

Libraries Working Towards Social Justice January & February 2022 Programs

1/27, 7pm - [Courageous Conversations on Zoom: Structural Racism in Our Schools?](#)

Please join us for a discussion of how structural racism shows up in K-12 public education as Courageous Conversations presents Johnny Cole, Director of the Office of Equity & Student Supports for Lexington Public Schools, and Kate Slater, Ph.D., anti-racist scholar and educator. They will share their insights and expertise in conversation with one another and welcome your questions and comments. Together we can better understand how structural racism shows up and how we can all contribute to creating an anti-racist community in Andover and beyond. Andover's newly hired Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Albert Pless, Jr. will join us at the beginning of the program. (Andover Memorial Hall Library)

2/2, 7pm - [Black Oscars: from Mammy to Minny, What the Academy Awards Tell Us about African Americans - Virtual](#)

Wonder how the Oscars have recognized black actors from the Academy Award's beginning in 1929? Join author Frederick W. Gooding, Jr. as he presents, "Black Oscars: from Mammy to Minny, What the Academy Awards Tell Us about African Americans."

Frederick W. Gooding, Jr. provides a thorough analysis and overview of black people that were nominated for their Hollywood roles, going decade by decade in highly accessible language. The book shows how the Oscars are a litmus test, ultimately reflecting what degree our society has truly embraced diversity within the hallowed confines of our sacred imaginations.

BIO:

Frederick W. Gooding, Jr. (PhD, Georgetown University) is an Associate History Professor and is the inaugural holder of the Dr. Ronald E. Moore Endowed Professor of the Humanities at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, TX. Featured in national publications such as "New York Times" and "USA Today," Dr. Gooding critically analyzes race in mainstream media and engages audiences on patterns "hidden in plain sight." Dr. Gooding has also provided social commentary on CBS, NBC and Fox News networks and has reached an international audience with messages of racial healing through the podcast, "Reconcile This!"

(<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/reconcile-this/id1549430350?uo=4>).

This program will be held on Zoom. We will send an email with the Zoom link on the day of the program. Hosted by the Haverhill Public Library.

2/8, 2pm - [The Extraordinary Story of the Tuskegee Airmen \(on Zoom\)](#)

Learn the story of how a group of black men who were once considered of little value to the World War II war effort, proved they could take down enemy aircraft abroad and racial barriers at home. Led by Jeffrey Urbin, Education Specialist at the [Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum](#). Hosted by Tewksbury Public Library in collaboration with Memorial Hall Library and Flint Memorial Library.

2/8 7pm - [WORDS Book Group \(We Only Read Diverse Stories\)](#)

This book group will focus on authors and stories that explore diverse and underrepresented voices and experiences. It meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm at the Nevins Library. This month we will discuss *Seven Days in June* by Tia Williams. Seven days to fall in love, fifteen years to forget and seven days to get it all back again... From the author of *The Perfect Find*, this is a witty, romantic, and sexy-as-hell new novel of two writers and their second chance at love.(Nevins Library/Methuen)

2/8, 7pm - [Celebrating Voices of Color: Poetry Reading and Open Mic:](#)

Join us for virtual readings in our poetry series. This month we will feature the voices of black and brown poets including Durane West, Julia Kanno and Matthew E. Henry (MEH). An open mike will follow with a limit of one poem per person, limited slots are available. Sign ups for the open mic will happen during the actual session. The series is facilitated by Doug Holder of Ibbetson St. Press. (Newton Free Library, virtual)

2/9, 7pm - [The Black Art Market with Charles Moore](#)

Join us for a Zoom presentation by art collector and historian Charles Moore. Author of *The Black Market: A Guide to Art Collecting* and *The Brilliance of the Color Black Through the Eyes of Art Collectors*, Moore introduces novice and would-be collectors to the art world, its deep roots, its connections to our pasts, and its hopes for our future. Hosted by the Wayland Public Library.

2/10, 5pm - [Half American: The Epic Story of Black Americans Fighting During WWII](#)

Drawing on his upcoming book, *Half American: The Epic Story of African Americans Fighting World War II at Home and Abroad*, historian Matthew Delmont will explain how World War II raised questions regarding race and democracy that remain unanswered more than seventy years later. During the war, U.S. Black troops fought bravely in a segregated military. When they returned from combat, they were faced with fighting white supremacy at home. Join us for this inspiring history of bravery and patriotism in the face of unfathomable racism. This event is part of the Newton History Series and is cosponsored by [Historic Newton](#). (Newton Free Library, virtual)

2/10, 7pm - [Courageous Conversations on Zoom: Health Impacts of Structural Racism](#)

The impacts of structural inequities in health and health care will be explored by Dr.

Amy Patel, Medical Director, Phillips Academy, Dr. Cara Marshall, Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, and Albert Pless Jr., Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the Town of Andover. They will provide historical context and share their professional experience to shed light on the burdens faced by communities of color with regard to health and health outcomes. They will also address possible solutions to these issues. (Andover Memorial Hall Library)

2/10, 7pm – [The Last Negroes At Harvard](#)

Authors Kent Garrett and Jeanne Ellsworth will discuss their book, *The Last Negroes At Harvard: The Class of 1963 and the 18 Young Men Who Changed Harvard Forever*. In the fall of 1959, Harvard recruited eighteen “Negro” boys as an early form of affirmative action. Four years later they would graduate as African Americans. Some fifty years later, one of these trailblazing Harvard grads, Kent Garrett, began to reconnect with his classmates and explore their vastly different backgrounds, lives, and what their time at Harvard meant. Garrett and his partner Jeanne Ellsworth recount how these young men broke new ground. By the time they were seniors, they demonstrated against injustice, had lunch with Malcolm X, experienced heartbreak & the racism of academia, and joined with their African national classmates to fight for the right to form an exclusive Black students’ group. Part journey into personal history, part group portrait, and part narrative history of the civil rights movement, learn the remarkable story of brilliant, singular boys whose identities were changed at and by Harvard, and who, in turn, changed Harvard. This virtual event is a collaboration between the libraries in North Reading, Tewksbury and Wilmington. (Wilmington organized this one.)

2/11, 1pm - [Compelling Questions: Why are Confederate monuments being removed in cities and towns across the country?](#) In this presentation we will explore the long and divisive history of these monuments, why they became pervasive on the Southern landscape by the early twentieth century and why they remain contentious today. (Chelmsford Public Library)

2/16, 6:30pm: [Watch it Wednesdays presents Thirteenth](#)

Join The Chelmsford Library and the Chelmsford Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee for a screening of the award-winning documentary, *Thirteenth*, created by Ava DuVernay. The screening will be followed by a discussion moderated by members of the DEIC. (Chelmsford Public Library)

2/22, 7pm: [Art on Tuesdays presents Faith Ringgold, Quilts Painting and Politics](#)

Faith Ringgold is celebrated for an artistic career exploring race in the American experience. This program will cover the breadth of her creative output, including

paintings, sculpture, performance art and her beloved story quilts. (Chelmsford, Andover, Billerica and North Reading)

2/23, 6:30pm: [Watch it Wednesdays presents *I am Not Your Negro*](#)

Join us to watch a film and have a discussion with members of the Chelmsford Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. This month, we will watch *I am Not Your Negro*, the award-winning 2016 documentary directed by Raoul Peck and narrated by Samuel L. Jackson, about the history of racism in the United States through Baldwin's recollections of civil rights leaders Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King Jr., as well as his personal observations of American history. (Chelmsford Public Library)

2/23, 7pm: [Race or Racism – Answers To Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Authors Joseph L. Graves Jr. and Alan H. Goodman will discuss their new book -- *Racism, Not Race: Answers To Frequently Asked Questions*. These two distinguished scientists will tackle common misconceptions about race, human biology, and racism. Using an accessible question-and-answer format, Graves and Goodman will explain the differences between social and biological notions of race. Although there are many meaningful human genetic variations, they do not map onto socially constructed racial categories. Drawing on evidence from both natural and social science, Graves and Goodman dismantle the malignant myth of gene-based racial difference. They demonstrate that the ideology of racism created races and show why the inequalities ascribed to race are in fact caused by racism. Joseph Graves is a professor in the Department of Biology at North Carolina A&T State University. He is a fellow of the Council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. His books include *The Emperor's New Clothes: Biological Theories of Race at the Millennium* and *The Race Myth: Why We Pretend Race Exists in America*. Alan Goodman is a professor of biological anthropology at Hampshire College and a former vice president for academic affairs. He is a past president of the American Anthropological Association and codirects its public education project on race. He is a coauthor of *Race: Are We So Different?*, among other books. (Lead organizer is Ashland Library. Tewksbury is participating.)

2/23, 7pm: [The Power of Protest Images in the Black Freedom Struggle - Virtual](#)

Since World War II, African Americans' fight for civil rights, social equality, and equal justice has increasingly unfolded through visual media. The question of black freedom is consistently put before the public through photographic and video images. Americans in the 1960s saw footage of civil rights marches, sit-ins, and boycotts in newspapers or on the nightly news. In the twenty-first century, social media and smartphones make it such that news organizations no longer control which images of black protest or black suffering circulate widely. This past spring, the nation erupted after a video of Minneapolis police killing George Floyd went viral. Many have pointed to the resulting images of protest as evidence of something: the question is what. This talk explores the power of

black protest images – past and present – as representations of black life in the United States and as tools in African Americans' ongoing quest for freedom.

Dr. Brenna Wynn Greer is an Associate Professor of History at Wellesley College. She is a historian of race, gender, and culture in the twentieth century United States, who explores historical connections between capitalism, social movements and visual culture. Her first book, *Represented: The Black Imagemakers Who Reimagined African American Citizenship* (University of Pennsylvania Press), examines the historical circumstances that made the media representation of black citizenship good business in the post-World War II era. A recipient of several teaching awards and major fellowships from the ACLS, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Professor Greer's work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Nation*, *Daily Mail*, *Enterprise & Society*, and *Columbia Journalism Review*.

This program will be held on Zoom. We will send an email with the Zoom link on the day of the program. Hosted by the Haverhill Public Library.

2/24, 7:00 pm: [Sybrina Fulton, Mother of Trayvon Martin, on Cultivating Justice toward Racial Equality](#)

Sybrina Fulton is dedicating her life to transforming family tragedy into social change. Since the death of her 17 year old son, Trayvon Martin, during the violent confrontation in 2012, Fulton has become an inspiring spokesperson for parents and concerned citizens across the country. As a mother, she encourages audiences to continuously educate their children about civil rights and to help them feel accepted as part of an ever changing society. Generously cosponsored by Ashland Public Library • Beech Street Center • Belmont Human Rights Commission • Town of Belmont • Belmont Against Racism • Belmont Public Library • Lincoln Public Library • Morrill Memorial Library Norwood • Wayland Free Public Library.

2/24, 7pm: [Looking Things Over with Zora Neale Hurston](#)

Living history performer Gwendolyn Quezaire-Presutti will share the life and times of acclaimed American author Zora Neale Hurston. Zora Neale Hurston, a woman of enormous talent, rose to become one of the central figures of the Harlem Renaissance. She was an outstanding novelist, journalist, folklorist and anthropologist and believed in the beauty of black expression and traditions. Although her work was praised by some, others attacked it, focusing on Hurston's lifestyle and personality--her audaciousness, independence, and arrogance. After going to Florida in 1927 to collect folklore, and after years of organizing her notes, Hurston published *Mules and Men* in 1935. Hurston loved writing the folklore stories and also enjoyed telling them. She proudly celebrated the African American culture of the rural South because she believed black people had wonderful stories the world needed to hear. Gwendolyn Quezaire-Presutti's portrayal of historical women draws on a wide array of primary historical resources and introduces untapped American history. For the past 22 years Gwendolyn has engaged audiences by giving voice to real life accounts, struggles, self-determination and triumphs of the women she portrays. Learn more about Gwendolyn [HERE](#). Hosted by the Chelmsford Library in collaboration with Memorial Hall Library and libraries in Carlisle, Clinton and Newburyport.

2/28, 7pm: [How to Make Slave and Other Essays](#) with Jerald Walker

Author Jerald Walker was recently recognized by the Massachusetts Center for the Book as one of Massachusetts's must-read authors of the year. Join Walker for a presentation on his critically acclaimed book, *How to Make Slave and Other Essays*. This collection of essays was a 2020 National Book Award finalist. This virtual event is a collaboration between the libraries of Ashland, Brookline, Newton, Tewksbury and Watertown.

Libraries Working Towards Social Justice formed in 2020 to expand our programming efforts beyond our individual communities to achieve a more equitable, diverse and inclusive society. The libraries include [Andover](#), Burlington, [Chelmsford](#), Dracut, Groton, [Haverhill](#), Lawrence, Lowell, [Methuen](#), Newton, North Andover, North Reading, Peabody, Pepperell, Reading, Tewksbury, Wayland, Westford and Wilmington.