Welcome to volume 2, no. 2 of *Digging up the Past*. Winter brings with it not only MLK day, but also Black History Month, Women’s History Month, the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust, and National Farmworker Awareness week. Like so many times of the year, it is not only a season of celebration, but also a season to remember, a season to learn from the past, and a season of action.

For many of us, MLK day is a day of celebration: we hold high the community service of students who are excelling in anti-racist work. Yet, when we slow down and reflect on the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., we remember that his work was necessary because of the long legacy of human enslavement, racial segregation, and white terror in our country. He was martyred because he took a stand against the systems of violence that shaped his time, many of which continue to shape our time. There is much work to be done.

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Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia and attended segregated grammar and high schools. His maternal grandfather was a minister and a charter member of the local chapter of the National Association for Colored People (NAACP), and his father was a Baptist minister and a charter member of the Atlanta Voter’s League. Martin Luther King, Sr. put himself through college at Morehouse, a historically Black college, and later served on its board of trustees. Clearly, Martin Luther King, Jr. came from a long line of activists. Having skipped two years of high school, King began studies at his father’s alma mater when he was just 15 years old.[1] At the time, the president of Morehouse was Dr. Benjamin E. Mays. As noted by Clayborne Carson, “Mays challenged Morehouse students to struggle against segregation.” Mays was strongly influenced by Gandhi’s philosophy of activism and, through his words and actions, passed that inspiration on to the next generation of scholar-activists, including MLK. [2] When King went from Morehouse to seminary, he did so with years of strong mentoring behind him.

While it is interesting and important to reflect on King’s early education, it is, perhaps even more important to reflect on his later work, when he confronted what he termed the “Giant Triplets” of militarism, materialism, and racism. While King spoke out against militarism as early as 1959, toward the end of his life he explicitly denounced the U.S. War in Vietnam. In relation, in a 1967 speech at the National Labor Leadership Assembly for Peace, he noted that money spent on war was money taken from programs to fight poverty.[3] King continues to inspire us today, because he spoke truth to power, challenging us to see the Giant Triplets and to confront them.

In this issue you will find essays, abstracts and more, to honor both Black History Month and Women’s History Month. Our featured, guest historian, is Jennifer Moran, a second-year PhD student with the department of History. Moran’s area of expertise is Chicanx history, with a focus on Chicanas and baseball. Happy Winter, and Happy Reading,
Dr. L Heidenreich Zuñiga

Because both Women's History Month and Black History Month come during the winter season, our featured quotable person for this issue is Audre Lorde. Audre Lorde was born Audrey Geraldine Lorde on February 18, 1934. Her family was Black middle class, which meant that while they had more access to education and employment than most Black Americans in the early twentieth century, they were still very poor. As a young girl, she grew up in Manhattan and attended Catholic schools. She earned her BA from Hunter's College (1959), and went on to earn a masters' degree in Library Science from Columbia University. It was not until 1968 that Lorde was able to work full-time as a writer and educator.

That year she accepted a teaching position at Tugaloo College in Jackson, Mississippi and, while there, realized that she could use her writing to work for racial justice. Tugaloo was seething with racist violence. Students at Tugaloo, like so many Black students throughout the South, were demanding equal access to education and basic services; white Americans living around the college responded by firing bullets at the campus. The activism of the students inspired Lorde, and her year at Tugaloo became a turning point in her life. That year she published *The First Cities*, her first volume of poetry. She spent the rest of her life working as a poet-activist, or as she proudly named herself “a Black, lesbian, feminist, warrior, poet.”

### Quotable Lorde

But we all hurt in so many different ways, all the time, and pain will either change or end....Your silence will not protect you (“The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action,” in *Sister Outsider*, 41).

I am a bleak heroism of words
that refuse
to be buried alive
with the liars (“Learning to Write,” in *Our Dead Behind Us*, 53).

Whatever the core problems are for the people of [a] country must also be the core problems addressed by women, for we do not exist in a vacuum. We are anchored in our own place and time, looking out and beyond to the future we are creating (*A Burst of Light*, 64).

Some women wait for something
to change and nothing
does change
so they change
themselves (“Stations,” in *Our Dead Behind Us*, 15).
College-level history courses enable you to explore aspects of the past that are important and interesting to you. The field of history allows you to ... “dig up the past.”

The Roaring Twenties: A Berlin Story, by Alexi Gall-History 105

In Berlin, Germany, the roaring twenties was a time of prosperity and growth for the country, but this soon changed when certain political leaders took control. During my research process I learned about the complete switch of society after Hitler and his Third Reich led Germany to power. I learned that prior to the rise of the Nazi’s Berlin had various activities citizens participated in such as cabarets, art shows, and jazz concerts. The sources I chose were books mostly written during the time of these occurrences. I used two journals/diaries from a soldier and an average citizen living through these historical moments in Berlin. I also found a recent article that relates the spread of the Spanish Flu during these years to our recent COVID19 pandemic. I utilized the libraries on campus to find my sources and information on the topic of Berlin during and after the golden twenties. This topic was so interesting to research because the city of Berlin along with Germany had such impactful effects on the whole world. The transition from a lively and free-spirited culture to being totally controlled by fear and violence a few years later left citizens with a complete lifestyle disruption.

The World Wars and Women in the Workplace, by Briana Weik, History 105

Japan finds itself among the lowest-ranking countries in the world for gender equality. Yet some of the challenges faced by women in Japan, are rooted in the West. Western influences from the late 1800s through post-World War II negatively impacted the existing reformations that were starting to gain traction between the Meiji and Showa periods, which laid a foundation for the mistreatment of women we see today. For example, in 1853, when Japan was already starting to see a downfall in their existing government under the Tokugawa, Commodore Matthew Perry stepped foot on Japanese soil and forced trade treaties upon the country. These trade agreements benefited the United States and other western countries at the expense of Japan. These unfair treaties caused a political and economic collapse, leading to the Japanese rejecting Western ideas. Unfortunately, many saw gender equality as a western idea. Historians struggle to find documentation from the perspectives of Japanese women from these times. There are useful sources by men observing their own culture and environment from this time; however, many only briefly touched on the lives of women around them. One of the most beneficial sources I found was Andrew Gordon’s A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present, which went in-depth on every element of each chunk of their history in the time frame. The treatment and discrimination women face today results from many attempts of Japan trying to step forward with equality on their own, followed by Westerners stepping in and trampling their progress. Clearly, international relations affect gender equality.

Resist Silence, by Frances Brown, History 369

Audre Lorde once said, “My silence did not protect me. Your silence will not protect you.” Born in 1932, Lorde was an African American queer poet and writer who actively spoke out on issues of gender, sexuality, and race. Lorde was a trailblazer for black lesbians and encouraged her students and readers to speak out even when they were fearful. My thesis statement for this project was: Lorde’s ability to create safe spaces within oppressed communities allowed for people to exist freely, resulting in the rejection of silence through the power of speech. Something interesting about Lorde is that one of her first was published to Seventeen Magazine. She submitted the poem when her teacher told her is was a bad poem. So, she submitted it to prove her teacher wrong. Lorde is a valuable person to learn about because she is noted as an inspiration to many people who came after her even years after her death. She taught me the value in my voice and the power that already exists within myself.
Clash of the Titans, by Ajay Ramani, History 105

How do most conflicts start? There could be a variety of reasons but for the most part it is for political and economic reasons. The yearning for power and influence in many cases only leads to greed and despair. The Vietnam War is an example of conflict rooted in politics and economics. The battle of communism versus capitalism, resulting from the Cold War of the 1950s, influenced the Vietnam War and all the parties involved in many negative ways. The two main powers of the world, United States and Russia, battled during the Cold War to spread their political and economic agendas. In Vietnam, it was the North versus the South in Vietnam—the North being communist and the South a democracy. Many say the war was dragged out too long and the United States should have focused on more important Cold War theaters. Body bags piled up: American soldiers, Australian soldiers, locals in Vietnam, and many more. The main lesson from Vietnam War is if we could have seen through Vietnam’s point of view rather than our own goals and needs, war could have been avoided and we could have solved things in a diplomatic way. In regard to my sources, there was an interesting scholarly journal that focused on the morality of the war and comparing both sides. I also used a video that was created during the war and it showed how Vietnamese people in the North were battling foreign countries trying to take control of their country. It was very interesting to see it from the Vietnamese perspective. I encourage people to learn more about this war because it shows how countries make policy decisions in times of conflict and confusion. Learning about a war can tell you a lot about a country and it helps prevent us from making the same mistakes as in the past.

France Challenges Societal Norms with Opportunities for Women in Sports, by Kinsey Kallaher, History 105

Sports in today’s age is an integral part in many children’s lives; it gives both girls and boys people to look up to, who they one day want to be like. However, females used to lack role models to look up to because men were the only ones allowed to participate in sports. For my research topic, I researched women in sports and the opportunities of sports for women in 20th century France. I chose this topic because sports were a big part of my life growing up. Through my research I was able to learn that France was an integral part of creating opportunities for women and girls in sports. When France hosted the Summer Olympics in 1900, they were the first games and country to integrate women's events into the games. Throughout the years after the 1900 games, France continued creating opportunities for women to participate in athletics. One of these key events was the founding of the Women’s World Games, which was headed by Alice Milliat. Milliat was a pioneer for women’s sports in France. These games helped grant women the recognition in the sports industry, which helped increase the number of events in later Summer Olympics. I also learned that before the early 20th century, doctors and physicians discouraged women from sports as they believed that athletics would harm them. They were afraid that it might disrupt their reproductive system. Sources which I used for my research included different journal articles on sports in the 20th century, newspaper articles about the events, along with databases with information on what happened. Learning about women in sports in France taught me where my privilege to be able to play sports came from. Without researching this topic, I never would have known that France had such an integral part in making it possible for me to play sports.
March 31, 2023
Celebrate César Chávez Day

Under the leadership of César E. Chávez and others such as Dolores Huerta and Larry Itliong, along with support from millions of Americans, the farm worker movement joined forces with other reform movements to achieve unprecedented successes that greatly improved working and living conditions and wages for farm workers. During the 1970s the United Farm Workers of America (UFW) grew and expanded from its early roots as a union for farm workers to also become a national voice for the poor and disenfranchised. The enduring legacies of César E. Chávez and the farm worker movement include passage of California's Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975, the first law in the U.S. that recognized farm workers' collective bargaining rights (from the National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/cech/learn/historyculture/index.htm).

Honor César Chávez by:
~ Learning about the history of unions
~ Marching for farmworker rights
~ Making a poster about César Chávez and Dolores Huerta for your school library
~ Finding out who picks the fruit at your local grocery market
~ Visiting the History table at WSU, taking our Chávez history quiz, and winning a prize

For more information go to the California Department of Education: https://chavez.cde.ca.gov/ModelCurriculum/resources.htm.
The 1960s and 1970s were a time of revolution. People throughout the U.S., young and old alike, fought for rights for their communities—African American, Indigenous, Chicanx, and more. And within our communities, women worked both for justice for our communities, and for their own rights within our communities. The Black Panther Party (BPP), was one community where women worked both inside and outside of their community for Black women’s rights and for a more just world. With their slogan of “Power to the People,” the BPP ran breakfast programs for children, held justice rallies, successfully promoted their members for local government offices (in Oakland, CA), and founded health clinics.[1] The BPP also became a place where women addressed gender inequality and, sometimes, the men of the organization listened. Women held leadership positions and served as spokespersons for the BPP. The BPP was not utopia, but it became a space where, in the 1970s, women were able to speak back and to hold positions of power.[2]

And so within the BPP you had the development of Black women’s rights; it became an organization that worked to create institutions to protect Black women’s minds and bodies—to create a world where Black women and girls could flourish.[3] Ericka Huggins was one of the Panthers who did this work. Ericka Huggins grew up in Washington D.C., and, as a teen was able to attend the famous March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The march was one of the largest in the nation’s history: 250,000 people came together to insist on human rights for all. Multiple activist organizations, including the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee coordinated their efforts to demand justice.[4] It was there, in that crowd of 250,000 people, that the young Ericka Huggins made a vow to commit her life to justice. Five years later at age 18, she joined the Black Panther Party and shortly thereafter married John Huggins. Together, the two were a powerful voice for change, challenging racism and working to develop resources in Black communities throughout the U.S. After her husband was killed, Erika Huggins continued to do this work.[5]

When the police falsely arrested Ericka Huggins for conspiracy, she became known among activists beyond the Black Panther Party.[6] Her arrest and incarceration sparked “Free Ericka” rallies across the country. Eldridge Cleaver, a leading Panther who had not spoken out for women’s rights, spoke out at this time, telling all Panthers that Huggins’ commitment inspired him, and that male Panthers “must purge our ranks and our hearts, and our minds, and our understanding of any chauvinism, chauvinistic behavior or disrespectful behavior toward women.”[7] Because Huggins continued to use her voice, and because of the activism of other Panthers, men and women from organizations throughout the U.S. began to work for her freedom and for the rights of other political prisoners. Women activists from organizations outside of the Panthers began to understand the politics of the prison system in the U.S.[8]

It took two years of activism before the charges against Huggins were dropped. During this time, the guards often placed Huggins in solitary confinement, and so she taught herself meditation as a tool for survival. Upon her release she returned to activism in the Black Panther Party. In 1971, she became writer and editor for the Black Panther Intercommunal News Service, and from 1973–1981, she was the Director of the Oakland Community School, the school founded by the Panthers.[9] At the school, students learned through an engaged curriculum. For example, learning about standard measurements was accomplished by baking; writing skills were practiced by writing letters to incarcerated persons.[10] Ericka Huggins is an example of the many women’s voices we can find if we look beyond the average textbook. Throughout our nation’s past, women have stood up to demand justice for their communities. Often, as with Huggins, they paid a high price. Yet their lives and their actions made a difference, and we continue to benefit from the bold actions they took.
Further Reading


Cheering crowds and the crack of the bat are familiar sounds to any baseball fan. When we think of America’s pastime, we often think of our favorite major league baseball players. However, with the recent popularity of the *League of Their Own* television series, women professional baseball players have once again become popular. The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, also known as the AAGPBL, was an all-women’s professional baseball league that gained popularity during World War II. Though almost all of the women who played in the AAGPBL were white, there were eleven Latina players. Among the most popular players was Marge Villa, born in Montebello, California in 1925. Mexican-American players are seldom featured as part of the AAGPBL, but they are an important part of Mexican-American history. They chose to play a traditionally male sport during a time when there were not many female professional athletes. They also faced racism and had to negotiate family life and traditional female gender roles.

Before joining the AAGPBL, Marge Villa grew up in the section of Montebello where Simon’s Brickyard was located. This company hired a majority of Mexican workers, who would eventually form baseball teams.[1] The teams were composed of both men and women. Because of this, Mexican American girls were given an opportunity to participate in sports that earlier generations could only dream of. Marge Villa grew up playing baseball, and was a tomboy for as long as she could remember. Both of her brothers were excellent ballplayers who taught her how to play the game. She credited her brother Tony for coaching her in fielding and batting.[2] A natural athletic superstar, Villa was often the youngest player on the team, yet this did not stop softball scouts from taking notice during her teenage years. About the age of fourteen, she was recruited by one of the best teams in California, the Orange County Lionettes. Due to her young age, Villa’s mother did not initially approve of her joining the team; she felt that Villa was too young to be in the company of “mature women” who socialized with the opposite sex.[3] However, her mother must have relented at some point, because it was from this team that Villa was scouted and recruited for the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League.

Marge Villa’s career in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League was rewarding and successful. Beginning in 1946, she played for five seasons and a total of 146 games. By the end of her first season alone, she set the league record for the most runs batted in, total bases, and most advanced bases in a single game. She did not stop there - over the course of her career, she stole 200 bases, walked 802 times, recorded 382 hits, and scored 249 runs.[4] Villa was small in size and stature, but she played with a huge heart. Her brothers did not allow her to shy away from the physical aspects of the sport, so she had no problem getting physical with women on the field, even if they were taller and heavier than she. According to the sports historian Santillán, “To this day, Marge remains a firm believer that there is no crying in baseball.”[5]
Though she was a successful player, Villa experienced racial discrimination throughout her career. For the Latina players who were able to make it into the big leagues, they all had one thing in common outside of their athletic prowess - they were all lighter-skinned. This allowed them to move more freely within the white-dominant All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. The League misidentified Villa, referring to her as “Spanish,” not Mexican-American. Many Latina players were also asked not to speak Spanish on the field or in public, thus hiding a part of their identity. Agnes Trejo, a player for the Oxnard F&O Cleaners team, shared that though she was fluent, she was afraid to speak Spanish for fear of being ridiculed. Like many Latina women, she had to navigate between her two cultures. However, bilingual and bicultural skills became very useful when the teams played exhibition games in Mexico. Mexican-American players would then act as translators for both the Mexican media and with other teams and umpires on the field. This act of accepting Mexican-American culture when it was convenient was a common issue for Latinas in baseball. Villa and other Latina players endured racial discrimination in order to play the game that they loved, to them it was a necessary sacrifice. During her short time with the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, Marge Villa enjoyed an illustrious career. She left in 1950 to help her family manage their farm in Montebello. She eventually married in 1954 and was a mother of two, and an avid golfer. Baseball still permeated her life, as she attended every Little League game of her children and grandchildren, even mentoring two of her grandsons. Even though she experienced racism, she often looked back fondly on her time in the league, and became an inspiration for other young women who dreamed of cheering crowds and the “crack of the bat.”


Further Reading


January 8, 1977: Pauli Murray became the first female/trans ordained African American Episcopal Priest (NWHA).

January 15, 1929: Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 25, 1851: Sojourner Truth addressed the first National Women’s Rights Convention, Akron, Ohio, 1851 (TBH).

February 1, 1902: Birthday of Langston Hughes, poet and author (TBH).

February 14, 1867: Morehouse College is founded in Atlanta, 1867. Both MLK and Spike Lee are Morehouse alums (TBH).


February 22, 1876: Zitkala-Sha, writer and Yankon Sioux activist, founded the National Council of American Indians (NWHA).

February 23, 1868: Birthday of WEB DuBois, historian and community activist (TBH).

March 6, 1857: In the Dred Scott decision, the US Supreme Court rules that Blacks are not citizens. A century+ of activism challenged this (TBH).

Mar. 17-Apr. 11, 1966: César Chávez, Larry Itliong, Dolores Huerta, and the National Farm Workers Association march from Delano to the California state Capitol in Sacramento (UW).

March 17, 1910: Camp Fire Girls is established as the first interracial, non-sectarian American organization for girls (NWHA).

March 29, 1918: Birthday of Pearl Bailey, jazz and blues singer, actress; she became a goodwill ambassador for United Nations (NWHA).


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National Honor Societies

Turn the page to take our quiz - bring your answers to the Department of History Office in Wilson-Short 301 for your LOADED HISTORY MUG!
According to MLK, Jr., what are the "Giant Triplets"?

Name that Poet:

I am a bleak heroism of words
that refuse
to be buried alive
with the liars

According to MLK, Jr., what are the “Giant Triplets”?

With Dolores Huerta and Larry Itliong, he founded the United Farm Worker Movement. His holiday is observed on March 31.

Born in 1925, she played for the Orange County Lionettes of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. She was one of eleven Latina ball players.

Bring your answers to the Department of History Office in Wilson-Short 301 (Washington State University, Pullman) for your LOADED HISTORY MUG!