



“Every American can draw strength from the story of hard-won progress, which not only defines the African-American experience, but also lies at the heart of our nation as a whole.” U.S. President Barack Obama said. National African American History Month is on February, with this year’s theme “Civil Rights in America.”

REBECCA ZENG Staff Writer

They Had a Dream

DEREK WU Staff Writer

Black History Month was formed in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, and it began as a week-long celebration instead of a month. In the beginning, they marked the second week of February as Negro History Week, since Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas’ birthdays occurred in the same week and both made large contributions to freeing African Americans from slavery. Carter G. Woodson’s goal was to teach the history of African descent and the importance of the race in modern society. A few decades later, several black students from Kent State University proposed to expand Negro History Week to Black History Month, which was passed within his school and took place one year after in 1970. Black History Month was officially sanctioned by the U.S. government in 1976.

After many years of existence, Black History Month is still celebrated today because of its ability to teach people about a race filled with history.

“If a race has no history, it has no worthwhile tradition. It becomes a negligible factor in the thought of the world, and it stands in danger of being exterminated,” Woodson said.

History’s Persisting Importance

ELTON HO Staff Writer

Decades after its institution in 1976, Black History Month is still celebrated in the U.S. The theme 2014, “Civil Rights in America,” was chosen to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This landmark act, enacted during the African-American Civil Rights Movement, prohibits major forms of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion and sex. Accordingly, this month will also commemorate the equality movements of other groups, including women and the LGBT community.

Even in contemporary times, criticism of Black History Month persists. Some detractors regard it as unnecessary in a modern desegregated era—even the current president is African-American. Others claim it is offensive to relegate the acknowledgement of African-American achievements to a single month, rather than integrating it with the achievements of all Americans.

On the other hand, proponents of the month contend that the contributions of African Americans are often overlooked, while ones of Caucasians receive attention year-round. Also, while it is not as blatant as it was a half-century ago, many can attest to racial prejudice in the present. Thus, Black History Month also serves a time to recognize the continual struggle of African Americans to speak up about discrimination and truly feel like equals in their country.

Rosa, Rosa, Roll On

SYLVIA WINSTON Features Editor

MOOR graphics by SYDNEY LI

Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson once said, “In many ways, history is marked as ‘before’ and ‘after’ Rosa Parks. She sat down in order that we all might stand up, and the walls of segregation came down.”

Ever since the beginning of our educational career, we were taught the importance of diversity and the effects it has on our lives. Many scholars know who Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr. and Fredrick Douglas are and what their contributions to society are. However, at AHS, a handful of students fall under this ethnic group and many do not speak freely about their roots. What would have happened if a woman such as Parks never refused to give up her seat or a man like King never recited his famous speech “I Have a Dream”?

For starters, we would not be able to mingle with our fellow classmates and friends during lunch.

“One of my best friends is African American and I love spending time with her. I wouldn’t like to be separated from during lunch period,” junior Grace Diep said.

The opportunity we have to be together with other ethnic groups during school is something many take for granted. During that era of segregation, the prejudice that many young African-Americans experienced caused them undue stress.

Although many argue that segregation still exists in America, the effort we do to counteract discrimination is not overseen by AHS students.

“I enjoy seeing students gather during lunch and after school to talk about their day, not caring what ethnicity their friends belong to. It proves that we have come far,” sophomore Elisa Martinez said.



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