

CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH - 2021

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER TO CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH



MARSHA P. JOHNSON

★ CHECK OUT THE MARSHA P. JOHNSON INSTITUTE @ [HTTPS://MARSHAP.ORG/](https://marshap.org/)

Marsha P. Johnson was an activist, self-identified drag queen, performer, and she went by "Black Marsha" before settling on Marsha P. Johnson. The "P" stood for "Pay It No Mind," which is what Marsha would say in response to questions about her gender.

Marsha is best known for her role in the 1969 Stonewall uprising and for her work supporting low-income LGBTQ people of color. Alongside fellow transgender pioneer Sylvia Rivera, Johnson co-founded the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (S.T.A.R.), a political collective that provided housing for queer youth and sex workers in lower Manhattan.

In 2020, Marsha was honored in her hometown of Elizabeth, New Jersey with a statue, commemorating her activism and accomplishments. 166,000 people signed a petition to have her honored. This is the first public monument in New Jersey to honor an LGBTQ person.

From the institute: So much of our understanding of Marsha came from the accounts of people who did not look like or come from the same place as her. As transness is now more accessible to the world, introducing the Marsha P. Johnson Institute to BLACK trans people who are resisting, grappling with survival, and looking for community has become a clear need.

**"INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO
JUSTICE EVERYWHERE".
- MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

A LITTLE ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER:

HAPPY BLACK HISTORY MONTH
2021!

This newsletter is all about celebrating and loving Blackness. Although Black History Month is only 28 days long, there is so much rich Black History to uncover. Join me on this journey to discover ways that you can celebrate and support Black folx during this special month.

We'll highlight awesome Black people and their accomplishments. We'll also do this in an inclusive way, highlighting folx from all different Black positionalities like: women, men, trans, non-binary, LGBTQ, and persons with disabilities. You are going to learn a lot this month.

Lastly, this is a personal project of mine that is meant to be accessible and quick and easy to read. No long-winded academic prose here -- just simple stories that will tickle your soul. Lastly, if you find any typos or mistakes -- it's all good. I am trying to disrupt the white supremacy culture of perfectionism through my work



BLACK HISTORY SPOTLIGHT



CLAUDETTE COLVIN

★ read more about Claudette @ <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/colvin-claudette-1935/>

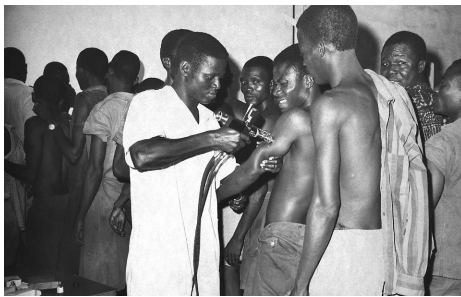
When most people think about the Montgomery bus boycott and the first Black person to refuse to give up their seat on a bus; they think of Rosa Parks. However, there were actually several women who came before Rosa Parks -- one of whom was Claudette Colvin. One March 2nd, 1955, the then fifteen year-old student refused to move to the back of the bus. This happened 9 months before Rosa Parks' actions inspired the Montgomery bus boycott movement.

At the time, Claudette was studying Black heroes like Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth in her segregated school. These studies ignited an inner fire within young Claudette and when the bus driver ordered her to get up and move her seat -- she refused.

She later reported that at the time she, "felt like Sojourner Truth was on one side pushing me down, and Harriet Tubman was on the other side of me pushing me down. I couldn't get up." For this heroic act, Claudette was arrested and sent to jail. She became one of four women who challenged the bus segregation law in court. This led to the Browder v. Gayle court case that successfully overturned bus segregation laws in both Montgomery and Alabama.

Although Claudette's contributions to the Civil Rights Movement have been largely overlooked, her legacy lives on and she serves as an inspiration to young activists. Claudette showed that youth are valuable experts and it's important to develop their full potential. This means that power between youth and adults should be shared.

LITTLE KNOWN HISTORY OF INOCULATION



Onesimus was born in Africa in the late seventeenth century before eventually landing in Boston. He was one of a thousand people of African descent living in the Massachusetts colony. Onesimus was a gift to the Puritan church minister Cotton Mather from his congregation in 1706.

Onesimus told Mather about the centuries old tradition of inoculation practiced in Africa. By extracting material from an infected person and scratching it into the skin of an uninfected person, you could deliberately introduce an infectious disease to a healthy individual -- making them immune.

Mather experimented with the procedure when a smallpox epidemic hit Boston in 1721 and over 240 people were inoculated. The experiment was considered a success and only 2% of patients requesting inoculation died compared to the 15% of people not inoculated who contracted smallpox.

Onesimus' traditional African practice was also used to inoculate American soldiers during the Revolutionary War and introduced the concept of inoculation to the United States.

Learn more @ <https://www.history.com/news/smallpox-vaccine-onesimus-slave-cotton-mather>

LOCAL EVENTS TO CHECK OUT

*information courtesy of visitoakland.com

HISTORY & CULTURE

The Oakland Museum of CA has an exhibit as part of the Gallery of California History about the Black Power movement. In response to the widely-popular 2016 exhibition All Power to the People: Black Panthers at 50, this new installation is now an on-going exhibit that illustrates the creative ways Black anti-racist activists in California supported their communities and challenged the U.S. government.

Unfortunately, the Oakland Museum is temporarily closed due to COVID, but you can enjoy the virtual Black Panther gallery.

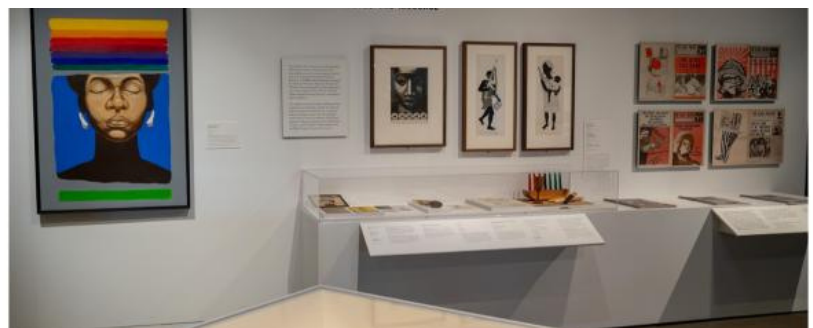
<https://museumca.org/black-panthers-video>

BLACK JOY PARADE AND FESTIVAL

While 2021 won't have the annual Black Joy Parade and Festival, there are still ways to celebrate Black Joy! Producers of the festival developed the **Find Your Joy: Black Joy Scavenger Hunt**. See iconic Black art, learn about historic locations and support local black-owned business.

Kicking off on 2/1, people can go anytime throughout the month alone or with their small bubble tribe.

Participation will be tracked via QR codes at each stop. Complete the journey and receive a small prize at the end.



COOL BLACK-OWNED BUSINESS TO SUPPORT

This list is provided courtesy of the City of Oakland

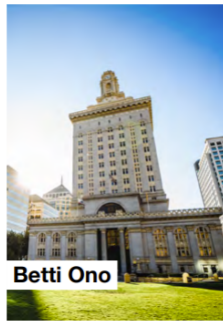
★ <https://www.visitoakland.com/black-history-month/>



Feelmore

This sex-positive shop, making space for marginalized people, just opened a second location in Berkeley.

1703 Telegraph Ave, Oakland, CA 94612
feelmore510.com



Betti Ono

Named by Essence Magazine as one of the five reasons to visit Oakland and founded by Oakland native Anyka Barber in 2010, Betti Ono is a cultural arts venue, gallery, and art+design store in the heart of Downtown Oakland's Black Arts Movement & Business District (BAMBD).

1427 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94612
bettiono.com



McMullen

Oakland's luxury fashion boutique catering to the modern woman of color.

2257 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94612
shopmcmullen.com



Beast Mode

Beast Mode is the official lifestyle and athleisure brand of American footballer Marshawn Lynch, specializing in athletic and performance apparel, hats, shirts, shoes and more.

811 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94607
beastmodeonline.com



Dope Era

This Oakland-based clothing brand founded and curated by rapper Mistah F.A.B., specializing in men's, women's and children's lifestyle and luxury urban wear.

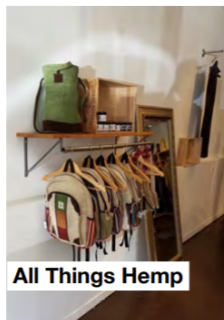
1764 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94612
dopeera.com



Queen Hippie Gypsy

Oakland's first black-owned 'crystal botanica' aims to give women of color need a safe and supportive space to practice ancestral spirituality.

337 14th Street, Oakland, CA 94612
queenhippiegypsy.com



All Things Hemp

Organically grown and harvested hemp products.

3738 Grand Ave, Oakland, CA 94610
allthingshemp.com



Marcus Book Store

The oldest independent black bookstore in the nation

3900 Martin Luther King Jr Way, Oakland, CA 94609
facebook.com/marcus.books

★ **Did you know?** Black History Month was started in 1926. It was originally called "Negro History Week"

★ **Did you know?** Before both Claudette Colvin and Rosa Parks, there was Irene Morgan Kirkaldy. In July 1944, Morgan Kirkaldy was arrested after she refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger in Virginia.

Want to contribute?

If you would like to add any resources or submit a piece; please do! Submissions are due on **Thursdays at 5pm.**

★ The weekly newsletter is released Monday morning. Contact Mr. Mango @ blkhxstorymatters@gmail.com



BLACK POETS

WON'T YOU CELEBRATE WITH ME

LUCILLE CLIFTON - 1936-2010

won't you celebrate with me
what i have shaped into
a kind of life? i had no model.
born in babylon
both nonwhite and woman
what did i see to be except
myself?
i made it up
here on this bridge between
starshine and clay.
my one hand holding tight
my other hand; come celebrate
with me that everyday
something has tried to kill me
and has failed.

AMERICAN HISTORY

MICHAEL S. HARPER - 1938-2016

Those four black girls blown up
in that Alabama church
remind me of five hundred
middle passage blacks,
in a net, under water
in Charleston harbor
so *redcoats* wouldn't find them.
Can't find what you can't see
can you?

ON BEING BROUGHT FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA

PHILLIS WHEATLEY - 1753-1784

'Twas mercy brought me from
my Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to
understand
That there's a God, that there's
a Saviour too:
Once I redemption neither
sought nor knew.
Some view our sable race with
scornful eye,"
Their colour is a diabolic die."
Remember, Christians, Negros,
black as Cain,
May be refin'd, and join th'
angelic train.