



Black History Month Resource Guide

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ABOUT



Commonfund Corporate

Commonfund is a leading asset management firm that empowers educational institutions, foundations, pension funds, family offices, RIAs, and other sophisticated investors to achieve their most important goals. Through our Outsourced CIO business, we provide nonprofits access to world-class investment management solutions. Our CF Private Equity business provides access to private equity investments for both nonprofit and for-profit organizations seeking to diversify their portfolios with private investments. Our Commonfund Institute is among the nation's most trusted sources for relevant, useful, and proprietary data, analytics, and best practices in financial management. All our businesses are united by a relentless commitment to investment performance matched by an equally relentless commitment to the values of trust, transparency, and ethical behavior that have inspired us since our founding more than fifty years ago. www.commonfund.org.

About Black History Month

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event evolved from of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian [Carter G. Woodson](#) and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.

To continue learning more, click [here](#).

Commonfund, in conjunction with our Black History Month subcommittee has created a resource guide to help all of us celebrate the contributions of African Americans in all aspects of American Life. African Americans, and those a part of the African Diaspora, have and continue to be such an integral part of the American (and Global) community, from music, art, politics, science, academia, finance, law, sports and entertainment, the list goes on and on. With that said, this resource guide is not an exhaustive list by any stretch of the imagination. The hope is that you will take advantage of at least a few of these resources to begin your exploration of this very important part of American history; your history, our history.

UNDERSTAND AND CONNECT



History of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)

[Aspen Institute: A Guide to America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#)

[HBCU First: A History of Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#)

[New Books in African American Studies](#)

[The Best Schools Magazine: History of Historically Black Colleges](#)

[Thurgood Marshall College Fund: The History of HBCUs](#)

[U.S. Department of Education: Historically Black Colleges and Universities \(HBCUs\)](#)



LISTEN AND ENGAGE

Podcasts

[Blackbelt Voices](#)

Hosted by Adena J. White, Kara Wilkins, and Katrina Dupins, “Blackbelt Voices” explores the vastness of Black Southern culture through first-person narratives and interviews with prominent scholars.

[Black History Buff](#)

“Black History Buff” shines a light on the inspiring stories of Black historical figures from all over the world. With each episode clocking in at around 10-20 minutes, Black History Buff is an elegant and efficient way for listeners to expand their knowledge of Black culture across the globe.

[Black History Year](#)

Produced by PushBlack, a non-profit Black media company, “Black History Year” introduces its listeners to thinkers and activists who have been erased or otherwise marginalized from mainstream conversations about history.

[Everyday Black History](#)

Welcome to “Everyday Black History”! Where we highlight the contributions of Black Men and Women both past and present. Here we celebrate Afro Appreciation, where Black American, Africans and Latinos of African descent are honored. We also highlight Institutions that have helped the advancement of people in the African Diaspora, such as Historically Black Universities and many others.

[Historically Black](#)

“Historically Black” uses personal objects to map Black history. Each episode explores the story behind a listener-submitted artifact, and in the process creates a sort of “people’s museum” that honors the lived experiences of various Black Americans.

[Humanity Archive](#)

Founded by Jermaine Fowler, “Humanity Archive” is an educational website and storytelling podcast that shares untold or underexposed stories from history. Many of the figures showcased represent hidden histories of African Americans in the U.S.

[Noire Histor](#)

Created by Natasha McEachron, “Noire Histor” is a multimedia exploration of history and inspirational stories from across the Black diaspora.

[School Colors](#)

“School Colors” is a documentary podcast that follows generations of parents and educators fighting for educational equity in Central Brooklyn. As the hosts tackle topics like gentrification and charter schools, School Colors reveals how race, class, and power heavily impact the quality of education Black students are able to receive.

[Witness Black History](#)

Launched by BBC as an extension of its “Witness History” podcast series, “Witness Black History” features interviews with people who were actually present for or have close ties to key moments in Black and civil rights history.

READ AND EXPLORE



Articles and Websites

- [African American History Month: National Resources](#)
- [America is Losing the Real Meaning of Black History Month](#)
- [Black History Month: What is it and why does it matter?](#)
- [BlackPast: Resource Guides and other websites](#)
- [Carter G. Woodson: Meet the Man who created Black History Month](#)
- [Hip Hop and the Metaverse](#)
- [How Negro History Week Became Black History Month and Why It Matters Now](#)
- [National Geographic Resource Library: Black History Month](#)
- [I Think Black History Month Should Last All Year](#)
- [National Museum of African American History & Culture](#)
- [National Museum of African American Music](#)
- [Schomburg Center For Research in Black Culture](#)
- [Studio Museum Harlem](#)
- [The Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration](#)

Books

- [Amazing Grace: An Anthology of Poems About Slavery, 1660-1810](#), edited by James G. Basker
- [Before the Mayflower](#), by Lerone Bennett (1962)
- [Blues People](#), by Amiri Baraka (1963)
- [Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents](#), by Isabella Wilkerson (2020)
- [First Martyr of Liberty: Crispus Attucks in American Memory](#), by Mitch Kachun (2017)
- [Harlem Renaissance](#), by Nathan Huggins (1971)
- [Homegoing](#), by Yaa Gyasi (2016)
- [Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family From Slavery to the Present](#), by Jacqueline Jones (1985)
- [Letter from Birmingham Jail](#), by Martin Luther King Jr. (1963)
- [Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present](#), by Harriet A. Washington (2008)
- [Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63](#), by Taylor Branch (1988)
- [The Souls of Black Folk](#), by W.E.B. Du Bois (1903)
- [The Myth of the Negro Past](#), by Melville Herskovits (1941)
- [Paul Robeson: A Biography](#), by Martin Duberman (1988)
- [Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You](#), by Ibram X. Kendi (2020)
- [The Autobiography of Malcolm X](#), by Alex Haley and Malcolm X (1965)
- [The Black Friend](#), by Fredrick Joseph (2020)
- [The Broken Heart of America: St. Louis and the Violent History of the United States](#), by Walter Johnson (2020)

- The Color of Water, by James McBride (2006)
- The Dead are Arising, The Life of Malcolm X, by Les Payne (2020)
- The Fire Next Time, by James Baldwin (1963)
- The Half Has Never Been Told: Slaver and the Making of American Capitalism, by Edward E. Baptist (2014)
- The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, by Michelle Alexander (2010)
- The Slave Ship: A Human History, by Marcus Rediker (2007)
- When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America, by Paula Giddings (1948)
- White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812, by Winthrop Jordan (1968)



WATCH AND LEARN

Documentaries

Documentaries allow us to re-live historic moments and provide insight into our culture and society.

Breaking the Huddle: The Integration of College Football

The HBO documentary *Breaking the Huddle* explores civil rights through the lens of football. Looking at the impact of the Civil Rights Movement and football programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the story culminates with the historic September 1970 game when the all-white University of Alabama Crimson Tide faced off against the fully integrated University of Southern California Trojans. Alabama's crushing defeat under legendary head coach Paul "Bear" Bryant by USC's star African American running back, Sam "Bam" Cunningham, is considered the game that changed college football in the South.

Da 5 Bloods

Four African American veterans battle the forces of man and nature when they return to Vietnam looking for the remains of their fallen squad leader and the gold fortune he helped them hide.

Dark Girls

Dark Girls is an emotional exposé on what it means to be dark skinned in America. Filmmakers D. Channsin Berry and Bill Duke capture moving interviews with women who open up about their experiences being dark, Black women in America.

Eyes on the Prize

This award-winning series covers all of the major events of the Civil Rights Movement from 1954-1985, including the Montgomery bus boycott in 1954, the Voting Rights Act in 1965, the birth of the Black Power Movement, and the courageous acts of the crusaders that contributed along the way.

Freedom Riders

Based on Raymond Arsenault's book *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*, this two-hour documentary tells the story of the summer of 1961 when more than 400 Black and white Americans risked their lives traveling together in the segregated South to protest segregation.

I Am Not Your Negro

In 1979, James Baldwin wrote a letter to his literary agent describing his next project, "Remember This House." The book was to be a revolutionary, personal account of the lives and assassinations of three of his close friends: Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. At the time of Baldwin's death in 1987, he left behind only 30 completed pages of this manuscript. Filmmaker Raoul Peck envisions the book James Baldwin never finished.

John Lewis: Good Trouble

An intimate account of legendary U.S. Representative John Lewis' life, legacy and more than 60 years of extraordinary activism — from the bold teenager on the front lines of the Civil Rights movement to the legislative powerhouse he was throughout his career.

Judas and the Black Messiah

FBI informant William O'Neal infiltrates the Illinois Black Panther Party and is tasked with keeping tabs on their charismatic leader, Chairman Fred Hampton. A career thief, O'Neal revels in the danger of manipulating both his comrades and his handler, Special Agent Roy Mitchell. Hampton's political prowess grows just as he's falling in love with fellow revolutionary Deborah Johnson. Meanwhile, a battle wages for O'Neal's soul. Will he align with the forces of good? Or subdue Hampton and The

Panthers by any means, as FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover commands?

LA92

Twenty-five years after the verdict in the Rodney King trial sparked several days of protests, violence and looting in Los Angeles, LA 92 immerses viewers in that tumultuous period through stunning and rarely seen archival footage.

More than a Month

In this 2012 documentary, African American filmmaker Shukree Hassan Tilghman sets off on a journey across America asking the question “Should Black History Month be ended?” Tilghman searches to learn more about race and power in contemporary America by interviewing experts at revered organizations around the country in addition to everyday people he meets along the way during his journey.

Roots

A dramatization of author Alex Haley’s family line from ancestor Kunta Kinte’s enslavement to his descendants’ liberation.

Slavery by Another Name

Did Slavery really end with the Civil War? The documentary Slavery by Another Name explores how in the years following the Emancipation Proclamation, systematic approaches were taken to re-enslave newly freed Blacks in the United States.

Soundtrack for a Revolution

Taking a fresh approach to the story of the American Civil Rights Movement, Soundtrack for a Revolution features the powerful music from the movement. Focusing on the freedom songs sung by protesters on picket lines, in mass meetings, in paddy wagons and in jail cells, this film celebrates the vitality of the music and the infectious energy that it provided. Freedom songs evolved from slave chants, the labor movement, and from the Black church, and were a vital tool as protestors stood up against adversity.

The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross

This Emmy Award-winning series premiered in 2013 and looks at more than just Black history, it explores Black identity and what it means to be an African American in the U.S. today. This series spans five hundred years and two continents as Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. takes viewers on a journey of the Black experience throughout the United States.

The Black List: Volume One

The Black List: Volume One features interviews from a variety of voices in contemporary Black America using a technique where the interviewer is never seen or heard on camera. The result is a living portrait of stories from leading voices across a variety of disciplines including arts, sports, politics, business and government.

The Black Power Mixtape 1967-1975

The Black Power Mixtape tells the story of the Black Power Movement through the eyes of Swedish journalists. Drawn to America in the late 1960s by stories of revolution and urban unrest, the journalists recorded interviews with activists like Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale, Angela Davis and Eldridge Cleaver.

The Trials of Muhammed Ali

The Trials of Muhammad Ali is a feature-length documentary film covering Ali’s toughest bout, his battle to overturn the five-year prison sentence he received for refusing U.S. military service. Trials is not a boxing film. It is a fight film tracing a formative period in Ali’s life, one that is remarkably unknown to young people today and tragically neglected by those who remember him as a boxer but overlook how controversial he was when he first took center stage.

Movies

Movies, unlike documentaries, allow for more creative interpretation and allow filmmakers to bring different elements to life through storytelling.

Belle (2014)

Belle is based on a real-life person: Dido Elizabeth Belle, born in 1761. She was the daughter of a relationship between Caribbean enslaved female Maria Belle and British naval Captain [later Admiral] Sir John Lindsay. Belle sees race through the very English perspective of class, status, and family ties. The violence associated with racial prejudice is not the concern of this film. Instead, Belle’s subject-matter is the impact of race on the late eighteenth century English class system and the aristocracy.

Between the World and Me (2020)

The HBO adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates’ award-winning 2015 book aims to honor its source material while expanding its tone with an all-star cast. The movie, like the book, is structured as an open letter to Coates’ adolescent son Samori about what to

expect as a Black person living in the U.S., and the words still ring true in 2020 in the face of institutional racism and police brutality.

Daughters of the Dust (1991)

Set in 1902, it tells the story of three generations of Gullah (also known as Geechee) women in the Peazant family on Saint Helena Island as they prepare to migrate off the island, out of the Southern United States, and into the North.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (1967)

Starring Sidney Poitier, Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn, this movie centers around the character Joanna Drayton, a 23-year-old white woman, who brings home her fiancé, who happens to be Black, to meet her upper-class family. Despite being liberal, Drayton's parents have a hard time adjusting to the relationship.

Hidden Figures (2016)

The story of African American women who served as human computers and made other vital contributions to NASA during the '50s and '60s that helped launch the unmanned space flight program. Available on Amazon and other streaming platforms.

Loving (2016)

This is the story of Richard and Mildred Loving whose interracial marriage would end with an historic 1967 Supreme Court decision. Because of their interracial marriage, the couple are arrested, roughed up, insulted, and booted from their home.

Malcolm X (1992)

Directed by Spike Lee and starring Denzel Washington, this movie is a 1992 American biographical film about the African American activist Malcolm X.

Marshall (2017)

Marshall is a 2017 American biographical legal drama film directed by Reginald Hudlin and written by Michael and Jacob Koskoff. It stars Chadwick Boseman as Thurgood Marshall, the first African American Supreme Court Justice, and focuses on one of the first cases of his career, the State of Connecticut v. Joseph Spell.

One Night in Miami (2020)

On one incredible night in 1964, four icons of sports, music, and activism gathered to celebrate one of the biggest upsets in boxing history. When underdog Cassius Clay, soon to be called Muhammad Ali, (Eli Goree), defeats heavy weight champion Sonny Liston at the Miami Convention Hall, Clay memorialized the event with three of his friends: Malcolm X (Kingsley Ben-Adir), Sam Cooke (Leslie Odom Jr.) and Jim Brown (Aldis Hodge).

Origin (2023)

This biographical drama film is written and directed by Ava DuVernay. It is based on the book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson, which describes racism in the United States as an aspect of a caste system.

Remember the Titans (2000)

Starring Denzel Washington, this film is based on the true story of a new African-American high school football coach in a newly integrated school in Alexandria, Va. in 1971. The Titans are struggling to get along and play as a team, divided by racial tensions, when a major player is critically injured in a car accident.

Selma (2014)

A critically acclaimed historical drama, *Selma* chronicles the Selma to Montgomery marches led by Civil Rights activists such as Martin Luther King, Jr. The marches, held over a period of 18 days, aimed to secure equal voting rights and were met with violent resistance from local law enforcement and possemen.

The Hate U Give (2018)

Based on the best-selling novel, *The Hate U Give* tells the story of Starr Carter, who lives in two worlds: the poor, Black neighborhood where she resides and the mostly white prep school she attends. This uneasy balance is shattered when she witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood friend by a policeman. Facing pressures from all sides, Starr must find her voice and stand up for what's right.

42 (2013)

Starring Chadwick Boseman, *42* is the inspiring biopic about the two years in which Jackie Robinson broke the sport's color barrier in Major League Baseball.

In addition to the movies and documentaries listed here, please view any of the "Representation Matters" and "Black Lives Matter" Collection on Netflix and other streaming platforms for various works from African American producers, directors, actors, and animated artists.

SUPPORT AND EXPERIENCE



National Legacy and other Black-led Non-profit Organizations

Divine Nine Fraternities & Sororities

An important aspect of the history of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) is the nine historically Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) that make up the National Pan-Hellenic Council. Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) began to come into fruition in the early 20th century due to the trials and tribulations that many African Americans were facing within the United States at the time. The inclusion of African Americans in universities proved to be trying times for African American students in the early 1900s. Often ostracized and banned from joining many social organizations, African American students began searching for ways to cope with these struggles. As we celebrate the historical significance of HBCUs during Black History Month, it is equally important to celebrate the social support system of The Divine Nine BGLOs that have supported countless students of color throughout history in innumerable ways and have positively affected societal change.

Equal Justice Initiative (EJI)

Founded in 1989 by Bryan Stevenson, a widely acclaimed public interest lawyer and bestselling author of *Just Mercy*, EJI is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to people who have been illegally convicted, unfairly sentenced, or abused in state jails and prisons. Many of those wrongfully convicted are disproportionately African American.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Founded in 1909 in response to the ongoing violence against Black people around the country, the NAACP is the largest and most pre-eminent civil rights organization in the nation.

NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (NAACP LDF)

The NAACP LDF is America's premier legal organization fighting for racial justice. Through litigation, advocacy, and public education, LDF seeks structural changes to expand democracy, eliminate disparities, and achieve racial justice in a society that fulfills the promise of equality for all Americans. LDF also defends the gains and protections won over the past 80 years of civil rights struggle and works to improve the quality and diversity of judicial and executive appointments.

National Urban League (NUL)

The National Urban League (NUL) is a historic civil rights organization dedicated to economic empowerment, equality, and social justice. Founded in 1910 and headquartered in New York City, the Urban League collaborates at the national and local levels with community leaders, policymakers, and corporate partners to elevate the standards of living for African Americans and other historically underserved groups.

Thurgood Marshall College Fund

Established in 1987, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) is the nation's largest organization exclusively representing the Black College Community. TMCF member-schools include the publicly supported Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs). Publicly supported HBCUs enroll over 80% of all students attending HBCUs. Through scholarships, capacity building and research initiatives, innovative programs, and strategic partnerships, TMCF is a vital resource in the K-12 and higher education space. The organization is also a source for top employers seeking top talent for competitive internships and good jobs.

United Negro College Fund (UNCF)

UNCF is an American philanthropic organization that funds scholarships for black students and general scholarship funds for 37 private historically black colleges and universities. UNCF was incorporated on April 25, 1944 by Frederick D. Patterson (then president of what is now Tuskegee University), Mary McLeod Bethune, and others.

For additional resources, please visit the Commonfund website to download our [Diversity and Inclusion: Ways to Make a Change](#) resource guide.

In 2018, we created a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office to intentionally promote and foster inclusion and equity across the firm and our investment process, thought leadership and professional and organizational development. To learn more and download our DEI report, visit - <https://www.commonfund.org/diversity>.