American literature. His most important work is generally thought to be "Black Thunder."



Dr. George Grant was one of the first African-American dentists, and also one of the first of his race to play golf. Using his dental skills, he fashioned the first golf tee, for which he received a patent in 1899.



Sherian Cadoria became the first woman to command the all-male Military Police Training Battalion at Fort McClellan, Alabama. She served for 33 months in Vietnam and, after 29 years in the Army, retired as a brigadier general.



Lewis Temple was a slave from Richmond, Virginia, who obtained his freedom and moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he worked as a blacksmith. He developed a harpoon known as "Temple's Toggle," for the whalers.



Harriet Tubman was very brave, making 19 trips into the South and helping over 300 slaves to freedom. During the Civil War, Tubman worked for the Union Army as a cook, scout, spy and as a nurse.



Gordon Parks is one of the most talented American photographers. For 20 years he was a photojournalist for "Life" magazine, producing 300 articles, and he is a member of the International Photography Hall of Fame.



C. DeLores Tucker was the first African-American and first woman to be Pennsylvania Secretary of State. She helped streamline voter registration, lower the voting age to 18 and started the first state commission on the status of women.



George Edward Alcorn Jr., the assistant director of Applied Engineering and Technology at the Goddard Space Flight Center. Honored as NASA's inventor of the year in 1984, he holds eight patents, and several of his inventions are used widely in the semiconductor industry.



George Washington Bush was one of the pioneers who set out by wagon train to the West in 1844. He moved north across the Columbia River in search of good land — into what is now the state of Washington.



Edward Davis — the nation's first African-American new car dealer. With the backing of the Studebaker Co., he opened a dealership in Detroit in 1940, which he operated until the carmaker closed 26 years later.

National African American History Month, 2009 A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

The history of African Americans is unique and rich, and one that has helped to define what it means to be an American. Arriving on ships on the shores of North America more than 300 years ago, recognized more as possessions than people, African Americans have come to know the freedoms fought for in establishing the United States and gained through the use of our founding principles of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right to assembly, and due process of law. The ideals of the Founders became more real and more true for every citizen as African Americans pressed us to realize our full potential as a Nation and to uphold those ideals for all who enter into our borders and embrace the notion that we are all endowed with certain unalienable rights.

Since Carter G. Woodson first sought to illuminate the African American experience, each February we pause to reflect on the contributions of this community to our national identity. The history is one of struggle for the recognition of each person's humanity as well as an influence on the broader American culture. African Americans designed our beautiful Capital City, gave us the melodic rhythms of New Orleans Jazz, issued new discoveries in science and medicine, and forced us to examine ourselves in the pages of classic literature. This legacy has only added luster to the brand of the United States, which has drawn immigrants to our shores for centuries.

This year's theme, "The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas," is a chance to examine the evolution of our country and how African Americans helped draw us ever closer to becoming a more perfect union.

The narrative of the African American pursuit of full citizenship with all of the rights and privileges afforded others in this country is also the story of a maturing young Nation. The voices and examples of the African American people worked collectively to remove the boulders of systemic racism and discrimination that pervaded our laws and our public consciousness for decades. Through the work of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King and Thurgood Marshall, the African American community has steadily made progress toward the dreams within its grasp and the promise of our Nation. Meanwhile, the belief that those dreams might one day be realized by all of our citizens gave African American men and women the same sense of duty and love of country that led them to shed blood in every war we have ever fought, to invest hard-earned resources in their communities with the hope of self empowerment, and to pass the ideals of this great land down to their children and grandchildren.

As we mark National African American History Month, we should take note of this special moment in our Nation's history and the actors who worked so diligently to deliver us to this place. One such organization is the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People -- the NAACP -- which this year will witness 100 years of service to the Nation on February 12. Because of their work, including the contributions of those luminaries on the front lines and great advocates behind the scenes, we as a Nation were able to take the dramatic steps we have in recent history.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 2009 as National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs that raise awareness and appreciation of African American history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of February, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

BARACK OBAMA
February 2, 2009

Source : The White House, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

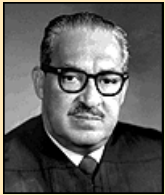
1948

July 26

Truman signs Executive Order 9981, which states, "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin." The order also creates the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services.

1954

May 17



The Supreme Court rules on the landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kans.*, unanimously agreeing that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional. The ruling paves the way for large-scale desegregation. The decision overturns the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling that sanctioned "separate but equal" segregation of the races, ruling that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." It is a victory for NAACP attorney Thurgood Marshall, who will later return to the Supreme Court as the nation's first black justice.

1955

Aug.

Fourteen-year-old Chicagoan Emmett Till is visiting family in Mississippi when he is kidnapped, brutally beaten, shot, and dumped in the Tallahatchie River for allegedly whistling at a white woman. Two white men, J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant, are arrested for the murder and acquitted by an all-white jury. They later boast about committing the murder in a *Look* magazine interview. The case becomes a cause célèbre of the civil rights movement.

The History of Black History by Elissa Haney

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." What you might not know is that black history had barely begun to be studied—or even documented—when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a respectable presence in the history books.

Blacks Absent from History Books

We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and more importantly, the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age twenty. He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. The scholar was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population—and when blacks did figure into the picture, it was generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time.

Established Journal of Negro History

Woodson, always one to act on his ambitions, decided to take on the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation's history. He established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History) in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected *Journal of Negro History*. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history.

Woodson chose the second week of February for Negro History Week because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.



Dr. Carter G. Woodson

Rosa Parks, Pioneer of Civil Rights 1913-2005

Civil Rights Leader Dies By Ezra Billinkoff

October 26—Rosa Parks, who inspired a generation to fight for civil rights, died on Monday at age 92. Parks, a black woman, refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, nearly 50 years ago. She was arrested and fined for breaking the law.

In response to her arrest, black men and women in Montgomery boycotted, or refused to use, the city buses. They demanded an end to segregation, or laws that denied equal rights to black people. A young pastor at the local church named Martin Luther King Jr. led the boycott. Because of the protesters' refusal to ride the buses, the bus system nearly went out of business.

Many believe that Parks's bold decision triggered the civil rights movement, a struggle to grant Americans the same rights, regardless of their color. "She sat down in order that we might stand up," said civil rights leader Jesse Jackson yesterday. "Her imprisonment opened the doors for our long journey to freedom."

Parks's action showed how one person could

make a big impact. She inspired others, including Martin Luther King Jr., to use nonviolence

and civil disobedience as a way to protest problems in society.

After Montgomery

The Montgomery bus boycott lasted 381 days. Throughout those months, churches and homes in the black community were attacked. Despite threats to their lives, the community continued to refuse to ride the buses. In November 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed segregation on buses. After the court order arrived in Montgomery, blacks began riding the buses again, sitting wherever they pleased.

Following the boycott, Parks moved with her family to Detroit, Michigan. A newly elected member of the House of Representatives named John Conyers Jr. hired her as a staff assistant. She remained there until 1988, when she retired.

"There are very few people who can say their actions and conduct changed the face of the nation," said Conyers. "And Rosa Parks is one of those individuals."

Source: *Scholastic News*

Civil Rights Timeline Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

Dec. 1



(Montgomery, Ala.) NAACP member Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat at the front of the "colored section" of a bus to a white pas-

senger, defying a southern custom of the time. In response to her arrest the Montgomery black community launches a bus boycott, which will last for more than a year, until the buses are desegregated Dec. 21, 1956. As newly elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., is instrumental in leading the boycott.

Jan.–Feb.

Martin Luther King, Charles K. Steele, and Fred L. Shuttlesworth establish the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, of which King is made the first president. The SCLC becomes a major force in organizing the civil rights movement and bases its principles on nonviolence and civil disobedience. According to King, it is essential that the civil rights movement not sink to the level of the racists and hatemongers who oppose them: "We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline," he urges.

Sept.

(Little Rock, Ark.) Formerly all-white Central High School



1955

1957

Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

1957

learns that integration is easier said than done. Nine black students are blocked from entering the school on the orders of Governor Orval Faubus. President Eisenhower sends federal troops and the National Guard to intervene on behalf of the students, who become known as the "Little Rock Nine."

1960

Feb. 1
(Greensboro, N.C.) Four black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College begin a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter. Although they are refused service, they are allowed to stay at the counter. The event triggers many similar non-violent protests throughout the South. Six months later the original four protesters are served lunch at the same Woolworth's counter. Student sit-ins would be effective throughout the Deep South in integrating parks, swimming pools, theaters, libraries, and other public facilities.

April

(Raleigh, N.C.) The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) is founded at Shaw University, providing young blacks with a place in the civil rights movement. The SNCC later grows into a more radical organization, especially under the leadership of Stokely Carmichael (1966–1967).

1961

May 4

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) begins sending student volunteers on bus trips to test the implementation of new laws prohibiting segregation in interstate travel facilities. One of the first two groups of "freedom riders," as they are called, encounters its first

March on Washington

August 28, 1963

The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom took place in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963. Attended by some 250,000 people, it was the largest demonstration ever seen in the nation's capital, and one of the first to have extensive television coverage.

Background

1963 was noted for racial unrest and civil rights demonstrations. Nationwide outrage was sparked by media coverage of police actions in Birmingham, Alabama, where attack dogs and fire hoses were turned against protestors, many of whom were in their early teens or younger. Martin Luther King, Jr., was arrested and jailed during these protests, writing his famous "Letter From Birmingham City Jail," which advocates civil disobedience against unjust laws. Dozens of additional demonstrations took place across the country, from California to New York, culminating in the March on Washington. President Kennedy backed a Civil Rights Act, which was stalled in Congress by the summer.

Coalition

The March on Washington represented a coalition of several civil rights organizations, all of which generally had different approaches and different agendas. The "Big Six" organizers were James Farmer, of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE); Martin Luther King, Jr., of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); John Lewis, of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); A. Philip Randolph, of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Roy Wilkins, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and Whitney Young, Jr., of the National Urban League.

Opposition

President Kennedy originally discouraged the march, for fear that it might make the legislature vote against civil rights laws in reaction to a perceived threat. Once it became clear that the march would go on, however, he supported it.

While various labor unions supported the march, the AFL-CIO remained neutral. Outright opposition came from two sides. White supremacist groups, including the Ku Klux

Klan, were obviously not in favor of any event supporting racial equality. On the other hand, the march was also condemned by some civil rights activists who felt it presented an inaccurate, sanitized pageant of racial harmony; Malcolm X called it the "Farce on Washington," and members of the Nation of Islam who attended the march faced a temporary suspension.

The March on Washington

Nobody was sure how many people would turn up for the demonstration in Washington, D.C. Some travelling from the South were harrassed and threatened. But on August 28, 1963, an estimated quarter of a million people—about a quarter of whom were white—marched from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial, in what turned out to be both a protest and a communal celebration. The heavy police presence turned out to be unnecessary, as the march was noted for its civility and peacefulness. The march was extensively covered by the media, with live international television coverage.

The event included musical performances by Marian Anderson; Joan Baez; Bob Dylan; Mahalia Jackson; Peter, Paul, and Mary; and Josh White. Charlton Heston—representing a contingent of artists, including Harry Belafonte, Marlon Brando, Diahann Carroll, Ossie Davis, Sammy Davis Jr., Lena Horne, Paul Newman, and Sidney Poitier—read a speech by James Baldwin.

The speakers included all of the "Big Six" civil-rights leaders (James Farmer, who was imprisoned in Louisiana at the time, had his speech read by Floyd McKissick); Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious leaders; and labor leader Walter Reuther. The one female speaker was Josephine Baker, who introduced several "Negro Women Fighters for Freedom," including Rosa Parks.



PHOTO SOURCE: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Noteworthy Speeches

The two most noteworthy speeches came from John Lewis and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

problem two weeks later, when a mob in Alabama sets the riders' bus on fire. The program continues, and by the end of the summer 1,000 volunteers, black and white, have participated.

1961

Oct. 1

James Meredith becomes the first black student to enroll at the University of Mississippi. Violence and riots surrounding the incident cause President Kennedy to send 5,000 federal troops.



1962

April 16

Martin Luther King is arrested and jailed during anti-segregation protests in Birmingham, Ala.; he writes his seminal "Letter from Birmingham Jail," arguing that individuals have the moral duty to disobey unjust laws.

1963

May

During civil rights protests in Birmingham, Ala., Commissioner of Public Safety Eugene "Bull" Connor uses fire hoses and police dogs on black demonstrators. These images of brutality, which are televised and published widely, are instrumental in gaining sympathy for the civil rights movement around the world.

June 12

(Jackson, Miss.) Mississippi's NAACP field secretary, 37-year-old Medgar Evers, is murdered outside his home. Byron De La Beckwith is tried twice in 1964, both trials resulting in hung juries. Thirty years later he is convicted for murdering Evers.

Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

1963

Aug. 28

(Washington, D.C.) About 200,000 people join the March on Washington. Congregating at the Lincoln Memorial, participants listen as Martin Luther King delivers his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.



Sept. 15

(Birmingham, Ala.) Four young girls (Denise McNair, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson, and Addie Mae Collins) attending Sunday school are killed when a bomb explodes at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, a popular location for civil rights meetings. Riots erupt in Birmingham, leading to the deaths of two more black youths.

1964

Jan. 23

The 24th Amendment abolishes the poll tax, which originally had been instituted in 11 southern states after Reconstruction to make it difficult for poor blacks to vote.

Summer

The Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), a network of civil rights groups that includes CORE and SNCC, launches a massive effort to register black voters during what becomes known as the Freedom Summer. It also sends delegates to the Democratic National Convention to protest—and attempt to unseat—the official all-white Mississippi contingent.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers his most famous address at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom (August 28, 1963)

"I Have a Dream"

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But 100 years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men - yes, black men as well as white men - would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

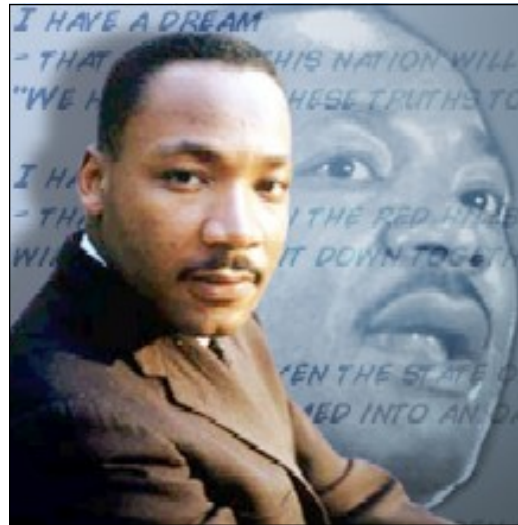
It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check that has come back marked "insufficient funds."

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to

the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end but a beginning. Those who hoped that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.



But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "for whites only." We cannot be satisfied as long as

Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

1964

July 2

President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The most sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin. The law also provides the federal government with the powers to enforce desegregation.

Aug. 4

(Neshoba Country, Miss.) The bodies of three civil-rights workers—two white, one black—are found in an earthen dam, six weeks into a federal investigation backed by President Johnson.

James E. Chaney, 21; Andrew Goodman, 21; and Michael Schwerner, 24, had been working to register black voters in Mississippi, and, on June 21, had gone to investigate the burning of a black church. They were arrested by the



police on speeding charges, incarcerated for several hours, and then released after dark into the hands of the Ku Klux Klan, who murdered them.

Feb. 21

(Harlem, N.Y.) Malcolm X, black nationalist and founder of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, is shot to death. It is believed the assailants are members of the Black Muslim faith, which Malcolm had recently abandoned in favor of orthodox Islam.

1965

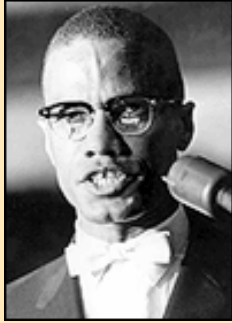
Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

1965

March 7

(Selma, Ala.) Blacks begin a march to Montgomery in support of voting rights but are stopped at the Pettus Bridge by a police blockade. Fifty marchers are hospitalized after police use tear gas, whips, and clubs against them. The incident is dubbed "Bloody Sunday" by the media. The march is considered the catalyst for pushing through the voting rights act five months later.



Aug. 10

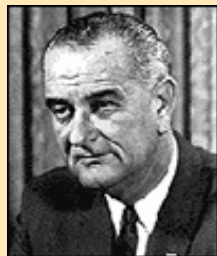
Congress passes the Voting Rights Act of 1965, making it easier for Southern blacks to register to vote. Literacy tests, poll taxes, and other such requirements that were used to restrict black voting are made illegal.

Aug. 11–17

(Watts, Calif.) Race riots erupt in a black section of Los Angeles.

Sept. 24

Asserting that civil rights laws alone are not enough to remedy discrimination, President Johnson issues Executive Order 11246, which enforces affirmative action for the first time. It requires government contractors to "take affirmative action" toward prospective minority employees in all aspects of hiring and employment.



a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today my friends - so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

J have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

J have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

J have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

J have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

J have a dream today.

J have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification - one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

J have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my father's died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi - from every mountainside.

Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring - when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children - black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics - will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

"Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

Civil Rights Timeline Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

Oct.

(Oakland, Calif.) The militant Black Panthers are founded by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale.

1966

April 19

Stokely Carmichael, a leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), coins the phrase "black power" in a speech in Seattle. He defines it as an assertion of black pride and "the coming together of black people to fight for their liberation by any means necessary."

1967

The term's radicalism alarms many who believe the civil rights movement's effectiveness and moral authority crucially depend on non-violent civil disobedience.

June 12

In *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court rules that prohibiting interracial marriage is unconstitutional. Sixteen states that still banned interracial marriage at the time are forced to revise their laws.

July

Major race riots take place in Newark (July 12–16) and Detroit (July 23–30).

April 4

(Memphis, Tenn.) Martin Luther King, at age 39, is shot as he stands on the balcony outside his hotel room. Escaped convict and committed racist James Earl Ray is convicted of the crime.

1968

April 11

President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1968, prohibiting discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing.

Civil Rights Timeline

Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

1971

April 20

The Supreme Court, in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, upholds busing as a legitimate means for achieving integration of public schools. Although largely unwelcome (and sometimes violently opposed) in local school districts, court-ordered busing plans in cities such as Charlotte, Boston, and Denver continue until the late 1990s.

1988

March 22

Overriding President Reagan's veto, Congress passes the Civil Rights Restoration Act, which expands the reach of non-discrimination laws within private institutions receiving federal funds.

1991

Nov. 22

After two years of debates, vetoes, and threatened vetoes, President Bush reverses himself and signs the Civil Rights Act of 1991, strengthening existing civil rights laws and providing for damages in cases of intentional employment discrimination.

1992

April 29

(Los Angeles, Calif.) The first race riots in decades erupt in south-central Los Angeles after a jury acquits four white police officers for the videotaped beating of African American Rodney King.

2003

June 23

In the most important affirmative action decision since the 1978 *Bakke* case, the Supreme Court (5–4) upholds the University of Michigan Law School's policy, ruling that race can be one of many factors considered by colleges when selecting their students because it furthers "a compelling interest in obtaining

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA



Barack H. Obama is the 44th President of the United States.

His story is the American story — values from the heartland, a middle-class upbringing in a strong family, hard work and education as the means of getting ahead, and the conviction that a life so blessed should be lived in service to others.

With a father from Kenya and a mother from Kansas, President Obama was born in Hawaii on August 4, 1961. He was raised with help from his grandfather, who served in Patton's army, and his grandmother, who worked her way up from the secretarial pool to middle management at a bank.

After working his way through college with the help of scholarships and student loans, President Obama moved to Chicago, where he worked with a group of churches to help rebuild communities devastated by the closure of local steel plants.

He went on to attend law school, where he became the first African—American president of the Harvard Law Review. Upon graduation, he returned to Chicago to help lead a voter registration drive, teach constitutional law at the University of Chicago, and remain active in his community. President Obama's years of public service are based around his unwavering belief in the ability to unite people around a politics of purpose. In the Illinois State Senate, he passed the first major ethics reform in 25 years, cut taxes for working families, and expanded health care for children and their parents. As a United States Senator, he reached across the aisle to pass groundbreaking lobbying reform, lock up the world's most dangerous weapons, and bring transparency to government by putting federal spending online.

He was elected the 44th President of the United States on November 4, 2008, and sworn in on January 20, 2009. He and his wife, Michelle, are the proud parents of two daughters, Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7.

President Obama's Inaugural Address
Tuesday, January 20, 2009
Washington, D.C.

My fellow citizens:

I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you've bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors. I thank President Bush for his service to our nation, as well as the generosity and cooperation he has shown throughout this transition.

Forty-four Americans have now taken the presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Yet, every so often the oath is taken amidst gathering clouds and raging storms. At these moments, America has carried on not simply because of the skill or vision of those in high office, but because We the People have remained faithful to the ideals of our forbearers, and true to our founding documents.

So it has been. So it must be with this generation of Americans.

That we are in the midst of crisis is now well understood. Our nation is at war, against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age. Homes have been lost; jobs shed; businesses shuttered. Our health care is too costly; our schools fail too many; and each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet.

These are the indicators of crisis, subject to data and statistics. Less measurable but no less profound is a sapping of confidence across our land — a nagging fear that America's decline is inevitable, and the next generation must lower its sights.

Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America — they will be met.

On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord.

On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn out dogmas, that for far too long have strangled our politics.

We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit, to choose our better history, to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.

In reaffirming the greatness of our nation, we understand that greatness is never a given. It must be earned. Our journey has never been one of shortcuts or settling for less. It has not been the path for the faint-hearted, for those who prefer leisure over work, or seek only the pleasures of riches and fame. Rather, it has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of things — some celebrated, but more often men and women obscure in their labor — who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom.

For us, they packed up their few worldly possessions and traveled across oceans in search of a new life.

Civil Rights Timeline
Milestones in the modern civil rights movement

the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body."

June 21

2005

The ringleader of the Mississippi civil rights murders (see Aug. 4, 1964), Edgar Ray Killen, is convicted of manslaughter on the 41st anniversary of the crimes.

October 24

Rosa Parks dies at age 92.

2006

January 30

Coretta Scott King dies of a stroke at age 78.

February

2007

Emmett Till's 1955 murder case, reopened by the Department of Justice in 2004, is officially closed. The two confessed murderers, J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant, were dead of cancer by 1994, and prosecutors lacked sufficient evidence to pursue further convictions.

May 10

James Bonard Fowler, a former state trooper, is indicted for the murder of Jimmie Lee Jackson 40 years after Jackson's death. The 1965 killing led to a series of historic civil rights protests in Selma, Ala.

January

2008

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) introduces the Civil Rights Act of 2008. Some of the proposed provisions include ensuring that federal funds are not used to subsidize discrimination, holding employers accountable for age discrimination, and improving accountability for other violations of civil rights and workers' rights.

For us, they toiled in sweatshops and settled the West, endured the lash of the whip and plowed the hard earth.

For us, they fought and died, in places like Concord and Gettysburg, Normandy and Khe Sanh.

Time and again these men and women struggled and sacrificed and worked till their hands were raw so that we might live a better life. They saw America as bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions, greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction.

This is the journey we continue today. We remain the most prosperous, powerful nation on Earth. Our workers are no less productive than when this crisis began. Our minds are no less inventive, our goods and services no less needed than they were last week or last month or last year. Our capacity remains undiminished. But our time of standing pat, of protecting narrow interests and putting off unpleasant decisions, that time has surely passed. Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America.

For everywhere we look, there is work to be done. The state of the economy calls for action, bold and swift, and we will act — not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth. We will build the roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together. We will restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost. We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories. And we will transform our schools and colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age. All this we can do. All this we will do.

Now, there are some who question the scale of our ambitions, who suggest that our system cannot tolerate too many big plans. Their memories are short. For they have forgotten what this country has already done, what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage.

What the cynics fail to understand is that the ground has shifted beneath them — that the stale political arguments that have consumed us for so long no longer apply. The



question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works — whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account — to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day — because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government.

Nor is the question before us whether the market is a force for good or ill. Its power to generate wealth and expand freedom is unmatched, but this crisis has reminded us that without a watchful eye, the market can spin out of control — that a nation cannot prosper long when it favors only the prosperous. The success of our economy has always depended not just on the size of our Gross Domestic Product, but on the reach of our prosperity, on the ability to extend opportunity to every willing heart — not out of charity, but because it is the surest route to our common good.

As for our common defense, we reject as false the choice between our safety and our ideals. Our Founding Fathers ... Our Founding Fathers, faced with perils we can scarcely imagine, drafted a charter to assure the rule of law and the rights of man, a charter expanded by the blood of generations. Those ideals still light the world, and we will not give them up for expedience's sake. And so to all other peoples and governments who are watching today, from the grandest capitals to the small village where my father was born: Know that America is a friend of each nation and every man, woman, and child who seeks a future of peace and dignity, and we are ready to lead once more.

Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks, but with sturdy alliances and enduring convictions. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead, they knew that our power grows through its prudent use: our security

emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint.

We are the keepers of this legacy. Guided by these principles once more, we can meet those new threats that demand even greater effort - even greater cooperation and understanding between nations. We will begin to responsibly leave Iraq to its people, and forge a hard-earned peace in Afghanistan. With old friends and former foes, we will work tirelessly to lessen the nuclear threat, and roll back the specter of a warming planet. We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense, and for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken; you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.

For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass, that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve, that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself, and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West: Know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy. To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history; but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.

To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters



Representatives of the Crow Nation of Montana participate in President Barack Obama's inaugural parade.



Members of the marching band from Barack Obama's high school, Punahou High School in Honolulu, Hawaii



flow, to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to suffering outside our borders, nor can we consume the world's resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it.

As we consider the road that unfolds before us, we remember with humble gratitude those brave Americans who, at this very hour, patrol far-off deserts and distant mountains. They have something to tell us, just as the fallen heroes who lie in Arlington whisper through the ages. We honor them not only because they are the guardians of our liberty, but because they embody the spirit of service, a willingness to find meaning in something greater than themselves. And yet, at this moment — a moment that will define a generation — it is precisely this spirit that must inhabit us all.

For as much as government can do and must do, it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies. It is the kindness to take in a stranger when the levees break, the selflessness of workers who would rather cut their hours than see a friend lose their job, which sees us through our darkest hours. It is the firefighter's courage to storm a stairway filled with smoke, but also a parent's willingness to nurture a child, that finally decides our fate.

Our challenges may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success depends — honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism — these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history. What is demanded then is a return to these truths. What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility — a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character, than giving our all to a difficult task.

This is the price and the promise of citizenship.

This is the source of our confidence — the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny.

This is the meaning of our liberty and our creed, why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall, and why a man whose father less than sixty years ago might not have been served at a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.

So let us mark this day with remembrance, of who we are and how far we have traveled. In the year of America's birth, in the coldest of months, a small band of patriots huddled by dying campfires on the shores of an icy river. The capital was abandoned. The enemy was advancing. The snow was stained with blood. At a moment when the outcome of our revolution was most in doubt, the father of our nation ordered these words be read to the people:

"Let it be told to the future world ... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive ... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it]."

America, in the face of our common dangers, in this winter of our hardship, let us remember these timeless words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents, and endure what storms may come. Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested, we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations.

Obama's Inauguration Evokes Global Celebration

President is first person of color to govern country with white majority

Washington — The flag-draped western face of the U.S. Capitol in Washington briefly became the focus of worldwide attention on January 20 as Barack Obama was sworn in as president and delivered his inaugural address, calling on Americans to meet the challenges that currently face them and telling the world that the American spirit "is stronger and cannot be broken."

The live telecasts and webcasts of President Obama's inauguration ceremony united audiences all over the world. At the same time, U.S. television networks brought Americans the public reactions from places such as the Indonesian school Obama attended for four years and his father's village in Kogelo, Kenya.



Peruvian shamans honored President Obama's inauguration with an ancient ritual to send him strength.

ington festivities.

"This is the first of its kind," a reader from South Africa told America.gov, adding "[I] am proud to be a black."

WORLD REACTS

Kenya was not the only country celebrating itself as a land of Obama's ancestors. The small Irish town of Moneygall near Dublin decked itself out in the red, white and blue colors of the American flag for the occasion. The president's great-great-grandfather on his mother's side is believed to have emigrated from there to the United States in 1850.

Despite a chilly evening in India, many viewed the proceedings as they happened live at 9 p.m. local time, holding impromptu gatherings in restaurants. In neighboring Pakistan, schoolchildren celebrated earlier in the day with a prayer ceremony for global peace.

Faith healers in Peru practiced an ancient Andean ritual known as Jatun Sonjo, or "Big Heart," which originally was dedicated to rulers of the Inca civilization. The ceremony included chanting Obama's name while shaking rattles and throwing flower petals at his photograph.

The town of Obama, Japan, had its own special

The former Illinois senator's rise to become the 44th president of the United States is a story that has inspired Americans and non-Americans alike.

Besides making his mark in U.S. history as the nation's first African-American president, Obama is now the first person of color to govern a country with a white majority.

That significance was felt strongly among many Africans, who take great pride in Obama's Kenyan ancestry. Celebrating his heritage, the new president invited three of his Kenyan relatives to join him for the Wash-



A Chinese girl smiles as she poses for a snapshot with a painting depicting U.S. President-elect Barack Obama, by Chinese artist Yu Chengsong, at a gallery in Beijing, China, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009. (AP Photo/ Elizabeth Dalziel)

inaugural celebration with a ceremony at a Buddhist temple, followed by a Hawaiian-style party and hula dancing to honor the president's birthplace in the 50th U.S. state. The Kenyan name Obama means "little beach" in Japanese, and the town has enjoyed newfound fame thanks to that coincidence.

A Ugandan reader pointed out to America.gov that the president's first name, Barack, means "blessing" in Swahili. He wrote, "May the good lord bless you during this amazing time of your life leadership."

SYMBOL OF EMPOWERMENT, ENGAGEMENT

Obama's inauguration offered reasons to celebrate besides his heritage: Some viewed his presidency as the empowerment of the post-baby-boom generation; for others it represented a new beginning in America's relations with the world.

A reader from the Netherlands welcomed Obama's inaugural address for its "warning of greed and [the] failure of the previous administration. ... I feel safe again and the hatred against the West will diminish much sooner now," he wrote, but also hoped that people will "not expect too much too soon."

A reader in Canada welcomed the improvement in the U.S. public image, saying, "As Canadians we feel it when you hurt, and are happy to share in this great joy."

That sentiment was echoed in a comment from South Africa. A reader told America.gov that if the United States is able to "find peace and prosperity, then the rest of the world will more than likely follow."

"Especially the Third World countries," she said. "Every time the USA sneezes, we cop the fallout."

By Stephen Kaufman, Staff Writer, www.america.gov



This nine picture combination of photos taken as people around the country and around the world watched President Barack Obama's televised inauguration, Tuesday Jan. 20, 2009. The people are: from left to right, top row, Vertie Hodge, 74, in Houston, an unidentified woman in Jakarta, Indonesia, Clarence Dember, also in Houston; in the second row, an unidentified woman in Park City, Utah, Amadou Kromah, 13, in Denver, Shifa Alameri at International Preparatory School at Grover Cleveland High School in Buffalo, N.Y; third row, Afshar Sanati, 18, at Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., Beverley Seng, of Charlottesville, Va., and teacher Larry Walter at Merrill Middle School in Denver. (AP Photos)



A street vendor demonstrates a set of Matryoshkas, traditional Russian nesting dolls of wood, depicting U.S. President-elect Barack Obama and outgoing President George W. Bush displayed for sale in front of traditional matryoshkas in St. Petersburg, Russia, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009. (AP Photo/Dmitry Lovetsky)



Famous African Americans

Muhammad Ali, professional boxer

Also known as: Cassius Marcellus Clay, Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr., Cassius Clay (1942-)



Three-time world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali, known for his lyrical charm and boasts as much as for his powerful fists, has moved far beyond the boxing ring in both influence and purpose. Ali won an Olympic gold medal and later tossed it into a river because he was disgusted by racism

in America. As a young man he was recruited by Malcolm X to join the Nation of Islam. He refused to serve in Vietnam--a professional fighter willing to serve time in jail for his pacifist ideals. He has contributed to countless, diverse charities and causes. And his later years have found him interested in world politics as he has battled to keep Parkinson's disease at bay.

Maya Angelou, novelist, poet (1928-)



She became a national celebrity in 1970 with the publication of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, the first volume of her autobiography, which detailed her encounters with southern racism and a rape by her mother's lover.

In 1977, she was nominated for an Emmy award for her portrayal of Nyo Boto in the television adaptation of the best-selling novel "*Roots*."

Josephine Baker, dancer, singer (1906-1975)



Josephine Baker was a Parisian dancer and singer, the most famous American expatriate in France. Describing herself, Josephine Baker said "I have never really been a great artist. I have been a human being that has loved art, which is

not the same thing. But I have loved and believed in art and the idea of universal brotherhood so much, that I have put everything I have into them, and I have been blessed." (*Ebony* report of interview in 1975.) More than that, Josephine Baker pulled herself out of poverty and the trauma of humiliation and made herself an international star, principally due to her love of dancing.

James Baldwin, novelist, essayist, playwright (1924-1987)



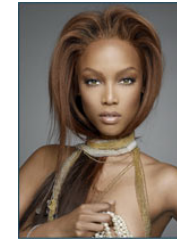
His second collection of essays, *Nobody Knows My Names*, brought him into the literary spotlight and established him as a major voice in American literature.

In 1962, *Another Country*, Baldwin's third novel, was a critical and commercial success. A year later, he wrote *The Fire Next Time*,

an immediate best-seller regarded as one of the most brilliant essays written in the history of the black protest.

He wrote 16 books and co-authored three others.

Tyra Banks, model, actress, Tygirl, Inc., founder and CEO, (1973 -



Tyra Banks has parlayed her super-model status into film, television, and music; her career is proceeding well according to her ambitious plans. A hit on the runways of top designers since the early 1990s, Banks's career segued first into television and later into film, when she was cast in a leading role in the 1995 film *Higher Learning*, written

and directed by John Singleton. With the help of a supportive family, Banks has successfully managed her fame in positive ways, and has chosen roles and collaborations with other African-American arts professionals who seek to portray their community in a diverse, multifaceted way.

Amiri Baraka (Everett LeRoi Jones), poet, writer, college teacher (1934 -)



Amiri Baraka is one of the most controversial writers in recent history, one whose influence on African-American literature has been profound. Plays, poems, novels, essays, short stories, jazz operas, and music criticism are all included in his body of work, and all have served as vehicles for his outspoken social and political commentary.

As the dominant black theorist and artist of the late 1960s, Baraka was responsible for shifting the focus of black literature from an integrationist art that conveyed a raceless and classless vision to a literature rooted in the black experience.

Daisy Bates, civil rights activist, publisher
(c. 1914 - 1999)



Daisy Bates is best known for her involvement in the struggle to integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. As an advisor to nine black students trying to attend a previously all-white school, she was a pivotal figure in that seminal moment of the civil rights movement.

As a publisher and journalist, she was also a witness and advocate on a larger scale. Her memoir of the conflict, *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*, is a primary text in the history of American race relations.

Ella Bully-Cummings, police chief, lawyer (1958 -)



Ella Bully-Cummings became chief of the Detroit Police Department in November of 2003. A longtime veteran of the force, which is the tenth largest in the United States, she became the first woman to lead it in its 138-year history. She commands

4,700 sworn officers and civilian employees of a force that works under the eye of a Department of Justice monitor. She is one of number of women named to lead police departments in major U.S. cities, including San Francisco's Heather Fong and Milwaukee's Nan Hegerty.

George Washington Carver, educator, agricultural/food scientist, farmer (1864-1943)



He attended Iowa Agricultural College (now Iowa State University) where, while working as the school janitor, he received a degree in agricultural science in 1894. Two years later he received a master's degree from the same school and became the first African American to serve on its faculty.

George Washington Carver devoted his life to research projects connected primarily with southern agriculture. The products he derived from the peanut and the soybean revolutionized the economy of the South by liberating it from an excessive dependence on cotton.

Carver revolutionized the southern agricultural economy by showing that 300 products could be derived from the peanut. By 1938, peanuts had become a \$200 million industry and a chief product of Alabama. Carver also demonstrated that 100 different products could be derived from the sweet potato.

Ray Charles, singer, composer (1930 - 2004)



He told *People* magazine: "Music is my life, my bloodstream, my breathing. I'm gonna make music until the good Lord says to me, 'Ray, you've been a good horse. It's time to put you out to pasture.'"

Charles has groomed, nurtured, and influenced many outstanding musicians. Quincy Jones, prolific composer and Hollywood arranger, and Hank Crawford, jazz saxophonist, arranger, and musical director, were early sidemen, arrangers, and musical directors for the Ray Charles big bands. In a *Rolling Stone* article, Wild noted that Charles has influenced singers "from Joe Cocker and Steve Winwood to Michael Bolton."

Ralph J. Bunche, statesman, diplomat, scholar, government official (1903-1971)



He was the first African American to serve on the U.S. delegation to the first General Assembly of the United Nations. In 1947 United Nations Secretary General Trygve Lie appointed him director of the Trusteeship Department. From this position he became Undersecretary General of the United Nations. He was now the highest U.S. official black or white at the United Nations. He became the highly respected and valued assistant of three U.N. heads, Trygve Lie, Dag Hammarskjöld, and U Thant

For his work in the areas of race, international relations, and peace, in 1949 Bunche was awarded the NAACP's Spingarn Medal. In addition to the Nobel Prize, Bunche received the Theodore Roosevelt Association Medal of Honor, 1954; the Presidential Medal of Honor, 1963; the U.S. Medal of Freedom, 1963; and in 1991 he was inducted into the African American Hall of Fame.

Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm, congresswoman, politician (1924 - 2005)



Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm (born 1924) was the first Black woman to serve in the United States Congress. She served as the representative for the 12th district of New York from 1969 until 1982. In 1972, when she became the first black woman to actively

run for the presidency of the United States, she won ten percent of the votes at the Democratic National Convention. In addition to her interest in civil rights for blacks, women, and the poor, she spoke out about the judicial system in the United States, police brutality, prison reform, gun control, politician dissent, drug abuse, and numerous other topics.

Johnnie Cochran, lawyer (1937 - 2005)



Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. led the winning team of lawyers in the "trial of the century," and in the process became arguably the most famous lawyer in the world. Cochran's successful defense of former football great O. J. Simpson against charges of murder in the televised trial was followed by millions of Americans.

Although his trial tactics are still sparking debate, his legal acumen and ability to sway a jury have characterized his legal career. While the People v. O. J. Simpson is perhaps Cochran's most well known courtroom victory, it was preceded and followed by a string of significant court cases, some involving superstars such as Michael Jackson and others involving ordinary people thrust into extraordinary circumstances.

Nat King Cole, vocalist (1919—1965)



The Time wrote of Cole, "He wasn't corrupted by the mainstream. He used jazz to enrich and renew it, and left behind a lasting legacy. Very like a king."

Cole was sometimes criticized by other blacks for not taking a more aggressive stand against unfair treatment of racial minorities. He did not refuse to perform before segregated audiences, believing that goodwill

and an exhibition of his talent were more effective than formal protests in combating racism.

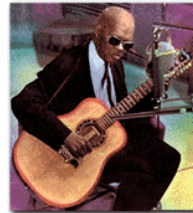
Bessie Coleman, aviatrix (1892-1926)



Known to an admiring public as "Queen Bess," Bessie Coleman was the first black woman ever to fly an airplane and the first African American to earn an international pilot's license. During her brief yet distinguished career as a performance flier, she appeared at air shows and exhibitions across the United States, earning

wide recognition for her aerial skill, her dramatic flair, and her tenacity.

Gary Davis, blues musician (1896-1972)



The Reverend Gary Davis was a self-taught street musician and Baptist preacher who became an icon of the mid-twentieth-century folk-music revival. Critics consider him to be one of the most innovative and influential blues guitarists of the century. His legacy as a teacher and performer

can be heard in the work of some of popular music's biggest stars, including Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead.

Frederick Douglass, abolitionist (c. 1817-1895)



Douglass quickly became a nationally recognized figure among abolitionists. In 1845 he bravely published his Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, which related his experiences as a slave, revealed his fugitive status and further exposed him to the danger of reen-

slavement. In the same year he went to England and Ireland, where he remained until 1847, speaking on slavery and women's right and ultimately raising sufficient funds to purchase his freedom. After meeting with President Abraham Lincoln he assisted in the formation of the 54th and 55th Negro regiments of Massachusetts. During Reconstruction he became deeply involved in the civil rights movement and in 1871 he was appointed to the territorial legislature of the District of Columbia. He served as one of the presidential electors-at-large for New York in 1872 and shortly thereafter became the secretary of the Santo Domingo Commission.

Charles R. Drew, surgeon and blood researcher (1904-1950)



Charles R. Drew was a renowned surgeon, teacher, and researcher. He was responsible for founding two of the world's largest blood banks. Because of his research into the storage and shipment of blood plasma—blood without cells—he is credited with saving the lives of hundreds of Britains during World War II. He was di-

rector of the first American Red Cross effort to collect and bank blood on a large scale. In 1942, a year after he was made a diplomat of surgery by the American Board of Surgery at Johns Hopkins University, he became the first African American surgeon to serve as an examiner on the board.

William Edward Burghardt DuBois, civil rights activist (1868-1963)

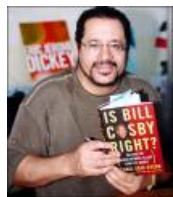
An outstanding critic, editor, scholar, author, and civil rights leader, W. E. B. Du Bois is certainly among the



most influential blacks of the twentieth century. He was one of the first male civil rights leaders to recognize the problems of gender discrimination. He was among the first men to understand the unique problems of black women, and to value their contributions. He supported the women's suffrage movement and strove to integrate this mostly white struggle. He encouraged many black female writers, artists, poets, and novelists, featuring their works in *Crisis* and sometimes providing personal financial assistance to them. Several of his novels feature women as prominently as men, an unusual approach for any author of his day. Du Bois spent his life working not just for the equality of all men, but for the equality of all people.

He was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

Michael Eric Dyson, educator, writer (1958—)



Hailed as one of a group of "new intellectuals," scholar Michael Eric Dyson is a longtime professor and lecturer, and an author who addresses issues of race and culture in such diverse publications as *Christian Century* and *Rolling Stone*. He has published seven

books, including the well-received *Making Malcolm: The Myth and Meaning of Malcolm X* and *I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King Jr.* He has also appeared on popular talk shows, taught academic courses on gangsta rap and hip-hop music, and even testified before congressional subcommittees on various issues of concern to black Americans. Washington Post correspondent David Nicholson noted that Dyson "belongs to a group of young intellectuals who

may yet define our view of black American culture as did their predecessors Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray."

Duke Ellington, bandleader, composer, pianist (1899-1974)



To tell the story of Duke Ellington is to tell the story of jazz; to tell the story of his orchestra is to tell the story of his compositions. The man, the music, the life that he lived, the compositions that he wrote, and the orchestra that he fronted were one and the same. As jazz critic

Ralph Gleason wrote in 1966, "the man is the music, the music is the man, and never have the two things been more true than they are for Ellington." Duke Ellington is one of the most important figures in the history and development of American music. Often referred to as the greatest single talent in the history of jazz (for many, the history of music), he was variously referred to as "The Aristocrat of Swing," "The King of Swing," and "The King of Jazz."

Medgar Evers, civil rights activist (1925-1963)



Medgar Evers was one of the first martyrs of the civil-rights movement.

In 1954, he was appointed Mississippi's first field secretary. He was outspoken, and his demands were radical for his rigidly segregated state. He fought for the enforcement of the 1954 court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* which outlawed school segregation; he fought for the right to vote, and he advocated

boycotting merchants who discriminated. He worked unceasingly despite the threats of violence that his speeches engendered. He gave much of himself to this struggle, and in 1963, he gave his life. On June 13, 1963, he drove home from a meeting, stepped out of his car, and was shot in the back.

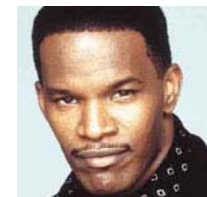
Myrlie Evers-Williams, civil rights activist (1933-)



Myrlie Evers's life was shattered on June 12, 1963, when she opened her front door to find her husband, civil rights leader Medgar Evers, dying on their porch — the victim of a sniper's bullet. In the days and weeks that followed, she showed her courage by continuing Medgar's fight for racial equality, even in the face of threats

on her own life; and when her husband's murderer was allowed to walk free, Myrlie Evers showed her incredible persistence by working for 30 years to see justice done. Her dogged determination paid off in 1994, when Byron De La Beckwith was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Medgar Evers.

Jamie Foxx, comedian, actor, singer, director, producer, musician (1967 -)



In the ever-shifting, multi-media world of Hollywood entertainment, the art of juggling talents has always paid off. Comedian, actor, singer, and producer Jamie Foxx has helped to affirm this, scoring successes on the

stage, the screen, on television, and in the recording studio. A dynamic and easily likable performer, Foxx has rapidly moved from obscurity to the helm of a highly rated television series for the WB network, and

shows no signs of decreasing his activity. "As a comedian, as an actor, you've got to make things happen," Foxx told *People* magazine.

Henry Louis Gates, scholar, teacher, critic, writer
(1950 -)



Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Skip," is one of the most powerful academic voices in America. In 1997 Gates was voted one of Time Magazine's "25 Most Influential Americans."

He is most recognized for his extensive research of African American history and literature, and for developing and expanding the African American Studies program at Harvard University. The first black to have received a Ph.D. from Cambridge, Gates is the author of many books, articles, essays, and reviews, and has received numerous awards and honorary degrees. Gates, who has displayed an endless dedication to bringing African-American culture to the public, has co-authored, co-edited, and produced some of the most comprehensive African-American reference materials in the country. Booklist declared that Gates "is doing for African Americans in the U.S. what Tocqueville did for Europeans."

Marvin Penze Gaye, singer, songwriter (1939-1984)



Marvin Penze Gaye was one of the most successful and popular soul artists during the early years of the Motown era. His extraordinary career matched his extraordinary life, a mixture of blessings and banes, dazzling success and inscrutable pain. His biography

and discography are twin reflections of the same duality: the artistic and personal struggle to heal the split between head and heart, flesh and spirit, ego and God. Meanwhile, the music lives on for the pleasures of its beauty and the marvel that was Marvin's voice.

Alex Haley, journalist, novelist (1921-1992)



The author of the widely acclaimed novel *Roots* spent the 12 years traveling three continents tracking his maternal family back to a Mandingo youth, named Kunta Kinte, who was kidnaped into slavery from the small village of Juffure, in The Gambia, West Africa. During this period, he lectured extensively in the United States and in Great Britain

on his discoveries about his family in Africa, and wrote many magazine articles on his research in the 1960s and the 1970s. He received several honorary doctor of letters degrees for his work.

The book *Roots*, excerpted in *Reader's Digest* in 1974 and heralded for several years, was finally published in the fall of 1976 with very wide publicity and reviews. In January 1977, ABC-TV produced a 12-hour series based on the novel.

William R. Harvey, educational administrator
(1941-)

During his twenty-five year tenure with Hampton University, President William R. Harvey has radically changed the national perception of the school. Since he assumed leadership of the university in 1978, he has pulled Hampton out of constant financial debt and has created a stable income to ensure numerous scholar-



ships and the ability for the university to grow. He has also boosted enrollment by almost 4,000 students, making Hampton University one of the largest traditional black colleges in the nation. His influence has reached outside of the university as well, promoting the welfare of the town of Hampton through land purchases and generous donations. He is also serving numerous other communities through his position on the Fannie Mae board of directors where he assists people in securing money for mortgages. On top of all of this, Harvey is also an astute businessman, venturing into the soft-drink bottling industry when he purchased a Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company franchise in 1986, making him the first African-American owner in this industry.

Billie Holiday, jazz singer
(1915-1959)



Billie Holiday began singing in New York clubs as a teenager, and by the time she was old enough to drink legally she had established a reputation as a stirring jazz singer. She was a natural talent with excellent musical instincts and an earthy voice that matched the searching honesty of her songs. By the end of the 1930s she had sung in the bands of Count Basie and Artie Shaw, but life with a big band was too restrictive for her, and in 1938 she became a solo act. In 1943 she was voted the best jazz vocalist in the *Esquire* magazine readers' poll. With that acknowledgment of her greatness, Decca Records made a series of thirty-six recordings - among them "Lover Man," "Porgy," "Now or Never," and a duet with Louis Armstrong on "My Sweet Hunk of Trash", that are regarded among the finest jazz vocals of the time.

Langston Hughes, writer, editor, lecturer
(1902-1967)



Langston Hughes achieved fame as a poet during the burgeoning of the arts known as the Harlem Renaissance, but those who label him "a Harlem Renaissance poet" have restricted his fame to only one genre and decade. In addition to his work as a poet, Hughes

was a novelist, columnist, playwright, and essayist, and though he is most closely associated with Harlem, his world travels influenced his writing in a profound way. Langston Hughes followed the example of Paul Laurence Dunbar, one of his early poetic influences, to become the second African American to earn a living as a writer. His long and distinguished career produced volumes of diverse genres and inspired the work of countless other African American writers.

LeBron James, basketball player (1984 -)



He was selected Cleveland Plain Dealer's Player of the Year, 2001, 2002; Gatorade National Player of the Year, 2002; USA Today National Player of the Year, 2002; Parade Magazine Player of the Year, 2002, 2003; NBA got milk? Rookie of the Year, 2003-04.

Unlike some of his fellow NBA players, James appears to be a solid citizen. He speaks well of teammates, takes time to sign autographs, is respectful of the history of the game, and—most importantly—has not had any brushes with the law like other high profile players. Even more importantly, he appears to have unlimited

potential as an athlete. For now, his team, his fans, and some major corporations are all invested in the idea that LeBron James is the next big thing.

Mae C. Jemison, astronaut and physician (1956 -)



On September 12, 1992, over five years after joining NASA, Jemison became the first African-American female to go into space. She served as a science mission specialist during an eight-day voyage upon the Space Shuttle Endeavour. Jemison's job was to study weightlessness and motion

sickness on the seven-person crew.

In addition to her 1988 Essence Award, she was named the Gamma Sigma Gamma Woman of the Year in 1990 and in 1992 received the Ebony Black Achievement Award in 1992. She continued to serve as a role model to women and African Americans. She told Newsweek, "One of the things that I'm very concerned about is that as African-Americans, as women, many times we do not feel that we have the power to change the world and society as a whole." With her life and accomplishments she has proven that idea very, very wrong.

Jackie Joyner-Kersey, track and field athlete (1962-)



Born in East St. Louis, Illinois, and raised in a house she remembers as "little more than paper and sticks," Jackie Joyner-Kersey eventually became known throughout the world as one of the finest female athletes of all time. The winner of six Olympic medals, three of them

gold, a record-holder in both the multi-event heptathlon (the female version of the decathlon) and the long jump, and a world-class basketball player, Joyner-Kersey

stands as an example of how strength and determination can triumph over adversity. An African-American, she has battled racial discrimination and gender bias and triumphed in the male-dominated field of athletic competition, despite her personal battle with a debilitating medical condition.

Queen Latifah, rapper, actress, producer (1970-)



During the late 1980s, Queen Latifah emerged as one of the most significant artists to enter the scene of rap recording, and earned a reputation as one of the most vital female artists of the following decade. In a recording media characterized by the belligerence of the gangster culture,

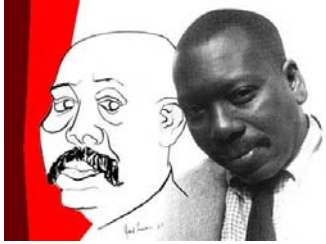
Queen Latifah established herself as a pillar of female strength and developed a reputation as a role model for her generation.

After achieving major success as a rapper, Latifah gained similar notoriety as an actress, mainly through her own hit television show, *Living Single*.

In 1995 won a Grammy award for Best Rap Solo Performance. Also in 1995, at the Soul Train Music Awards she won the Sammy Davis, Jr. Award for Entertainer of the Year. Latifah performed at the American Music Awards in January of 1995, and in January of 1997 she was nominated for two Image Awards, including Best Actress in a Motion Picture for her role in *Set It Off*.

Jacob Lawrence, painter, printmaker, muralist
(1917 - 2000)

He was the first African American to have his work displayed in a major New York gallery and to be included in the permanent collection of the Museum of



Modern Art, both
1941.

Jacob Lawrence was one of the first African American artists to rise to prominence in the mainstream American art world.

He was encouraged by teachers and fellow artists during his teenage years to study both art and African American history. He combined these interests to produce works unique in both their subject and style. Many of these comprise series of panels that join together to create a narrative. Lawrence is also known as an illustrator of books for adults and children.

Spike Lee, film director, film producer, screenwriter, actor (1957 -)



Known as one of the most original and innovative filmmakers in the world, Lee presents the different facets of black culture. He is quick to admit, however, that there are those in the black community among his detractors. Lee says that he is neither a spokesman for 35 million African Americans nor tries to present himself that way. He will probably continue to court controversy, but with his savvy and salesmanship skills, Spike Lee will remain a significant influence in the entertainment world.

Kevin Liles, record company executive (1968-)

At the age of 30, after just ten years with the company, Kevin Liles was promoted to president of leading rap label Def Jam Records. Four years later he was appointed vice president of Island Def Jam Music Group,



the label's parent company. By that time he was widely acknowledged as a driving force behind the doubling revenue of Def Jam. Instrumental in the careers of superstars like Jay-Z, Ja Rule, and DMX, Liles also had his hand in spin-off labels Def Soul and Def Jam South, as well as joint music

recording ventures, Roc-A-Fella and Murder Inc. A cross-branding whiz, Liles also forged deals that tied Def Jam in with products ranging from clothing to video games. With his ability to impart professional respect on an industry often impeded by its gangster rep, Liles was touted as one of the few hip-hop/rap executives that had what it took to segue into a management suite in corporate America.

Malcolm X (El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz), black nationalist (1925-1965)



Malcolm X was one of the most fiery and controversial people of the 20th century. He had a profound influence on both blacks and whites. Many blacks responded to a feeling that he was a man of the people, experienced in the ways of the street rather than the pulpit or the college campus, which traditionally had provided the preponderance of black leaders. Many young whites responded to Malcolm's blunt, colorful language and unwillingness to retreat in the face of hostility. The memory and image of Malcolm X has changed as much after his death as his own philosophies changed during his life. At first thought to be a violent fanatic, he is now understood as an advocate of self-help, self-defense, and education; as a philosopher and pedagogue, he succeeded in integrating history, religion, and mythology to establish a framework for his ultimate

belief in world brotherhood and in human justice.

Thurgood Marshall, lawyer (1908 - 1993)



United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall built a distinguished career fighting for the cause of civil rights and equal opportunity. Ebony dubbed Marshall "the most important Black man of this century — a man who rose higher than any Black person before him and who has had more effect on

Black lives than any other person, Black or White." The first African-American to serve on the Supreme Court, Marshall stood alone as the Supreme Court's liberal conscience toward the end of his career, the last impassioned spokesman for a left-wing view on such causes as affirmative action, abolishment of the death penalty, and due process. His retirement in 1991 left the Court in the hands of more conservative justices.

Walter Mosley, writer (1952 -)



"A good private-eye novel . . . is not really about violence; it's about the fallibility of people, about the grotesqueries of modern life, and not least it is about one man, the detective, who defines the moral order." This statement, from Washington Post reviewer Arthur Krystal, captures the essence of Walter

Mosley's widely praised detective stories. Mosley's novels include a series of hard-boiled detective tales featuring Ezekiel "Easy" Rawlins, who reluctantly gets drawn into investigations that lead him through the tough streets of black Los Angeles. There Easy operates in a

kind of gray area, where moral and ethical certainties are hard to decipher. "The Rawlins novels . . . are most remarkable for the ways they transform our expectations of the hard-boiled mystery, taking familiar territory — the gritty urban landscape of post-World War II Los Angeles — and turning it inside out," wrote David L. Ulin in the Los Angeles Times Book Review. "Mosley's L.A. (...) is a sprawl of black neighborhoods largely hidden from the history books, a shadow community within the larger city, where a unique, street-smart justice prevails."

**Elijah Muhammad (Elijah Poole) black nationalist,
Nation of Islam Spiritual Leader (1897-1975)**



Poole established the Nation of Islam's Temple, Number Two in Chicago. He was able to build the first strong, black religious group in the United States that appealed primarily to the unemployed and underemployed city dweller, and ultimately to some in the black middle class. In addition, his mes-

sage on the virtues of being black was explicit and uncompromising, and he sought with at least a little success to bolster the economic independence of African Americans by establishing schools and businesses under the auspices of the Nation of Islam.

Condoleezza Rice, former Secretary of State(1954-)



Born in the heart of a still-segregated Dixie, she was brought up to believe that the sky was the limit as far as her future was concerned. A professor of political science for more than two decades, her expertise on the political machinations of the former

Soviet Bloc made her a much-sought-after consultant in both the public and private sectors. She was President Bush's National Security Advisor during his first term and Secretary of State during his second term.

Richard Pryor, comedian, actor, and writer (1940 - 2005)



In the 1970s and 1980s Richard Pryor was one of America's top comedians, an actor, writer, and stand-up artist whose irreverent albums sold in the millions. Pryor mined both personal and social tragedy for his comic material and peppered his appearances with outrageous language and adult humor. Even at the peak of his popularity, however, he suffered the dire consequences of drug and alcohol abuse. Premiere correspondent David Handelman theorized: "Like many celebrities, Pryor turned to drugs in part out of insecurity about his fame. But he had the added guilt trip of being perhaps the most successful black man in a country of disenfranchised blacks."

Wilma Rudolph, track and field athlete (1940-1994)



Wilma Rudolph was the first American woman runner to win three gold medals in the Olympic games. Her performance was all the more remarkable in light of the fact that she had double pneumonia and scarlet fever as a young child and could not walk without braces until age 11. Rudolph served as a track coach, an athletic consultant, and assistant director of athletics for the Mayor's Youth Foundation in Chicago. She was also the founder of the Wilma Rudolph Foundation. Ru-

dolph, a noted goodwill ambassador, was also a talk show hostess and active on the lecture circuit.

Dred Scott, litigator (1795-1858)



As a slave, Scott accompanied his master to Illinois (a free state) and Wisconsin (a territory). At various times he attempted to buy his freedom or escape but was unsuccessful. He obtained the assistance of two attorneys who helped him to sue for his freedom in county court.

Scott lost this case, but the verdict was set aside and in 1847 he won a second trial on the grounds that his slave status had been nullified upon entering into a free state. In 1857 the United States Supreme Court ruled against Scott, stating that slaves were not legally citizens of the United States and therefore had no standing in the courts. Shortly after the decision was handed down his owner freed Scott. The case led to the nullification of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, allowing the expansion of slavery into formerly free territories and strengthening the abolition movement.

Robert George Seale, activist (1936-)



Robert George Seale was a militant activist who, with Huey P. Newton and Bobby Hutton, founded the Black Panther Party for Self Defense in 1966. Beginning as an armed patrol dedicated to the defense of Oakland Blacks against the brutality of the city police, the Black Panthers gained local notoriety for their fearlessness and militant demand for Black rights. In 1967 the Black Panther Party (BPP) garnered national attention when it sent an armed con-

tingent to the state capitol in Sacramento to protest a proposed gun-control law and to assert the constitutional right of Blacks to bear arms against their white oppressors.

Seale was sentenced to four years in jail but in 1971 the conspiracy trial ended in a hung jury and the judge ordered all charges dropped against Seale and the other defendants. The following year the federal government suspended the contempt charges and released Seale from prison.

Throughout the 1980s Seale continued to develop and support organizations dedicated to combating social and political injustices. He still lectures about his past and current experiences struggling for civil rights for African Americans.

Betty Shabazz, activist, nurse, health services administrator, educator (1936-1997)



When Betty Shabazz married the dynamic civil rights leader Malcolm X, she could not anticipate the extent of her husband's fame or the course that their lives would take. Shabazz was catapulted into the American consciousness and the media spotlight following her

husband's assassination in 1965 by three members of the Nation of Islam. His young widow, pregnant with twin daughters at the time of his murder, was left to raise them—and their four sisters—by herself.

Although raising and educating her daughters took up most of her time, Shabazz still managed to further her education and she became director of the school's Department of Communications and Public Relations of Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn.

In a statement released after Shabazz's death, civil rights leader Jesse Jackson declared that "she never stopped giving and she never became cynical. She leaves today the legacy of one who epitomized hope and healing."

Tavis Smiley, radio and television commentator, writer (1964 -)



Smiley has been running on a political fast track since he was in college, when he interned in the administration of the late Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley. After graduation from Indiana University, he worked for three years as an administrative aide in the Bradley organization, hosted

radio talk shows, served as a guest commentator on several network television shows, and created his own 60-second syndicated radio commentary, "The Smiley Report." He has written three books since 1993, most notably the liberal manifesto *Hard Right: Straight Talk about the Wrongs of the Right*. Published in June 1996, the book was into a third printing only a month later. Smiley's driving ambition, political activism, and willingness to confront the issues of the day ensure that his voice will be heard on the American scene for many years to come.

Sojourner Truth, abolitionist, women's rights advocate (c. 1797-1883)



Born Isabella Baumfree in Ulster County, New York, around 1797, she was freed by the New York State Emancipation Act of 1827 and lived in New York City for a time. After taking the name Sojourner Truth, which she felt God had given her, she assumed the "mission" of spreading "the Truth" across the country. She became famous as an itinerant preacher, drawing huge crowds with her oratory (and some said "mystical gifts") wherever she appeared. She became one of an active group of black women abolitionists, lectured before numerous abolitionist audiences, and

was friends with such leading white abolitionists as James and Lucretia Mott and Harriet Beecher Stowe. With the outbreak of the Civil War she raised money to purchase gifts for the soldiers, distributing them herself in the camps. She also helped African Americans who had escaped to the North to find habitation and shelter.

C. DeLores Tucker, activist and founder (1927 - 2005)



C. DeLores Tucker never shied away from sensitive political issues. A longtime civil rights activist who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and raised funds for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Tucker took her deep convictions and organizing skills into a new arena later in her life. She launched a crusade to alter the violent, anti-female message

in gangsta rap, a message she saw as undermining and even contributing to the early deaths of American youth --especially black youth. From 1994 on, Tucker used her considerable skills as a political figure and public speaker to denounce gangsta rap and to persuade the major entertainment conglomerates not to sell it.

Usher Raymond IV, singer (1979 -)



Omnipresent on the music charts for the last seven years, Usher Raymond is an undisputed R&B star. His smooth ballads, upbeat pop hits and handful of club anthems have made him one of the most successful male artists of the past decade. Backed by successful

producers like P. Diddy and Jermaine Dupri, Usher made a name for himself with his self-titled debut album and the gold hit "Think of You." Released in 1997, *My Way* featured the platinum hits "You Make Me Wanna..." and "Nice & Slow." The young sensation then followed up with hits like "U Remind Me" and "U Got It Bad," and broke records with 2004's *Confessions*.

Denmark Vesey, carpenter, minister, revolutionary
(c.1767-1822)

"Remember Denmark Vesey of Charleston!" was the battle cry of the first black regiment formed to fight in the Civil War. The war achieved what Vesey had so desperately striven for — the abolition of slavery. He had planned his own war of liberation in 1822, but his plans were revealed before the uprising could take place.



Vesey's actions were particularly courageous because by the time he planned his rebellion, he had already gained his freedom and was making a good living. But he had seen too much suffering — he hated slavery and slaveholders — and he was determined to free his people from the terrible oppression and cruelty. Like others who rose against the system,

Vesey was condemned to death and hanged. Yet his opponents could not kill his spirit. Vesey became a symbol in the struggle for freedom and an inspiration for later abolitionists, including John Brown.

Alice Walker, writer (1944-)

Recognized as one of the leading voices among black American women writers, Alice Walker has produced an acclaimed and varied body of work, including poetry, novels, short stories, essays, and criticism. Her



writings portray the struggle of black people throughout history, and are praised for their insightful and riveting portraits of black life, in particular the experiences of black women in a sexist and racist society. Her most famous work, the award-winning and best-selling novel *The Color Purple*, chronicles the life of a

poor and abused southern black woman who eventually triumphs over oppression through affirming female relationships.

**Booker Taliaferro Washington, lecturer, civil rights/
human rights activist, educational administrator,
professor, organization executive/founder, author/
poet** (1856-1915)



Dedicating himself to the idea that education would raise his people to equality in this country, Washington became a teacher. He first taught in his home town, then at the Hampton Institute, and then in 1881, he founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in Tuskegee,

Alabama. As head of the Institute, he traveled the country unceasingly to raise funds from blacks and whites both; soon he became a well-known speaker. In 1895, Washington was asked to speak at the opening of the Cotton States Exposition, an unprecedented honor for an African American. His Atlanta Compromise speech explained his major thesis, that blacks could secure their constitutional rights through their own economic and moral advancement rather than through legal and political changes.

Denzel Washington, actor, philanthropist (1954 -)



Washington's trademark for success in portraying a character has been to learn as much about the individual as possible, including his social, historical, and political environments and displaying physical traits. With this kind of dedication and zeal to be true to

the character, Washington has established himself as a leading actor in the movie industry. Handsome, suave, tall, and brown skinned, it is no coincidence that Denzel Washington has been compared to Sidney Poitier. Washington in 2002 won an Academy Award for his role in director Antoine Fuqua's *Training Day*, to become only the second African American actor in the 73-year history of the Motion Picture Academy to win the Oscar for best actor in a lead role; Poitier was the first.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett, journalist, activist
(1862 - 1931)

Activist and journalist Ida B. Wells-Barnett was an early proponent of civil rights. Editor and partial owner of her own newspaper, she published articles on topics



considered controversial at the time. One of her main causes was fighting the practice of lynching, which she regarded as a horrific form of racial prejudice that no decent human being could ignore or justify. She waged her war against it in the press as well as on the podium, earning a reputation

for fearlessness and determination despite numerous efforts to intimidate her, including death threats. Wells-Barnett spoke out against discrimination in other ways as well, denouncing the restriction of African Americans to the backs of buses and theater balconies

and their exclusion from religious organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union. When she exposed the segregationist policies of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), several wealthy donors withdrew their support from that group and gave nearly \$9,000 to the establishment of the Negro Fellowship Reading Room and Social Center.

Kanye West, rap musician and record producer
(1977 -)



Kanye West began his career in music as a producer for top hip-hop artists such as Jay-Z, but he wanted more: he wanted to rap, too. Though his middle-class background and preppy dress made him seem ill-fitted for a hip-hop scene dominated by gangsta personalities, West's talent and determination led to his massive success. His debut album, *The College Dropout*, rewrote the rules of hip-hop, reviving socially conscious lyrics and mixing them with cutting-edge commercial party beats. By the time he released his second album, *Late Registration*, in August of 2005, West had become one of hip-hop's biggest stars.

Reggie White, football player, minister, philanthropist
(1961 - 2004)

For a decade and a half, Reggie White dominated the National Football League as one of its most ferocious defensive players. White habitually struck terror into many an offense with his strength; he possessed speed, stamina, and the ability to size up situations for maximum impact. Former Philadelphia Eagles head coach Buddy Ryan once called White the "perfect defensive lineman...probably the most gifted defensive athlete I've



ever been around." White was voted by the NFL Hall of Fame to the NFL All-time Team in 2000. White's other career — carrying the gospel of Christ to those in need — will last his entire life. He and his wife built Hope Place, a shelter for unwed mothers, on property near their home in rural Tennessee; they also founded the Alpha & Omega Ministry to sponsor a community development bank in Knoxville. "I'm trying to build up black people's morale, self-confidence and self-reliance to show them that the Jesus I'm talking about is real," White explained in *Ebony*.

Serena Williams, tennis player, olympic athlete, actor
(1981 -)



Ranked number one in the world among female tennis professionals in 2002, Serena Williams had become one of the sport's most exciting and closely watched young players. With her older sister Venus, she formed half of a tennis-prodigy pair that had been making headlines from an early age. As an African American in a historically white- and European-dominated sport, she found herself in the spotlight and under scrutiny. Serena and Venus Williams were coached by their father Richard, an unorthodox career-builder whose methods stirred comment and controversy. Beyond all these reasons Serena Williams caught the attention of tennis fans simply because she was a player of extraordinary ability and dynamism. She has risen to the very top of her game winning five Grand Slam events in two years and being ranked in the top five female tennis players in the world for over three years.

Oprah Winfrey, talk show host, actress, broadcasting executive
(1954-)



Oprah Winfrey revolutionized the talk show market with her unique and natural style and rose to become the host of the most watched daytime show on television, which boasts 22 million viewers daily (three-fourths of whom are women). She is the first African American to own her own TV studio. The multitalented Winfrey is also a millionaire businesswoman, a talented actress, owner of a movie production company, and committed philanthropist. In 1996 and 1997 she was third on the Forbes list of the world's highest-paid entertainers, after grossing a combined total of \$201 million, and in 2001 she was listed among the 10 most influential people in publishing. In 2001, with an income of \$900 million, she placed 280 on the Forbes list of the 400 richest people in America.

Source:

www.gale.com/free_resources/bhm/

ANNA JULIA COOPER

In 2009
the United States Postal Service honors
Anna Julia Cooper
with the 32nd stamp in the Black Heritage Series.

Cooper, an educator, scholar, feminist and activist, fought for social justice and civil rights for black women, young people and the poor through her scholarship, community outreach and innovative educational leadership.

The stamp features a portrait of Cooper created by Kadir Nelson, who based his painting on an undated photograph.



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