

VOLUME 2: WOMEN



BLACK HISTORY FLASH CARDS

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Ahosi / Mino, Dahomey - The Dahomey Warriors

c. 18th – 19th Century

Photo: Group portrait with the so-called 'Dahomey Amazons', visiting Europe - Collectie Stichting Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen
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- An all-female military regiment of the Kingdom of Dahomey, which is present-day Benin.
- Europeans gave them the name “Amazon Warriors” because of their similarity to the ancient Amazon warriors of the Black Sea.
- Were all formally married to the King but remained celibate throughout their lifetimes.
- Went through extreme and gruesome training in which they were forced to scale thorn hedges, survive in the woods, and execute prisoners.
- Used weapons but were known for their excellent hand-to-hand combat skills.
- Fought frequently and were always prepared to die for their King and country.
- Even after defeat and capture by the French in battle, the Dahomey warriors plotted revenge by sleeping with French soldiers and then killing them with their own bayonets while they rested.



**Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors
and Opal Tometi
Creators of Black Lives Matter**

ABOVE IMAGES, LEFT: Citizen University - The Movement Moment - panel at CitizenU-Con16. MIDDLE: The Laura Flanders Show - Taking on the Sheriff with Art and Activism: Patrisse Cullors and Kai Lumumba Barrow. RIGHT: The Laura Flanders Show - Police Violence & Reparations: Opal Tometi, Joey Mogul & Darrell Cannon. All used under Creative Commons 3.0 license.

- Organizers, freedom fighters, and justice seekers.
- Creators of Black Lives Matter; a chapter-based national organization that was formed in 2013 to improve the lives of African-Americans and rebuild the Black Nationalist Movement.
- Garza co-founded the BLM with Cullors and Tometi as a call to action after an unarmed teenager, Trayvon Martin, was killed and his murderer went free.
- Cullors is an advocate for criminal justice reform in Los Angeles.
- Tometi serves as executive director and guides various chapters in the works they do when leading demonstrations, protesting institutional racism, and taking legal stands against injustices.



Amanirenas

40 BC – 10 AD

- Warrior Queen of the powerful Nubian region of Kush which is present-day Sudan.
- Referred to as “Candace” in some European literature.
- Fought alongside her husband and son in a war against Kush’s larger and more powerful rival, the Roman Empire.
- Took part in a pre-emptive strike against Rome and led a counterattack after Rome destroyed the capital of Kush and took thousands into slavery.
- Lost an eye during battle, which made her even more courageous as a warrior.
- Amanirenas and her army used gruesome tactics against the enemy, including attacking with war elephants and feeding captives to her pet lion.
- Reached a peace treaty with Rome because of her successful military attacks, which led to 400 years of peace and prosperity for Kush.



Amina Queen of Zaria

c. 1533 – c. 1610

- 16th-century warrior Queen of present-day Nigeria.
- Best known for her impressive military skills and her ability to lead the cavalry.
- Conquered much of North Africa for the Hausa people during her 34-year reign.
- Accredited as a brilliant architect who constructed strong earthen walls around the cities she built and seized.
- Overcame traditional gender roles by refusing to marry or have children.
- Queen Amina's life was the inspiration for the television series *Xena Warrior Princess*.



Amy Ashwood Garvey

January 10, 1897 – May 3, 1969

- Activist for African Independence and the rights of African women.
- First wife of Marcus Garvey, leader of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), the largest African-American and Pan-African movement of all time.
- Risked her life for her husband in 1922 by stepping in front of his would-be assassin's bullets.
- Served as director of the Black Star Line shipping company.
- Established of UNIA's ladies auxiliary as well as its newspaper, *The Negro World*.
- Owned a jazz club and produced shows where other activists would gather to discuss Pan-Africanism.
- Co-founded the Association for the Advancement of Coloured People in 1958.



Amy Jacques Garvey

December 31, 1895 – July 25, 1973

- Pioneering journalist, publisher, and advocate for the improvement of African-American lives through Black Nationalism.
- Born into an interracial, upper-class family in Jamaica, where she was formally educated.
- Second wife of Marcus Garvey, leader of the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), the largest African-American and Pan-African movement of all time.
- Published two books of her husband's writings and served as editor of *The Negro World*.
- Continued her husband's work after he went to prison, speaking nationally on the importance of Black nationalism, separation from European society, and African independence.



Assata Shakur

July 16, 1947 – Present

- Civil Rights activist and a member of the Black Panther Party.
- Regarded as a hero for her protests against racism and her role in the 1970s Black Liberation Army.
- Community advocate who helped the poor by organizing a free breakfast program and a health clinic.
- Became the first woman to be placed on the FBI's Most Wanted list after escaping to Cuba from prison, where she was serving a life sentence for the 1973 murder of a police officer.
- Many people believe Shakur to be a political champion who is innocent of the criminal accusations against her.

Photo: By:K. Kendall - Audre Lorde, via Flickr.com
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Audre Lorde

February 18, 1934 – November 17, 1992

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- Poet, feminist, womanist, and Civil Rights activist.
- Learned to use poems to express her feelings as a result of difficulty communicating as a child.
- Worked as a professor in the 1950s and 1960s, where she furthered her self-acceptance as a lesbian woman and influenced students to think more deeply.
- Empowered African women living in Europe to become more conscious through an Afro-German movement she started in Berlin.
- Poetic and prose works written by Lorde dealt with personal issues, feminism, Civil Rights, and the Black female individuality.

Photo: By MontyCarmoss, bell hooks
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bell hooks

September 25, 1952 – Present

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- Writer, educator, social critic and essayist.
- Her works and passion for solving the problem of racism in the U.S. were influenced by her experience growing up in segregated schools.
- Began writing, reciting, and publishing poetry early on under her real name Gloria Jean Watkins.
- Took on the pen name “bell hooks” (After her grandmother, Bell Blair Hooks) in the 1970s to move away from writing poetry and into a focus on critical essays on systems of domination.
- Published her first book, *Ain't I a Woman*, which was a feminist discussion of racism and sexism.
- Taught at Yale and several other colleges after earning a doctorate in English literature in the 1970s.
- Continues to be a voice for educational reform, and the ability of students to engage in rigorous study and to think critically.

Photo: William P. Gottlieb



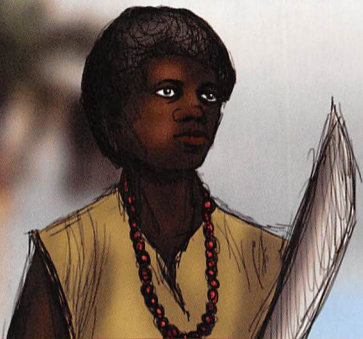
Billie Holiday

April 7, 1915 — July 17, 1959

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- Considered one of the best and most influential jazz vocalists of all time, her legacy still influences jazz and many other genres to this day.
- Despite no formal music training she developed new vocal techniques and was known for her unique vocal delivery and improvisational skills.
- She was discovered on the Harlem nightclub scene and signed in 1935.
- Her first hit *What a Little Moonlight Can Do*, a collaboration with pianist Teddy Wilson, became a jazz standard.
- She has received four posthumous Grammy awards, all for Best Historical Album. She herself was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 1973.
- In the 1972 film adaptation of her autobiography *Lady Sings the Blues* she was portrayed by another legendary performer, Diana Ross.
- In 2000, she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Diana Ross received the honor on her behalf.



Carlota Lukumi

(AKA La Negra Carlota) Unknown – 1844

- Rebel resistance leader and freedom fighter.
- Forced into slavery in Cuba after being kidnapped from West Africa as a child.
- Musically inclined, Carlota used “talking drums” to communicate coded messages with other slaves as a way to plan a revolt.
- Led the 1843 raid that freed dozens of slaves from captivity.
- Used a machete to forcibly overthrow Spanish landowners.
- Captured a year after the revolt began, but not before liberating slaves from many different plantations in the area.
- Inspired many other uprisings of those wanting to see an end to slavery in Cuba.



Carol Mosely Braun

August 16, 1947 – Present

- Attorney, activist, and politician.
- Earned a law degree in 1972 and took a position as U.S. attorney in Chicago in 1973.
- While serving as Democratic representative to Illinois House of Representatives, she advocated for social change, education reform, and healthcare reform.
- First African-American woman to be elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992.
- Fought for Civil and Women's Rights, and called for more restrictive gun laws during her time as a senator.
- Served as U.S. ambassador to New Zealand and Samoa under President Bill Clinton in 1999.
- Campaigned for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2003 but dropped out early in the race to join the private sector.

Photo: By Ms. magazine, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
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Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

September 15, 1977 – Present

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- Poet, novelist, and author of African and feminist literature.
- Traveled from Nigeria to the U.S. to further her education in communication, political science, and African studies.
- Penned the prize-winning novel *Purple Hibiscus* as well as several books of poetry and other novels.
- Elected into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (intellectual honors).
- Speaks regularly on women's issues and promotes feminism through her work.
- Part of one of Adichie's TEDx talks was sampled in Beyonce's 2013 song, *Flawless*.



Dame Eugenia Charles

May 15, 1919 – September 6, 2005

- First female attorney of Dominica and only female Prime Minister.
- Served as head of state longer than any other Prime Minister of Dominica.
- Helped to found the Dominica Freedom Party in the 1970s and led it for over two decades.
- Worked with U.S. President Ronald Reagan to orchestrate the 1983 United States Invasion of Grenada.
- Dedicated herself to the reconstruction of housing, roads and other infrastructure destroyed by Hurricane David.
- Was conservative in most policies; her inflexible views led her to be nicknamed the “Iron Lady of the Caribbean”.

Photo: Marcia Gleckler (deardeolinda.com)

A close-up portrait of a young Black woman with short, dark hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a blue and red striped shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Deolinda Rodríguez de Almeida

February 10, 1939 – 1968

- Writer, translator, revolutionary movement leader, and Women's Rights activist.
- Known as "Mother of the Revolution" for her role in the Angolan Independence Movement.
- Co-founded the women's division of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).
- Corresponded with Martin Luther King Jr. in an effort get ideas on how to help her country's fight for independence from the Portuguese.
- Tortured and executed after being captured for her political work.
- Died a martyr of the struggle for freedom in Angola.



Diana Ross

March 26, 1944 – Present

- Singer, songwriter, actress, and twelve-time Grammy nominee.
- Recognized as one of the most iconic singers of all time with a career that spans over four decades.
- Achieved twelve number one hits as a solo singer after ending her role as the lead singer of the Supremes in 1970.
- Gave a Golden Globe Award and Academy Award-nominated performance in 1972's *Lady Sings the Blues*.
- Became the first African-American woman to co-host the Academy Awards in 1974.
- Named "Female Entertainer of the Century" by *Billboard* magazine.
- Declared the most successful female music artist in history by the *Guinness Book of World Records* in 1993.



Dr. Dorothy Height

March 24, 1912 – April 20, 2010

- Civil Rights and Women's Rights activist.
- Began her speaking career in high school as an anti-lynching activist.
- Broadened her activism after the founder of the National Council of Negro Women, Mary McLeod Bethune, and U.S. first lady Eleanor Roosevelt came to visit the YMCA where she worked.
- Worked alongside Dr. Martin Luther King on several different campaigns and initiatives.
- Co-organized the March on Washington in 1963.
- Ran the YMCA in Harlem and the National Council of Negro Women for twenty years.
- Height's later years were focused on strengthening the African-American family.



Ella Baker

December 13, 1903 – December 13, 1986

Photo: Ella Baker - The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights under Creative Commons 3.0 license.

- Civil Rights activist and behind-the-scenes organizer.
- Considered by many to be the most influential woman of the Civil Rights Movement because of the work she did with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).
- Worked beside some of the most prominent Civil Rights leaders of the 20th century, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Thurgood Marshall, and W. E. B. Du Bois.
- Served as an organizer on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and guided students who were leading campus sit-ins.
- Continued her activism in later years and was passionate about solving school desegregation problems, ending the Apartheid in South Africa, and addressing police brutality issues in the U.S.



Saint Escrava Anastacia

c. 1800 – Unknown

- African-Brazilian slave and martyred Saint of Rio de Janeiro.
- Was the product of a slave-master relationship and was born with piercing blue eyes that set her apart from others.
- Treated cruelly and forced to wear a slave mask (a collar and a muzzle) made from heavy iron.
- Forgiving in spirit, Anastacia cured her master's son of a mysterious illness before dying herself from tetanus caused by the slave mask.
- Now seen as a protector Saint of the descendants of slaves and the poor in Brazil.



Taytu Betul

c. 1851 – February 11, 1918

- Empress of Ethiopia and wife of Menelik II.
- Was educated and spoke more than one language, which was rare for women of her time.
- Co-equal with the Emperor, who always consulted her prior to making important decisions.
- A military strategist who persuaded her husband to declare war against Italy at the Battle of Adwa, as a way to stand up for liberty against Italian aggression.
- Bravely commanded both men and women on the battlefield and fought on the frontline to bring her country to victory.
- Governed Ethiopia after the Emperor suffered a stroke and was no longer able to rule.



Fanny Jackson Coppin

October 15, 1837 – January 21, 1913

- Higher education trailblazer and missionary.
- Born a slave but gained her freedom at the age of twelve.
- Eventually studied at Oberlin College in Ohio, the first college in the United States to accept both Black and female students.
- Taught math, Greek, and Latin at Philadelphia's Institute for Colored Youth (now Cheyney University of Pennsylvania).
- Became principal of the same school she taught at in 1869, making her the first African-American woman to serve in this role.
- First African-American woman to serve as a school superintendent.
- Worked with her husband's ministry to promote self-help programs in the U.S and South Africa.



Harriet Tubman

c. 1822 – March 10, 1913

- Escaped slave, abolitionist, and armed spy during the Civil War.
- Escaped from slavery and began freeing her family members through a connected network of safe houses called the Underground Railroad.
- Led approximately 300 slaves to freedom in the North during her lifetime, earning her the nickname “Moses”.
- Served as a soldier, American spy, cook, and nurse in the Union army during the Civil War.
- Continued to work in support of women’s equal rights and the right for a woman to vote until her death in 1913.
- John Brown shared his plans to raid Harpers Ferry with her.
- She was buried with military honors in Fort Hill Cemetery in New York.



Photo: By Rob Koopman - Hatshepsut, Leiderdorp, Netherlands, Used under Creative Commons Share Alike 2.0 Generic license.

Hatshepsut

1507 BC – 1458 BC

- First female pharaoh of Egypt to obtain full power.
- Improved the economic status of her entire kingdom, making it possible for even ordinary people to live in prosperity.
- Ruled peacefully, but built the greatest army in the world during her lifetime.
- Expanded trade outside of Egypt and brought many riches (i.e. ivory, gold, incense) to her kingdom.
- Undertook amazing building projects, including the construction of one of the greatest wonders of the ancient world, the memorial temple at Deir el-Bahri.



Hattie McDaniel

June 10, 1895 – October 26, 1952

- Professional singer, actress, songwriter, and comedian.
- Became the first African-American to win an Academy Award when she won an Oscar for her portrayal of Mammy in *Gone with the Wind* (1939).
- Appeared in over 300 films and was the first African-American woman to sing on the radio in the U.S.
- Has two stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and was the first Black Oscar winner to be placed on a U.S. postage stamp.
- Involved in several community service projects, including providing entertainment for World War II soldiers stationed at military bases, and raising funds for the Red Cross.



Photo: By Ol a.urabain - Henrietta Lacks under Creative Commons Share Alike 4.0 International license.

Henrietta Lacks

August 1, 1920 – October 4, 1951



- African-American woman whose cancer cell culture was used to create one of the most important cell lines in cancer research in 1951.
- Diagnosed with cervical cancer in 1950 after giving birth to her fifth child at the age of 30.
- During treatment at Johns Hopkins, two cervical samples were taken without Lacks' knowledge or permission and were used to create the HeLa cell line.
- Lacks' cells were the first cells observed that could be divided multiple times without dying. As a result, they were used in many medical experiments.
- The cells were the first to be successfully cloned and have been used to develop a vaccine for polio, and to research cancer, AIDS, virology, and sensitivity to products.
- Lacks was given a posthumous honorary doctorate in public service in 2011 and inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame in 2014.



Ida B. Wells

July 16, 1862 – March 25, 1931

- Civil Rights leader, feminist, crusader for justice, and former slave.
- Became an activist after being forcibly removed from a train in 1884 because she refused to leave her first-class seat and move to the back.
- Used her platform as a journalist to lead an anti-lynching crusade in the United States in the 1890s.
- Formed the National Association of Colored Women in 1896 and later co-founded the NAACP.
- Called for President Woodrow Wilson to put an end to discriminatory hiring practices for government jobs, created the first African-American kindergarten in her area, fought for women's right to vote, and tried to run for Senate.
- Raised awareness of the oppression of women and African-Americans throughout the U.S. and internationally.

Photo: By Casper Manlangit - Jackie Joyner Kersee,
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A close-up portrait of Jackie Joyner Kersee, a Black woman with short dark hair, smiling broadly. She is wearing a blue V-neck shirt. The background is dark and out of focus, with a man's face partially visible on the right.

Jackie Joyner Kersee

March 3, 1962 – Present

- Track star, field athlete, and philanthropist.
- Ranked among the all-time greatest athletes for her talent in the long jump and heptathlon.
- Overcame severe asthma and went on to win six Olympic medals.
- Kersee was voted “Top Woman Collegiate Athlete of the Past 25 Years” in 2001.
- Voted by *Sports Illustrated for Women* magazine as the “Greatest Female Athlete of All Time”.
- Co-founded Athletes for Hope, which helps professional athletes get involved in charitable causes and support their communities.



Josephine Baker

June 3, 1906 – April 12, 1975

- Entertainer and French resistance activist.
- Started her dancing career locally, where she quickly became the highest-paid chorus girl in Vaudeville.
- First Black person to become a world-class dancer and star in a major motion picture.
- Renounced her U.S. citizenship in 1937 after marrying a French man.
- Aided the French Resistance during World War II.
- Became close friends with actress Grace Kelly later in life, after a racial incident at Sherman Billingsley's Stork Club in Manhattan.
- Civil Rights movement contributor who refused to perform for segregated crowds and spoke at the March on Washington by the side of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Josina Muthemba Machel

August 10, 1945 – April 7, 1971



- Anti-colonial activist and key figure in the Mozambican struggle for independence.
- Traveled thousands of miles and was arrested twice while attempting to join the Mozambican Liberation Front (FRELIMO).
- Joined a women's branch of FRELIMO and received political and military training so that she could be a part of the liberation struggle in Mozambique.
- Organized health and child care centers, and schools while serving as an advocate for children orphaned by the war.
- Married Samora Machel, the future first President of Mozambique, in 1969 and continued the fight for independence until she died from liver cancer a year later.



Laura Adorkor Kofi

1893 – March 8, 1928

- Minister and activist who worked to empower Black people around the world.
- Immigrated from Ghana to the U.S. in the early 1920s to join the Black Nationalist movement, where she became spokesperson and director of the Universal Negro Improvement Association.
- Founded the African Universal Church after splitting from the UNIA and took on a spiritualist role as “Mother Kofi”.
- Attracted audiences in the tens of thousands when speaking and giving sermons about the opportunities available to Black people if they moved to Africa.
- Assassinated during a sermon about African-American self-improvement. The gunman was beaten to death by the crowd of followers.

Photo: by Jari Styer/Eastern Mennonite University.
Leymah Gbowee, under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0
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Leymah Roberta Gbowee

February 1, 1972 – Present

h Gbowee

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- Liberian peace leader and organizer of women.
- Collaborated with future Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to enable a free election in 2003.
- Worked in trauma healing to help rehabilitate child soldiers who were affected by years of war in Liberia.
- Gbowee's women's peace movement used non-traditional tactics such as a sex strike, and threats of curses and nudity in the streets to bring an end to the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003.
- Co-awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize for her role in peace-building efforts and the non-violent struggle for women's rights.



Mary Church Terrell

September 23, 1863 – July 24, 1954

- Educator and activist for both Civil Rights and Women's Rights.
- One of the first African-American women to earn a college degree.
- Terrell's parents were both former slaves who used their freedom to become small-business owners in Memphis and encouraged their daughter to get an education.
- Married Robert Heberton Terrell an attorney who would eventually become Washington, D.C.'s first Black judge and encourage his wife to become involved with Women's Rights.
- Co-founded the National Association of Colored Women in 1896 as a way to get African-American women involved in winning the right to vote.
- Took on Jim Crow laws in the south and helped desegregate restaurants in Washington D.C. during the 1950s.

Photo: By York College ISLGP - Maya Angelou at York College under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license.



Maya Angelou

April 4, 1928 – May 28, 2014

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- Poet, author and Civil Rights activist.
- Authored the first nonfiction best-seller by an African-American woman *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* as well as a number of poems, novels, and autobiographies spanning over fifty years.
- Contributed to the Civil Rights Movement as a fundraiser and organizer, working with both Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcom X.
- Was the first Black woman to write a screenplay of a major film and the first female poet of any race to recite a poem at a U.S. Presidential inauguration.
- Received many honors over the years, including the 2010 Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Photo: By Roosevelt Pinheiro/ABr, Former Governor
General of Canada, Michaëlle Jean, under Creative
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Michaëlle Jean

September 6, 1957 – Present

- Haitian-born former journalist who was appointed Governor General of Canada by Queen Elizabeth II.
- Third and current (2017) Secretary-General of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*, which works to promote the cultures of regions where French is the first language.
- Became the first Black person on French television news in Canada during her work as a news reporter and television host.
- Worked with her husband in the production of several documentaries, including the award-winning *Haiti Dans Tous Nos Rêves (Haiti in All Our Dreams)*.
- Humanitarian who worked to assist victims of domestic violence recover through the coordination of government-funded spousal support.

Photo: By Roland Godefroy: Miriam Makeba, under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license.

Miriam Makeba

March 4, 1932 – November 9, 2008

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- South African born singer, humanitarian, UN goodwill ambassador, and Civil Rights activist.
- One of the first African musicians to receive worldwide recognition and bring African music to a Western audience.
- Well-known for her work to end U.S. segregation as well as Apartheid and white-minority government prominent in South Africa.
- Immigrated to the U.S. in 1960 after gaining popularity as a singer and an actress for her role in the anti-apartheid film, *Come Back, Africa*.
- Received a Grammy for her collaboration album with Harry Belafonte.
- After marrying Black Panther Party leader Stokely Carmichael, Makeba faced criticism from Whites as well as the U.S. government, which caused her to move to Guinea where she continued to protest injustice through her music.

Photo: By Gilda N. Squire (Gildasquire). Book Cover for Misty Copeland Life in Motion memoir under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

Misty Copeland

September 10, 1982 – Present

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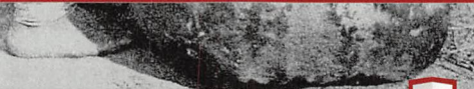
- American ballet dancer, stage performer, author, and celebrity spokesperson.
- The first African-American to be promoted to principal ballerina by the American Ballet Theater (ABT).
- Unlike most ballerinas, Copeland didn't start ballet training early; she began dancing at the age of 13.
- Copeland rose above a difficult childhood to excel as a student and a ballerina.
- Recipient of many awards, including the Los Angeles Music Center Spotlight Award for best dancer in Southern California, the 2013 National Youth of the Year Ambassador by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and one of Glamour's Women of the Year for 2015.
- Authored books that empower children of color, including her 2015 book, *Firebird*.

Photo: From the book, Die volkerstamme in noorden
Derech-Ostrafrikan by Max Wepf, Published 1910



Muhumusa

Unknown – 1945



- Rwandan warrior Queen and spiritualist.
- Widow of Rwabugiri, Chief of Rwanda in the late 19th century.
- Forced into hiding in the mountains with her son after her husband was killed by his stepmother.
- Followed the Nyabinghi religion and was thought by many to possess the spirit of Nyabinghi, the ancestral Queen, because of her intelligence and charisma.
- Became the leader of the mountain people and led an anti-colonial struggle against the Germans and British, who were trying to take over the region.
- Her power scared the British, who put the Witchcraft Act of 1912 into place in Rwanda to try to reduce Muhumusa's power once she was captured and exiled.



Nandi, Mother of King Shaka Zulu

c. 1760 – October 10, 1827

- Mother of Shaka, the famous King of the Zulu people.
- Her son was born out of wedlock to Zulu King Senzangakhona kaJama.
- Nandi was treated cruelly by other tribe members for becoming an unwed mother, but she remained strong and resilient.
- Raised the future King in strength and saved him and his sister from starvation during the 1802 great food shortage, by traveling great distances on foot to seek help.
- Was put in charge of the military, once Shaka became King, and governed in his place while he was away.
- Helped her son grow his kingdom and enact compromises with other kingdoms through peaceful nonviolence.



Nanny of the Maroons

c. 1686 – c. 1755

- Celebrated Jamaican war hero and community leader.
- Leader of the Jamaican Maroons, who fought against British forces during the early 1700s.
- Was born in Ghana and escaped slavery in Jamaica to form her own group, the Maroons, who lived in “Nanny town”.
- Organized many raids against the British and is credited with helping free over 1,000 slaves.
- Worked as a powerful healer of both physical and spiritual illnesses in the area, thanks to her West African roots.
- Nanny’s legacy lives on; she is remembered as one of the earliest leaders of slave resistance in the Americas.



Photo: Bryan Light (flickr.com/photos/alat/light)

Oprah Winfrey

January 29, 1954 – Present

- Media network owner, talk show host, actress, producer and philanthropist.
- Listed by Forbes as the richest African-American and one of only ten Black billionaires in the world, as of 2017.
- Best known for hosting the highest rated talk show in history, from 1986 to 2011.
- Nominated for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in *The Color Purple*, one of many movies she has starred in or produced.
- Supports charitable projects and nonprofit organizations around the world through her organization, Oprah's Angel Network.
- Gave over \$400 million dollars to educational purposes and opened a school for girls in South Africa in 2007.



Phillis Wheatley

c. 1753 – December 5, 1784

- First African-American poet to publish a book in the English colonies.
- Was forced into slavery as a personal servant after being taken from West Africa in 1753.
- Learned English, Latin, Greek, and theology, in addition to pursuing literary work, which was a rarity in times where most slaves were forbidden from learning to read or write.
- Published her first poem at the age of 13 and continued to put other works into print including her most famous work, *Poems on Various Subjects*.
- Penned several poems in honor of George Washington and was invited to meet the Commander-in-Chief, after he was moved by one of her works.
- Eventually found freedom and married, but never escaped poverty due to the struggles of living during the Revolutionary War.

Photo: By Agencia Brasil - Presidente recebe a presidente da Libéria, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Portrait extracted, 3:4 ratio under Creative Commons 3.0 Brazil License.



President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

October 29, 1938 – Present

- 24th President of Liberia.
- Before becoming President, Sirleaf had a successful career in banking and treasury.
- First woman elected as the Chair of the Economic Community of West African States, a union that promotes economic integration across fifteen West African countries.
- Brought running water and electricity to parts of her country that had been without power for fifteen years.
- As President, she enforced a free public school system, increased wages, and pensions, and greatly reduced the country's debt.
- Jointly awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, along with Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkol Karman, for her dedication to Women's Rights.



Queen Nzingha

c. 1583 – December 17, 1663

ANN ZINGELA,

Queen of Matamba.

in a concert of Columbia.

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- 17th-century Queen of the Mbundu people in Angola.
- Best remembered for her resistance against the Portuguese and setting her people free from slavery.
- In 1621, represented her kingdom in a meeting with the Portuguese, in which she had one of her male servants get down on his hands and knees to be her “seat” in response to the Portuguese governor only bringing one chair to the meeting to make her feel inferior.
- Negotiated a short-lived period of peace with the Portuguese.
- Fought against the Portuguese in a three-decade war while growing her kingdom into a commercial state.
- Aligned with the Dutch and personally led troops into battle, until finally reaching a peace treaty with the Portuguese.
- Spent the rest of her reign helping former slaves restructure their lives.



Rosa Parks

February 4, 1913 – October 24, 2005

- Civil Rights advocate and mother of the Freedom Movement.
- An early activist and NAACP member, who worked to free the “Scottsboro Boys” in the 1930s.
- Refused to give up her seat to a white man on an Alabama bus in 1955; a key event that helped kick off the Civil Rights Movement and the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
- Co-founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development, to help youth reach their highest potential.
- Earned more than forty honorary doctorate degrees, and hundreds of medals and awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom.
- In 1997, Parks became the first living person to be honored with a holiday.

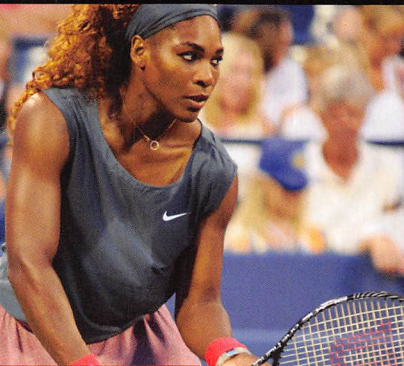


Ruby Bridges

September 8, 1954 – Present

- Civil Rights activist and author.
- First Black child to desegregate an all-white elementary school in New Orleans in 1960.
- She and her family suffered cruel threats and mistreatment by protesters and community members, who were against desegregation.
- Served as head of the Ruby Bridges Foundation, formed in 1999, to promote tolerance and respect of all people, regardless of race.
- Bridge's struggle has been portrayed in many works, including the 1998 TV special *Ruby Bridges* and her own book *Through My Eyes* (1999).
- Recipient of the Presidential Citizens Medal, and an honorary degree from Tulane University.

Photo: By Edwin Martinez from The Bronx - Serena Williams at the Women's draw at the 2013 US Open under Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license.



Serena Williams

September 26, 1981 – Present

- American professional tennis player and philanthropist.
- Raised in a tennis focused family, alongside her professional-playing sister, Venus Williams.
- Four-time Olympic gold medal winner, and ranked No. 1 in the world singles eight times between 2002 and 2017.
- Holds numerous records, including being a 7-time Wimbledon singles champion and 6-time U.S. Open champion.
- Currently (2017) holds the most Grand Slam titles in singles, doubles and mixed doubles, combined.
- Listed on Forbes' list of the 100 highest paid athletes and serves as Chief Sporting Officer for British luxury automobile manufacturer Aston Martin.
- Donates to, and works with, many charitable causes, and is funding the construction of *The Serena Williams Secondary School* in Matooni, Kenya.



Sojourner Truth

c. 1791 – November 26, 1883

- Abolitionist and Civil Rights advocate.
- Escaped slavery in New York in 1827 and successfully sued for the return of her five-year-old son with the help of an abolitionist family.
- Changed her name from Isabella Bornfree to Sojourner Truth, after becoming a charismatic religious orator giving speeches about the evils of slavery.
- Became nationally recognized, after publishing an autobiography about her life.
- Worked alongside Fredrick Douglass but separated from his cause because he believed that men's rights outweighed women's suffrage.
- Assisted in helping slaves escape to freedom in the North and organizing Black troops and supplies for the Union Army
- Aided former slaves find jobs and rebuild their lives through her work with the Freedmen's Bureau.



Photo: By David W. Carmichael (<https://davidscastingphoto.com>). Surya Bonaly at Nürnberg Games 2007, under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.

Surya Bonaly

December 15, 1973 – Present

- Award-winning French figure skater and PETA activist.
- The only Olympic figure skater to successfully land a backflip on one skate blade.
- Originally trained as a gymnast but switched to figure skating at the age of eleven.
- Rose above many challenges in her career including breaking both wrists during a fall and rupturing her Achilles tendon during practice.
- Was famous for her jumps and risky moves as well as her bold and unusually colored costumes.
- Removed her silver medal during the ceremony at the 1994 World Championships because she believed she should have won first place instead of second.
- Became an American citizen in 2004 and is a proud vegetarian and advocate for animal rights.



Tarenorerer (AKA Wayler)

c. 1800 – June 5, 1831

- Aboriginal guerilla leader of Tasmania.
- Kidnapped in her teens and sold into slavery to sealers, she was intent on getting revenge against British Whites.
- Tarenorerer used her time in captivity to learn how to use firearms and how to speak English fluently.
- Escaped enslavement and returned to Tasmania as an Amazonian-like warrior who killed anyone who tried to come against her in power.
- Led both men and women Tasmanians in the “Black War” against the British colonists until her eventual capture and death from influenza in 1831.



Photo: By Angeles Radulescu - Toni Morrison, Flickr.com
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Toni Morrison

February 18, 1931 – Present

- Award-winning professor, editor, and novelist.
- First African-American woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature.
- Recipient of many awards including the Pulitzer Prize, the NAACP Image Award, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.
- Wrote many novels with strong, African-American women striving to survive in a white/male-dominated world as the focal points.
- Penned the award-winning novel *Beloved* based on the life of a runaway slave who killed her daughter rather than have her return to slavery.
- Morrison's *Beloved* ranks 26th on the American Library Association's list of most banned/challenged books because of its thought-provoking content.



Photo: By Lindelboom, Henk / Anso - Wikimedia Commons
Dutch National Archives

Wilma Rudolph

June 23, 1940 – November 12, 1994

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- Track star, Olympic champion, and educator.
- Contracted polio at the age of four and lost the use of her left leg but eventually regained her strength thanks to her family's dedication to providing massage therapy at home.
- Refused to let her disability stop her and became the first American woman to win three gold medals in Track and Field during the 1960 summer Olympic games in Rome.
- Refused to participate in the 1964 Olympic games because she felt she could not match her 1960 success.
- Retired in 1963 and became a school teacher and coach after finishing her college degree in education.



Zora Neale Hurston

January 7, 1891 – January 28, 1960

- Author, folklorist, and anthropologist.
- Spent her early years studying and collecting folklore throughout the South and the Caribbean as she worked to record the stories and tales of many cultures, particularly African-American.
- Her 1920s Harlem apartment was a hotspot for social gatherings during the Harlem Renaissance.
- Worked with famous poet Langston Hughes on a play and penned several more plays during her lifetime.
- Hurston wrote her most famous novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) while studying voodoo practices in Haiti.
- Author Alice Walker helped to revive her writings in 1975, fifteen years after Hurston died poor and was buried in an unmarked grave.

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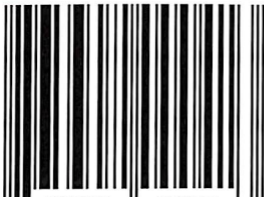
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