Angelina College Black History Month

Resource Guide for Learning More About the Contributions of Black and African-Americans to the United States

Brought to You By The Office of Access & Inclusion

Why We Celebrate 1

Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History Month," created this event originally as a weeklong event in 1926. The event sought to highlight the centrality of Black Americans to the story of America, as their accomplishments were largely neglected in books and discussions on American history. Black history and contributions continue to be left out of year-round curriculum 95 years later, which is why we continue to celebrate it today. Our goals this month are to:

1. Promote greater knowledge of Black history through the sharing of resources and organizations every week.
2. Reaffirm our campus commitment to two of our core values: diversity and learning.

Learning Resources: Week 2 2

Cofounders: Bobby Seale (Top left) and Huey P. Newton (bottom left).

Most Americans are familiar with impactful Civil Rights initiatives such as the Montgomery bus boycott, the March on Washington, Freedom Rides, and the Greensboro Sit-in. However, another controversial civil rights initiative was the creation of the Black Panther Party (BPP), originally named the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. The BPP was created in 1966 by college students Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, and its original purpose was to patrol and protect Black neighborhoods from police brutality. Thus, in keeping with this year's Black History theme of "The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity", we thought it would be fitting to highlight an organization that fought to improve the living conditions of Black families and neighborhoods.

The Black Panther Party

Watch This Brief Intro Video about the Black Panther Party

Women of the Black Panther Party. By the late 60's, women made up over 70% of the group's membership and were vital to the party's growth and organization.

Black Panther Party Philosophy 3

10 Point Program

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our black and oppressed communities.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society.
6. We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.
8. We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black Communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

The Ten-Point Program is a set of guidelines for the Black Panther Party and states their ideals and ways of operation, a "combination of the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence." (1) The 10-Point Program is made up of two parts: "What we want now!" and "What we believe." The document was released in May of 1967, with the first part describing what the BPP wanted from America's leaders, and the second part illuminating the Party's philosophy, as well as the rights that Black people were said to have, but were in actuality denied. The official chapters of the BPP and their members were expected to live by and practice the principles laid out in the program every day. By clicking on the link embedded above, you can read the 10-Point Program of the BPP in full.

Critical Question

How might you connect the philosophy and wants of the Black Panther Party to today? Do you think these things have been achieved?

Little-Known Facts About the Black Panther Party

01 Created numerous social programs, some of which we still use today.

The party set up 65 social programs between 1966 and 1982, ranging from a Free Breakfast for Children Program (FBCP) to Free Health Clinics to a Free Busing to Prisons Program.

02 They conducted groundbreaking research into Sickle Cell Anemia

This disease was largely neglected because it disproportionately affected the Black community. In addition to setting up screening sites, the BPP went door-to-door and pricked fingers for blood samples to test for the trait and the disease. This research was groundbreaking. The party's Sickle Cell Anemia Research Foundation, which was later funded by the federal government, had one of the nation's first sickle cell testing programs.

03 The FBI Targeted The Party In An Attempt To Destroy It

By 1968, the BPP had drawn the attention of the FBI, as had many Black civil rights organizations and leaders of that time. J. Edgar Hoover created the FBI COINTELPRO Unit to destroy the party from within. At the time, he said that the BPP was "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country."

Extended Learning Activities 4

Watch the documentary, "Black Panther Party: The Vanguard of the Revolution" by Director Stanley Nelson

Watch this video connecting the Black Panther Party to civil rights movements of today.

We hope you read and watched the links throughout, as they will give you a better idea about the historical context in which the Black Panther Party was founded, as well as the numerous things the political action group did to alleviate the social injustices they saw, such as poverty and police brutality, that plagued Black neighborhoods and families. The history of the BPP is complex, but the foundation of the party was to ensure a more equal and equitable world for Black and other underprivileged people across the world, and to help our country live up to its promise that "all men are created equal." Though their history is fraught with run-ins with police, intergroup fracturing, and sexism, it is also a story of Black resistance, resilience, and community. If you are interested in joining us this Friday (Feb. 12) at 3:00 p.m. for a discussion linking the Black Panther Party to movements of today, click here. We hope that you have learned something from this infographic, and, as always, we join you in learning, challenging ourselves, and growing.

Sincerely,
Annie Allen
Director of Access & Inclusion

For more powerful images from Black History, click here.

For questions or comments, please email access@angelina.edu dit