



NOTABLE MINORITIES WHO CHANGED HISTORY

March 2, 2007

Featuring

Ida B. Wells

"There must always be a remedy for wrong and injustice if we only know how to find it."

- An Ida B. Wells Quote.

Women's History Month

In Europe, International Women's Day was first celebrated on March 8, 1911. At this time, women's rights were a hot issue in Europe and America, but with the hardships of the depression and later WWII women's rights were put on the back burner. Although, women did earn the right to vote in America in 1920 with the passing of the 19th amendment. In the 1960's, women's liberation movement came into play creating interest in women's issues and women's history. In 1980 The National Women's History Project was formed and promoted women's history. In 1981, congress approved National Women's History Week, and then in 1987 expanded it to a month.

MARCH DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 1 - St. David's Day (Welsh)
- 2 - World Day of Prayer
- 3 - The Doll Festival (Japan)
- 4 - Purim (Jewish)
- 8 - International Women's Day
- 17 - St. Patrick's Day (Ireland, United States)
- 21 - Naw Ruz (Baha'i, Persia)
- 22 - New Year's Day (India)
- 25 - Feast of Annunciation (Christian)
- 26 - Mothering Sunday (England)

* March is also recognized as Irish-American Heritage Month and Greek-American Heritage Month.

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www.wikipedia.org

Ida B. Wells (1862 - 1931)

Social Activist

Ida B. Wells (later known as Ida Wells - Barnett) was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi on July 16, 1862. She was an African American civil rights activist, an anti-lynching crusader, women's rights advocate, suffragist, journalist, and speaker. She was born into slavery, but her family gained its freedom in 1865. When she was 16 both of her parents died and an older brother died of yellow fever. She and her four remaining siblings faced being farmed out to different aunts and uncles. She could not bear the thought of being separated from her siblings, so in order to keep her family together she took on a teaching job at a local school for African American children.

In 1880, she moved to Memphis and continued teaching. During the summer sessions she attended Fisk University in Nashville. She held strong political opinions and often spoke out for women's rights. In Memphis in 1884, she led a campaign against segregation on the local railway. She had been asked by the conductor of Chesapeake, Ohio & South Western Railroad Company to give up her seat for a white man and ordered into the "Jim Crow" car. She refused to give up her seat and was drug out of the car by two men. She hired a lawyer and sued the railroad. She won her case in the local circuit court, but the railroad appealed to the Tennessee Supreme Court and in 1887, they overturned the lower courts ruling in favor of the railroad.

She gained media publicity while participating in women's suffragists parades, by her refusal to stand in the back of the parade due to her race. In 1889, she became co-owner and editor of an anti-segregationist newspaper located on Beale Street in Memphis. In 1892, she was forced to leave Memphis after her editorials in the newspaper, *Free Speech*, were considered to antagonistic. She moved to Chicago and in 1895 married attorney Ferdinand Lee Barnett. He had founded and was the editor of Chicago's first African American newspaper, the *Chicago Conservator*. The couple had four children.

In 1906, she joined W.E.B. Du Bois in promoting the Niagara Movement, a group that advocated for full civil rights for African Americans. In 1910, She helped form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She founded the Alpha Suffrage Club of Chicago in 1913, which was the first African American suffragist organization. From 1913 - 1916 she worked as a probation officer in Chicago. Langston Hughes, the poet, credited her with laying the foundation for the Urban League through her tireless social work. She wrote an autobiography in 1928 titled, *Crusade for Justice*. In 1930 she ran for the Illinois State Legislature, becoming one of the first African American women to ever run for a public office. She died of uremia (kidney disease) in Chicago on March 25, 1931. A public housing complex in Chicago is named for her and a high school in San Francisco is named in her honor as well.

Did You Know?

- Columbia State Minority Affairs is sponsoring a contest in honor of Black History month (February) and Women's History Month (March). Our contest is called "Who Am I" and will run February 21 through March 14. To enter is easy, just go to the library and see how many of the influential women you can identify. The forms are on the table with the pictures and can be submitted to us at Jones Student Center, Room 158. If no one is available to accept your form just slide it under the door. You could be the winner of a Columbia State sweatshirt, or some of the other fabulous prizes on display with the pictures. We look forward to your participation.
- The Columbia State Minority Affairs' office has moved from the Pryor Administration Building, Room 109 to the Jones Student Center in Rooms 158 and 159. Our phone extensions will remain the same. In addition, our business hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.