This issue is dedicated to celebrating Black History Month. Many of the people and events highlighted represent the "lesser known," yet still equally integral, aspects of Black History. Black History is not separate from American History - it is all of our History.

**THE ORIGINS OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

Carter G. Woodson was born in 1875 to former slaves. He exceeded all expectations of him by teaching himself English and arithmetic at 19 and eventually earning a PhD at Harvard University.

He noticed that history books ignored America’s Black population, which led him in 1915 to establish the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and its *Journal of Negro History*. In 1926, Woodson developed Negro History Week, and he chose February because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the Black American population - Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

The week was eventually expanded into Black History Month in 1976. For his work, Woodson has been hailed as the "Father of Black History."
Gladys Bentley was a popular blues singer and pianist of the 1920s and 30s. She was openly queer and experimented with gender presentation in her performances. Her name doesn't have the same recognition as many of her Harlem Renaissance peers, in part, because the risqué nature of her performances would have kept her out of mainstream venues, newspapers, and history books. Today though, Bentley's story is resurfacing and she is seen as an African American woman who stretched the boundaries of gender and sexuality in her time.

Madam C.J. Walker invented a line of African American hair care products in 1905 after suffering from a scalp ailment that resulted in her own hair loss. The first in her family to be free-born, she was one of the first American women to become a self-made millionaire. Walker organized clubs and conventions for her representatives, which recognized not only successful sales, but also philanthropic and educational efforts among African Americans. Netflix recently released a miniseries titled *Self Made* in which Walker is portrayed by Octavia Spencer.

Bayard Rustin was a leader of the Civil Rights Movement. He organized the 1963 March on Washington and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which strengthened Martin Luther King, Jr.'s leadership. While Rustin was accepting of his gay identity, criticism over his sexuality as well as pushback from other civil rights leaders led him to usually act as an adviser behind the scenes. In the 1980s, he became a public advocate for gay rights. Rustin was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013.
In 1939, Black jazz singer Billie Holiday recorded "Strange Fruit," a song that ultimately would be named *Time*’s "Song of the Century" in 1999. However, this racially charged protest song against the lynching of Black Americans garnered mixed reactions during her lifetime. Namely, despite Federal Bureau of Narcotics Commissioner Harry Anslinger forbidding Holiday from performing the song, she refused and persisted. This resulted in Anslinger devising a plan to destroy her and her career - taking advantage of her drug abuse to send her to prison, refusing to reissue her cabaret performer’s license, and fatally preventing doctors from offering her treatment when she was hospitalized.

Despite her tragic life, Holiday has a lasting legacy in the world of jazz and pop music. She garnered 23 Grammys posthumously and was inducted into the National Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame in 2000. For 20 years, she continued singing "Strange Fruit" despite the backlash she faced, and even to this day, her song is just as impactful.

Hulu recently released a movie titled *The United States vs. Billie Holiday* in which Holiday is portrayed by Andra Day. Day won the award for Best Actress in a Motion Picture - Drama at the 2021 Golden Globes, making her just the 2nd Black woman to ever win (coming after Whoopi Goldberg who won in 1986 for her role in *The Color Purple*).

**The Safe Bus Company** operated in the city of Winston-Salem, North Carolina from 1926 to 1972. It was the largest Black-owned transportation company in the country. It was originally formed to provide transportation to the city’s underserved Black neighborhoods. In the 1920s, segregation reached into nearly every aspect of daily life. The name “Safe Bus” was taken from a promise made to Winston-Salem Mayor Thomas Barber to operate a safe and organized bus system for Black residents.
Kizzmekia Corbett, PhD is the key immunologist behind the development of the COVID-19 vaccine and a North Carolina native. Her remarkable research and advocacy work has helped us all get closer to a cure and improve health disparities among minority communities that stem from decades of abusive medical tactics. Dr. Corbett recognizes that gaining trust is needed to bridge a path to the Black community and takes this personally. She now volunteers her time talking about vaccine science with people of color because it is necessary to make scientific knowledge accessible in public forums to ease health disparities. Even as a graduate student she was involved in promoting science by going to schools and speaking to groups that would not normally consider careers in science. Her industry is 70% white and she works hard to find ways to get more people of color interested in science.

Camara Jones, MD, MPH, PhD is a family physician and epidemiologist whose work focuses on the impacts of racism on the health and well-being of the nation. In her 2014 TEDxEmory Talk (right above), Dr. Jones describes four allegories on race and racism which illuminate topics that are otherwise difficult for many Americans to understand or discuss. In 2021, she unveiled a new allegory to describe race as a system (right below).

In total, these allegories are powerful and illustrative and promote both discussion and action in regards to addressing and resolving racism and racial inequity within the US.
Miss Major Griffin-Gracy is a transgender activist who has fought for over fifty years to create a better world for her trans/gender nonconforming community. Major is a veteran of the infamous Stonewall Riots, a former sex worker, and a survivor of Dannemora Prison and Bellevue Hospital’s “queen tank.” Her global legacy of activism is rooted in her own experiences, and she continues her work to uplift transgender women of color, particularly those who have survived incarceration and police brutality. Amazon Prime hosts the 2015 documentary Major! which details her life and work.

Jennifer King made history by becoming the NFL’s first Black female assistant coach. She is currently the running back coach for the Washington Football Team. King also becomes the second female assistant position coach in the NFL behind Tampa Bay Buccaneers assistant defensive line coach Lori Locust. She faced many hardships before being promoted in the NFL according to the team statement, and made sure not to let any obstacles hinder her from moving forward. King serves as an inspiration for women and girls everywhere. She stressed in the team’s statement that it’s important for young Black girls “to know they can do anything.”

Moziah Bridges is the 15-year-old CEO of Mo's Bows, a Memphis-based and family run business of handmade bow ties. He served as the fashion correspondent for the 2015 NBA Draft, was featured on Time's list of "30 Most influential Teens" in both 2015 and 2017, and was on Fortune's "18 under 18" list in 2016. In 2017, he secured a partnership with the NBA to make custom neckties and bow ties for all 30 NBA teams. In 2019, he published his book Mo's Bows: A Young Person’s Guide to Start-Up Success: Measure, Cut, Stitch Your Way to a Great Business. His goals are to attend college for fashion design and design for pop culture's biggest influencers someday.
"Reading the DPT Call to Action Letter greatly shifted my perspective about the inequity that exists in regard to how my Black peers experience school. Specifically, the narratives shared by various Black students at Duke DPT detailing micro/macroaggressions or just plain racism were very impactful and illuminating. These were moments that I never really noticed or paid attention to myself, and yet these same moments were wholly and abundantly experienced by the people who shared their stories. I can only imagine how isolating that must feel, especially given that there are so few peers who look like you whom you can confide in and will truly understand what you are going through. So I am thankful for my classmates' bravery in speaking their truth. Reading that letter helped kickstart my continuing journey in educating myself and putting in the work to manifest change in spaces to make them more diverse, inclusive, and equitable."

"As a Black American, I feel that is normal for me to feel out of place in some situations. A quote that I heard during a Diversity Club meeting that really resonated with me is: 'If you do not go somewhere because you feel uncomfortable and others feel that you do not belong there, then no one will ever go. But it is up to you to pave the way for others and go places believing that you do belong to change the narrative and take part in improving opportunities for others.' Hearing this really encouraged me to see the true value of my Black experience."
"My daughter and her close friend have played on the same club team (soccer) for three years. At one particular tournament in VA, we were driving back to the fields after lunch when we encountered a congested entry to the soccer complex. Subsequently, most cars were doing a U-turn in order to turn right into the complex rather than wait to turn left. Notably, there were no signs to indicate this was a traffic violation. Despite the train of cars that performed the U-turn, only one car was stopped by law enforcement – my daughter's friend's family. Once they finally arrived at the fields, her dad was visibly incensed by the experience. Her family is multi-racial and they've experienced similar situations before. Dad was so upset, that he traveled back to VA a month later to fight the ticket – and won.

"Fast forward six months and our families were eating together after a match. They shared a recent harrowing experience with their son, where he was pulled over by law enforcement in Raleigh for having part of his license plate obscured by the plastic border. Not only is this infraction unusual, but evidently justified their son being pulled from the vehicle and frisked on the hood of his car. In his words, 'I thought they were going to shoot me.' I've long suspected societal double standards based on race, but these experiences were my closest and the first time I felt a visceral response."

"On June 16, 2020, Duke hosted an event 'Living While Black at Duke.' It centered around 4 themes: 'How did we get here?;' 'Being Black in America;' 'Being Black at Duke;' and 'How do we move forward?.' People were brave and vulnerable. Stories were incredibly raw and powerful. Colleagues across the University shared one testimonial after another. I found the day first informative, then moving, then heartbreaking, then infuriating. My understanding of the different experiences students, colleagues, friends were having was so naive, so shallow. What resonates with me the most about the concept of privilege is the unjust and unearned advantage to not have to think about race. This advantage is afforded to me by nothing more than the randomness of the situation I was born into. The way that the day was organized really gave focus to my journey to become anti-racist and an advocate. 1. 'How did we get here?': Continue to learn. Read. Listen. Understand history. 2. 'Being Black in America': My personal experience of how I've been asked to navigate life reflects such narrow perspective, one that has been unjustly advantaged. Listen, learn, see, and appreciate others' experiences and perspectives. Support legislature, advocate for change. 3. 'Being Black at Duke': Engage students, colleagues, friends. Do better here and now. Be a better support, a better ally. Fight for justice and representation. 4. 'How do we move forward?': Keep having the discussions. Identify and work with those that share common value and influence. 'Just keep moving.' We're physical therapists, we've been promoting 'move forward' for years."