

# Celebrate Black History Month

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## Black History Month. How did it all begin?

by Debbie A. Smith

It was through one man's desire for all Americans, Black and White, to know the truth about the role of the Negro in American history, that started the celebration now known as Black History Month.

Carter G. Woodson, also known as the father of Black History, was an educator and historian. He received his Doctoral degree from Harvard University in 1912. Woodson was the second black man to receive this distinction (W.E.B. Du Bois was the first). He dedicated his life to studying the history of the Negro people, and consequently, became the distinguished author of numerous books on this topic.

It was Carter Woodson who founded the organization that drastically changed the image of the Negro in American history. The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History was founded in 1915 with only five members. The purpose of the organization was to clarify the prevalent misconceptions and myths concerning the Negro. Negroes were perceived in the lowest possible light. They were considered second class citizens and most of all inferior to the Whites with whom they shared a nation.

It was through the ASNLH that Woodson gathered all available information concerning the role that Negroes played in the

history of the United States. Through Woodson and his organization a great deal of previously ignored historical people and events were rediscovered and revealed to the public. This information dealt with the achievements and struggles of Negro Americans who had contributed enormously to making this great country. It was through the efforts of proud Negroes such as Dr. Woodson and others that history was rewritten. Therefore we are able to celebrate blacks' contributions to history.

Today black history is celebrated during the entire month of February, but this was not always so. Black History Month grew out of what was earlier known as Negro History Week, which was celebrated for the first time in February 1926. Woodson, who conceived the idea, set the date for this week to coincide with the birth dates of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The idea of Negro History Week was received with great enthusiasm, but Woodson knew that the idea needed time to catch on.

Eventually the ingenious idea of Negro History Week did catch on and later became Black History Month. The aim of this celebration continues to educate people on the many achievements and successes of Black Americans. Not only are blacks acknowledged for their contributions to the Negro race, during Black History Month, but also their contributions to the history of America.

Various activities have been scheduled throughout the month in celebration of Black History Month, all WSSU students are encouraged to participate.

## WSSU's Schedule of Events

February 14	9:00 pm	Valentine's Day Sweetheart Ball	Place-TBA
February 16		Visual Art Series-Mr. Van Hinnant	Univeristy Art Gallery
February 16	3:00 pm	Black History Methodist Church	Auditorium
February 16	7:00 pm	Movie - "Cotton Club"	S.U. Ballroom
February 17	1:00 pm	Black History Month Film	S.U. Lobby
February 18	7:30 pm	Lecture: The Possibility of An African World Union Speaker: John Henrik Clarke	228 CB
February 19	10:00 am	Communication Arts Majors' Seminar	228 CB
February 20	7:00 pm	Patterson Assembly Series, Speaker: Sonia Sanchez	228 CB
February 23	7:00 pm	Movie-"Soldier's Story"	S.U. Ballroom
February 24	1:00 pm	History Month Film	S.U. Lobby
February 24	7:30 pm	SGA Gospel Extravangza	Auditorium
February 25	8:00 pm	Seminar: Understanding the Middle East: An Afro-American View-Khalid Fattah	Atkins Hall
February 26	10:00 am	Annual Black Book Reviews	228 CB
February 27	8:00 pm	Lyceum Event-Pearl Williams Jones Gospel Trio	Auditorium
February 28	9:00 pm	SGA Dance	Whitaker Gym

Black History Month is an annual event and is celebrated during the month of February. A series of programs have been developed to provide an educational forum for the increased awareness of the black struggle and to provide comprehensive efforts which recognize the contributions of Black Americans.

(For information - Contact Ms. Elaine Browne, Asst. Director of Student Activities, 27 Student Union, 761-2044)

### The News Argus Salutes

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
by Angela Corbett

Born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia the child prodigy of the equal rights movement was listed officially at birth as Michael Luther King, Jr. However, in 1957 when he received his first passport the world came to know this great civil rights leader as Martin Luther King, Jr.

As a youth, King watched his father and other ministers dominate audiences with their stimulating words. This along with other occurrences encouraged King to become a great orator. The power of the spoken word fascinated Martin Luther King and eventually inspired him to become a Baptist Minister.

King entered public school in 1935, but was later transferred to a private laboratory school in Atlanta. Later he entered Booker T. Washington High School where he skipped both the ninth and twelfth grades.

At the age of 15 King entered Atlanta's Morehouse College. Attending Morehouse from 1945-1949, he chose sociology as his

major, but finally in his junior year decided to give himself to the ministry. At the age of 17, he gave his first sermon and in 1947 was ordained as the assistant pastor of his father's church.

As years passed, King began to visualize race as the root of all evil. He therefore felt pressed to voice his opinions on equal rights for black Americans.

In 1948, King moved to Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, where he was one of six Negro students enrolled. Although King studied the philosophy of Marx, Sartre, Jaspers, Heidegger and Neebuhr, he treasured the suffering and self-sacrifice of Gandhi's philosophy most. The style and tolerance of Gandhi inspired King to use similar techniques in acquiring his goals.

The fated meeting of Coretta Scott and Martin Luther King led to their marriage on June 18, 1953. At this moment King realized he must plan for his future, whereupon he was offered a deanship, an administrative position and invitations from two churches. These offers flattered King, but did not sway his ambition to become a minister-teacher-prophet.

## Black History Trivia

(compliments of Black Collegian January/February 1986)

1. Prior to Curtis Mayfield, who was the lead singer of the Impressions?
2. Name the largest Black church organization in America.
3. Who was generally considered the first jazz musician to use the organ as a serious instrument?
4. Name the founder of the National Association of Colored Women in 1896.
5. Shirley Verrett is famous for her performances in what type of production?
6. As of 1985, the only fully Black owned soft drink franchise is associated with what major soft drink company?
7. What genre of entertainment were Bert Williams and George Walker best known for?
8. Name the organization of Black members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

9. Ralph Bunche received what prize for his Palestinian mediation efforts in 1950?
10. Rome defeated Hannibal at Zama in 202 B.C. with the aid of what Black warrior?
11. Who was the first Black man to lead the American League in home runs?
12. What organization did Malcom X form after leaving the Nation of Islam?
13. Who is known as "The Mother of African-American Dance"?
14. What day, each year, will Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday be celebrated as a U.S. Federal Holiday?
15. Roy de Carava is famous for his work in what artistic medium?

Answers on Page 4 and 9

1. Jerry Butler
2. National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A.
3. Fats Waller
4. Mary Church Terrell
5. Opera
6. Seven-Up
7. Comedy
8. Congressional Black Caucus

## Grandmet and The National Urban League Will Sponsor A 1986 Essay Contest (enter by March 28, 1986)

Fifteen \$1,000 Academic Scholarships Will be Awarded

Essay Topic:

"The Minority Viewpoint: The Role of Family, Community and Student in Motivating Minorities Toward Achieving Academic Excellence"

interested?.....

Contact -

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