



Get Your **FREE 2011 Credit Score NOW**



Stay warm with **Style** FurHatWorld.com



NEWS

## Black History Month

What Black History Month really means in college and beyond.

Arnetta Randall

For many African Americans, Black History Month means celebration and an entire month displaying African American history, but to others it's both a gift and a curse, said Bryant Maxwell, an English and Economics Alumnus from the University of Illinois.

Black History Month was first recognized by President Gerald Ford in 1976, as a time to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans in U.S. history. It falls on every February since that time. However, a glimpse through the looking glass by several African-American students shows a mixture of pride and dissatisfaction, including biting commentary about the current state of affairs, as well as hopes for the future.

"At least this history is being covered," said Aaisha Haykal. "But it relegates black history and black people to a certain month, and assumes there is not any other time of year to celebrate my people."

Haykal is pursuing a Master's Degree in Library Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and sees similar problems with other theme months, such as Breast Cancer or AIDS Awareness Months.

"I also have an issue with the shallowness of the information that is provided," she said. "It's mostly just facts as opposed to a real discourse about [historical and current] issues facing the black community."

The constrained time period may be one challenge, but general public knowledge also lacks depth and perspective, according to Cy Hendrickson, a Caucasian high school math teacher on Chicago's West Side.

"I see the vast majority of the history of minorities in this country as sort of the dark side of history's moon," according to Hendrickson, who is Caucasian.

Hendrickson links public ignorance about the civil rights movement and African-American endurance to an endemic lack of knowledge about less glorious threads of American society, history and politics. This influences the way people celebrate Black History Month and think about the people who made that history, zeroing in on certain popular figures like Martin Luther King or Rosa Parks while ignoring everything else.

"I think most of the unsung heroes are those who carried the movement," said Kaisha Esty, a London native and student at the University of Nottingham, studying American Studies. "Leaders are nothing without the actual foot soldiers."

Wayne Bennett, author of the award-winning blog, "A Field Negro", cites examples such as the Nanny of the Jamaican Maroons, who fought the British to free the slaves in 18-century Jamaica, and Ralph Bunche, who was among the founders of the United Nations and the first African-American to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

"They are people who will never be in a history book and whose names we don't know," Adesioye said.

Such historical struggles to assure civil rights later helped lead to affirmative action enrollment practices, encouraging minority enrollment in higher education. It is yet another controversial, but important, piece of the puzzle shaping the future of African-Americans in academia and society.

"Sure we can get in to some great schools, but are some of the people going to be ready for them?" Maxwell said.

Haykal supports affirmative action but thinks challenges to higher minority enrollment rates should be addressed before college.

"I think that there needs to be more incentives for state-



Race is still a factor on college campuses.

### Black History Month Theme

Posters with 2011 theme, African Crafts, Flags, Card Sets, Bookmarks  
www.DiversityStore.com

### Publish Your Afro-Am Book

Get A Book Publishing Guide Mailed To Your doorstep At No Cost.  
www.Xlibris.com

### Celebrate Black History

With Every Black U.S. Stamp 109 Mint USPS Stamps w/Biography  
www.BlackHistoryStamps.com



Ads by Google

### Highlights

- The Nanny of the Jamaican Maroons and Nobel Prize winner Ralph Bunche are lesser known, but important, African American figures.
- Racial intolerance hasn't disappeared since Obama election, students say.
- "When it comes down to it, we all breathe, eat, sleep, and go to the bathroom."



Follow us on Twitter!

**[ COLLEGE STUDENTS! ]**

**DO YOU WANT TO GET PUBLISHED IN A NATIONAL NEWS PUBLICATION?**

**Apply Now!**

Did you watch the Super Bowl?

Yes, I wouldn't miss it

No, I don't really care about it

**VOTE NOW**  
**results**

[more polls](#)

## NYU Summer Sessions

New York and Abroad

Learn, Explore, Experience

## NYU Summer Sessions

New York and Abroad

Learn, Explore, Experience

### Contest

**Win a Beard Head!**

Win 25 Beard Heads for your sorority/fraternity or one Beard Head for yourself!

**ENTER HERE**

College News Magazine

**subscribe now!**

only \$6.95 for 8 issues (2 years)

### JewelryAdviser.com

**10% OFF** Coupon  
Use code COLLEGE

**FREE SHIPPING**

certified teachers to go into these schools to prepare students for college," she said.

Teachers and parents should also encourage African-American students to have high goals, and instill an early passion and drive to succeed.

Networking, as well as promotion of cultural community groups during college, should also be a part of ensuring a navigable and comfortable atmosphere for minorities. According to Bennett, affirmative action programs also help bring down barriers by encouraging awareness and engagement with a multicultural world. It is not enough for leaders at the top to herald, as happened when Barack Obama was elected, the advent of a "post-racial" America.



## Solar Energy Charity

Helping Relieve Poverty Through  
The Provision of Solar Energy.  
Join Us!

[www.Solar-Aid.org](http://www.Solar-Aid.org)

Public Service Ads by Google

"The idea that America is a 'post-racial' society, whatever that actually means, is a fallacy," said Lola Adesioye, a New York-based weekly columnist for The Guardian. "New leaders, new policies, new research, new boards make little difference, because the issue is not being dealt with where it needs to be," she added.

"A diversified student body does more to prepare the student for the real world," Bennett said. "The real world is not all white."

Though she has not personally experienced any racist attacks, Haykal has observed news developments since Obama's election.

"Not only has racial intolerance taken a negative turn, but [so too has] religious and sexual intolerance as seen by the rash of statements by public figures against Muslims and homosexuals," Haykal said.

Esty feels race will continue to be an issue for generations to come, though that may not necessarily be a bad thing.

"America can not be a post-racial society as long as it is aware that they have a mixed-race (or black) President," she said. "The fundamental shift, I believe, is whether the racial climate celebrates this as a source of progress or a threat."

According to Adesioye, people need to look at what it is about human beings that still has us subscribe to this idea of 'the other' when it is clear that we are all interdependent and much more alike than we are different.

"When it comes down to it, we all breathe, eat, sleep, and go to the bathroom," she said.

02/07/11

[f Become a Fan on Facebook](#)

**GEICO** Click for a **FREE** car insurance quote.

**\$ Money**

Student guide to building credit history  
Student guide to building credit history

How to build credit history the right way  
How to build credit history the right way.

- Coastal Contacts breaks sales records
- CBO: Social Security empty by 2037
- US, China agree on \$45 billion export ...
- Treasuryhunt.gov the modern day ...
- Student facing \$200K debt helps others
- Canada slashes corporate tax rate-again
- Gadsden, Alabama students face loss of

**10% Off + Free Shipping**  
on \$29 orders & Up  
Coupon Code: **College**  
Expires 5/31/11  
**AllSarongs.com**

**10% off your order**  
COUPON CODE: **collegenews**

**Simply Cool T-Shirts**  
**thatismyshirt.com**

**Careers**

The best job search engines  
The best job search engines

An overview of the best, most personalized and newest job search engines

- Six tips for acing the job interview
- How to write a cover letter
- Eight tips for tailoring Your resume
- Creating the total package
- College Career Center
- Need to get a head start on your career?
- Soon-to-be law grad wants tuition back
- Five unusual careers for college grads

**Ticket Broker GreatSeats.com sells ACC Tournament Tickets. Can't go? Sell Tickets quickly!**