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THE SOURCE

THE MAGAZINE OF HIP HOP, MUSIC, CULTURE & POLITICS

JAY-Z
MORE THAN
JUST THE
MILLIONS

THE LOX
IS THERE LIFE
AFTER BAD BOY?

PLUS:
THE
OFFICIAL
DR. DRE
2001
REVIEW

ESHAM
WILD
STYLE
RETURNS

INSIDE: THE MOST EXPLOSIVE 224 PAGES OF

YEAR 20

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THE MAGAZINE OF HIP-HOP MUSIC, CULTURE & POLITICS
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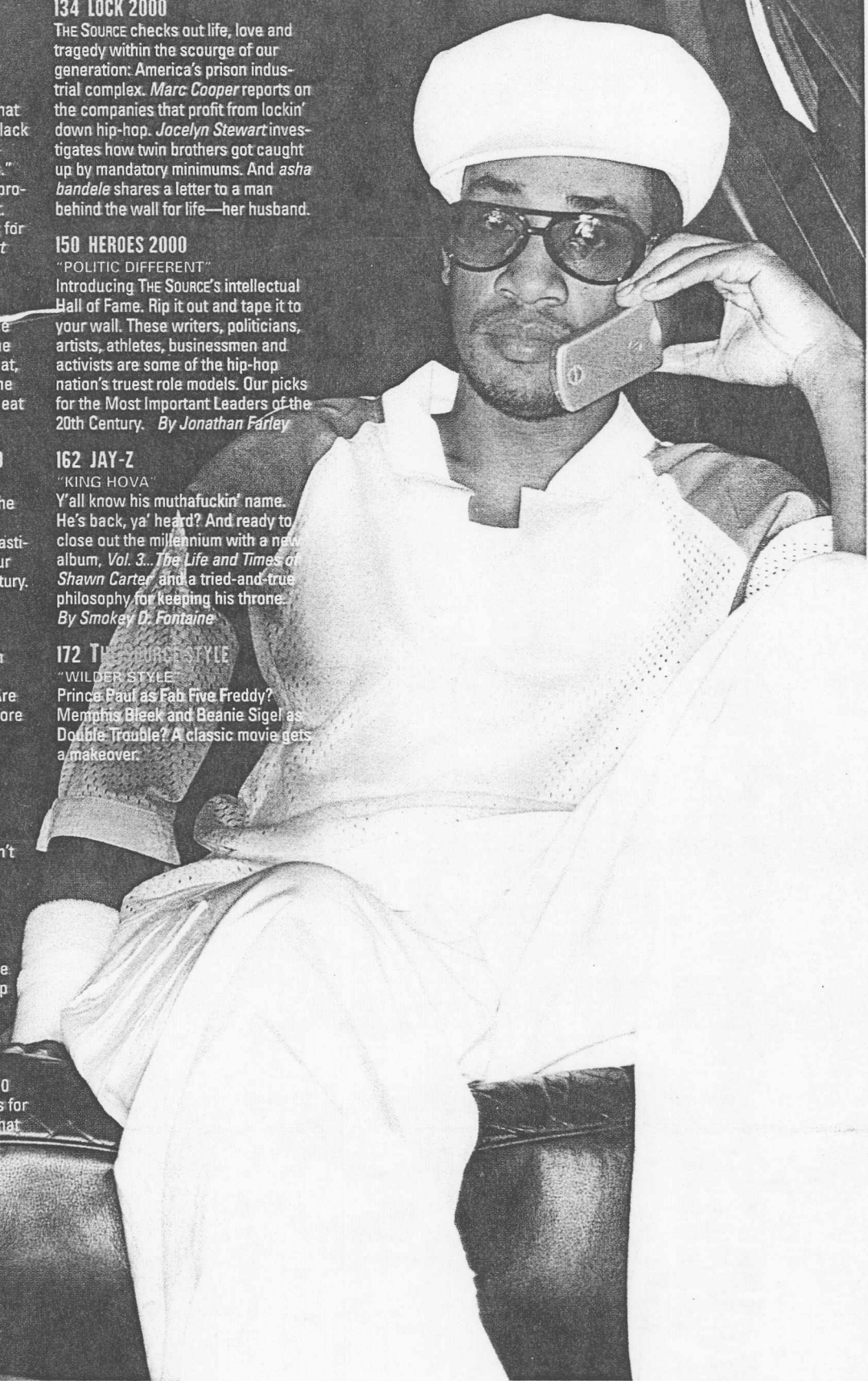
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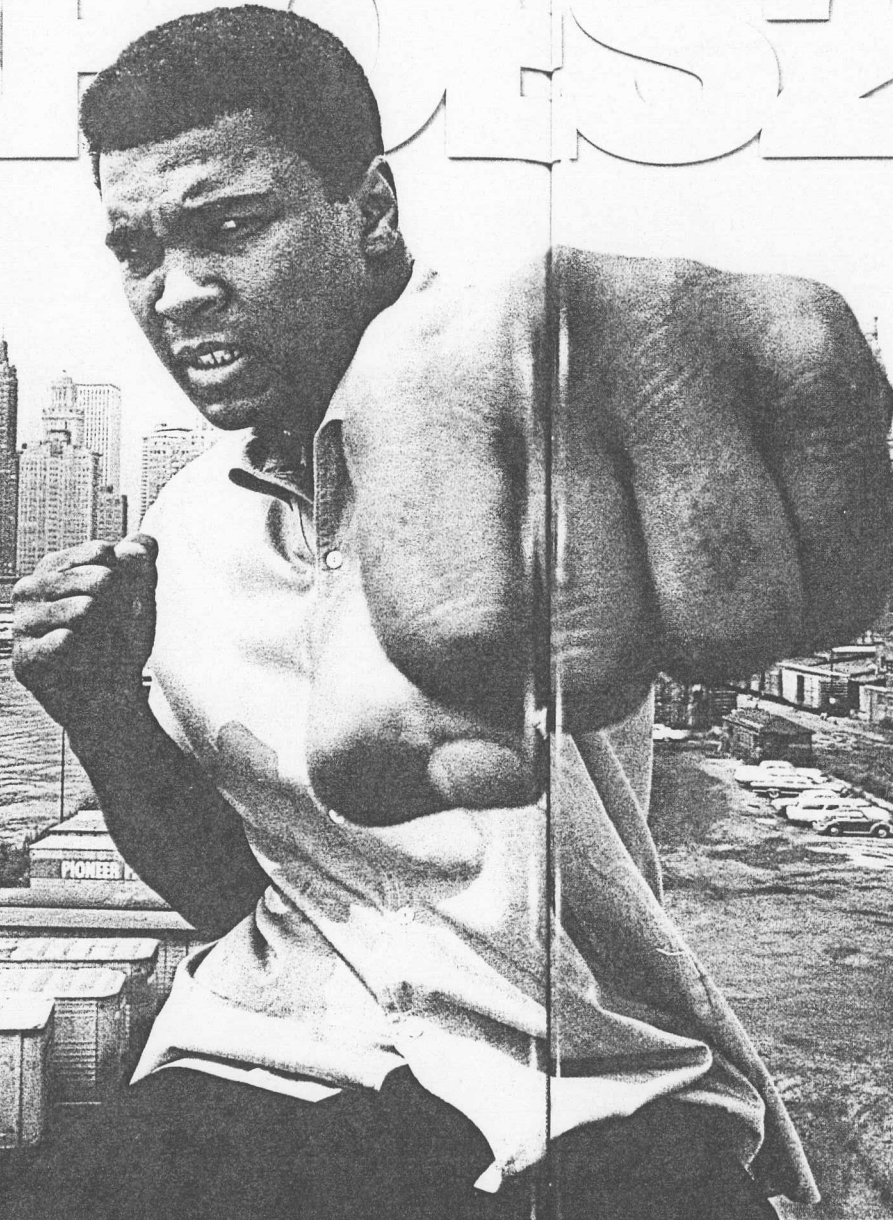
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH, SHOT EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE SOURCE BY NITIN VADUKUL

HEROES 2000



POLITIC DIFFERENT

The new millennium is here and it brings with it new music, new stars, and new sciences. But as we stare wide-eyed at the new millennium's cultural opportunities, the hip-hop nation should take a moment to make sure its politics are straight. To help you out, THE SOURCE compiled a list of our 20 Political Heroes of the 20th Century.

Most of these Black and brown men and women stood for hip-hop's interests before hip-hop existed. All their politics evoke the hip-hop spirit: demanding, lively, complex and sweeping. Our reporter, Jonathan Farley, a 29-year-old professor at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, illustrates how some of our all-time political heroes broke new ground, how they used protest politics to challenge their change mainstream society, and what inspired them to go there.

As a shortly coming up in Brooklyn, I remember sweating Malcolm X for his militant ideas on race in America. I recall feeling overwhelmed too. How the hell was I gonna lead the race, make some dough, get that girl I'd been spitting at and pass midterms? Then I picked up Alex Haley's *Autobiography of Malcolm X* and read Malcolm's advice to all wannabe revolutionaries. He said, essentially, don't try to be him. Walk your own path, and make sure it's sharp and progressive. Stand for some of the Black and bold politics he stood for and be sure to share those politics with the people you can influence. Basically, be the Malcolm X of your cipher.

Hopefully, after you read THE SOURCE'S HEROES 2000 list, you'll be inspired to do further knowledge on these people (any library visits or Web research will do). You could then return to your circle of influence as its Frantz Fanon or Angela Davis or Chuck D or... You get the picture. Hip-hop is rich with intellectual heroes. Take your pick and build.

DIMITRY ELIAS LEGER



POLITICS

The Nation of Islam (1930-present), religious organization, led by Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X & Louis Farrakhan

HOW THEY CAME UP: The Nation of Islam was founded in 1930 in Detroit by W.D. Fard. Elijah Muhammad took over the leadership in 1934 after Fard's unexplained disappearance. When Malcolm X joined the Nation, his oratorical and organizational skills enabled it to greatly expand in popularity and reach. Unfortunately, the government successfully conspired to create a rift between Muhammad and Malcolm, and Malcolm X left but remained the most studied militant Black political leader ever.

After Muhammad's death in 1975, the Nation split again, and Farrakhan assumed leadership. **HOW THEY FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** The Nation preached that the Black man is the original man. It considered the white man as a devil whose number will soon be up. Then the Black man will be saved when he has separated completely from whites. Millions of Blacks embraced the Nation's leaders and became leaders in their community over the decades. Malcolm X took Elijah Muhammad's teachings, another ►►

level by emphasizing our right to self-defense "by any means necessary" and the importance of reading and education "to beat the white man at his own game." He became hip-hop's patron saint. Farrakhan helped the Nation of Islam continue to inspire the hip-hop nation by emphasizing the importance of keeping Black families strong. In 1995, Farrakhan stunned the world when he brought over a million Black men to the nation's capital, Washington, DC, as a statement of brotherhood. **WHY THEY DID IT:** "Our population runs into billions, and the earth belongs to us. We are the original owners of the earth and will take it and rule it again. This is the time."—Elijah Muhammad



Jesse Jackson (1941-present), politician/international ambassador

HOW HE CAME UP: Jesse was born in Greenville, SC, the son of a teenage mother with no husband and no job. He went on to the University of Illinois on a football scholarship. From there he transferred to North Carolina A&T, where he got involved with the Congress of Racial Equality. He next went to Chicago Theological Seminary but soon returned to the South to join Martin Luther King Jr.'s Civil Rights crusade. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:**

Love him or hate him, Jesse is one of the most influential politicians in America. After serving as an aide to Dr. King, Jackson became an independent political force. He started the Rainbow Coalition and Operation PUSH, and in the '80s, ran two credible campaigns for president of the United States. Today Jesse Jackson routinely consults with world leaders and has helped free a dozen political prisoners in the process. **WHY HE DID IT:** "If my mind can conceive it and my heart can believe it, I know I can achieve it."



Angela Davis (1944-present), college professor, political activist and author

HOW SHE CAME UP: Angela Davis was born in Birmingham, AL, one of three children of a businessman and a teacher. She attended Brandeis University in Boston and then studied in France and Germany. She returned to America in 1967 to join the Black Panther Party and the struggle for improved civil rights. **HOW SHE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** In the '70s, Davis campaigned to free the Soledad Brothers, three politically active convicts. The government then sought to link Davis to a jailbreak conspiracy and sentence her to death. This sparked a two-year international campaign to free Angela, and she became a symbol of US political shadiness and of the beautiful ferocity of Black women in Black politics. When Ronald Reagan tried to have Davis fired from her position as a philosophy professor at UCLA, she used the publicity surrounding her case to help save the Soledad Brothers. Davis also tirelessly worked with the Black Panther Party. Her bravery in the face of the death penalty, her intelligence, her always boldly upraised fist, and her Black-sure-as-hell-is-beautiful Afro made her an icon and heroine for millions across the world. **WHY SHE DID IT:** "Something is wrong. Maybe the real criminals in this society are not the people who populate the prisons but those who have stolen the wealth of the world from the people."

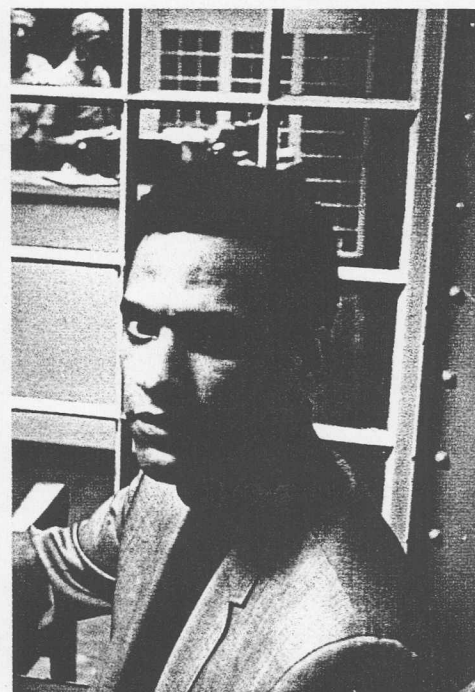


Rosa Parks (1913-present), political agitator

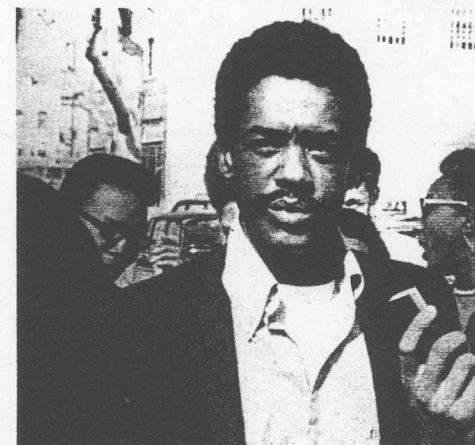
HOW SHE CAME UP: Rosa Parks was born in Tuskegee, AL, and raised in Pine Level, AL, near Montgomery. Her father was a carpenter and stonemason; her mother, a teacher. She had one brother. Her husband, Raymond, was active in the NAACP. They married in 1932, and Rosa finished school in 1934. She protested American racism as a member of the NAACP, where she worked various jobs. **HOW SHE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Parks took her own stand against The System by refusing to move. She resisted a bus driver's order to give up her seat on a segregated bus in favor of a white man. Her action generated mad beef and became a national symbol for Blacks and decent people of all races to protest America's legal and social segregation practices. Rosa Parks's then unheard of act was the spark that set the Civil Rights Movement aflame, and the movement literally rewrote the rules of the South. In 1996, Parks received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Bill Clinton. **WHY SHE DID IT:** "People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

The Black Panther Party

(1966-1980), social-activist organization, run by Huey Newton, Bobby Seale and Eldridge Cleaver



HOW THEY CAME UP: The Black Panther Party was founded by Huey Newton, then 24, and Bobby Seale, 29, in Oakland, CA. The Panthers gave the community free health clinics and fed thousands of children across the country in a Free Breakfasts for Children program. **HOW THEY FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** The Panthers' goal was to bring "Power to the People." They wanted decent housing, an Afrocentric educational system, trial by juries of our Black peers, free health care, a day of jubilee for all Blacks in prison, and an end to police brutality. Black people rallied around them. The press was fascinated but got shook when the Black Panthers said Black people should arm themselves against American oppression. They were so influential that in 1967, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover declared war against the Panthers. Party leaders were framed on bogus charges, arrested, driven into exile, and even shot as part of a secret, illegal FBI plot against radical activist groups known as COINTELPRO. **WHY THEY DID IT:** "The racist dog policemen must withdraw immediately from our communities, cease their wanton murder and brutality and torture of Black people, or face the wrath of the armed people."—Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense



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STARKS, CORBIS/BETT MANN; LUPA, CLEVER; BRUNO BARBEVIA/MAGNUM PHOTOS; NEWTON DOBBS/STOCK PHOTO; SEALE, CORBIS/BETT MANN; LUPA, KING, JR., AMERICAN STOCK/PHOTO PHOTOS

Martin Luther King Jr.

(1929-1968), political activist

HOW HE CAME UP: Martin Luther King Jr., a native of Atlanta, was the son of a pastor and an elementary school teacher. He entered Morehouse College at 15, became a minister at 18, and received his doctorate in theology from Boston University at 26. Leading the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott catapulted King to the forefront of the Civil Rights struggle. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** King won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for championing Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolent direct action while protesting US segregation laws. Martin Luther King was determined to bring down America's system of segregation by focusing the country on Black humanity and the need for common decency. King's prophetic eloquence and oratory prowess eventually moved the conscience of the world. **WHY HE DID IT:** "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Nelson Mandela (1918–present), political leader

HOW HE CAME UP: Nelson Mandela was born in South Africa, the son of a chief. As a practicing lawyer, he joined the African National Congress in 1944. In 1960, government forces fired on 67 peaceful protesters—the Sharpeville Massacre. The ANC abandoned nonviolence and began an armed insurrection. Mandela went underground. He was eventually captured in 1964, thanks to the CIA. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life in prison by the government; but in 1990, prolonged internal pressure from agitators like Steve Biko and Bishop Desmond Tutu combined with an international campaign to isolate South Africa's government, and the apartheid regime collapse. After 27 years in prison, Mandela emerged from prison a free man, becoming president in 1994.

Mandela became an icon and a hero to freedom-loving people everywhere by his fearless defiance of the South African regime. Although the government tempted Mandela with freedom if only he would call off the armed struggle, he refused. **WHY HE DID IT:** "Only through hardship, sacrifice and militant action can freedom be won. The struggle is my life. I will continue fighting for freedom until the end of my days."

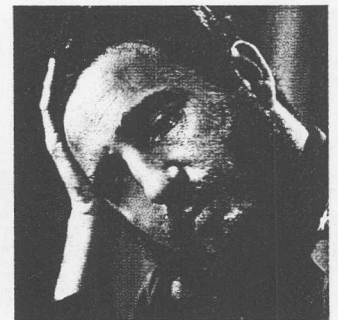


Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), psychiatrist/political theorist

HOW HE CAME UP: Frantz Fanon was born in Martinique, one of eight children. His father was a customs official, and his mother, a shopkeeper. After studying in France, Fanon moved to Algeria, a French colony, to practice medicine. There he was horrified by the way French soldiers tortured the Algerians they suspected of being rebels. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Declaring "Africans, men and women of Africa, to arms!" Fanon joined the Algerian revolution against France, in which over one million Algerians died. He died in 1961, only days after writing his anti-colonialism masterpiece, *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon became known as "The Voice of the Third World" by progressive thinkers all over the world. His political theories informed the Black Panthers. They considered Fanon their "patron saint." His central thesis was that colonized people must free themselves from the colonizer through armed struggle. **WHY HE DID IT:** "Come, then, comrades, the European game has finally ended; we must find something different. We today can do everything, so long as we do not imitate Europe."

Ernesto "Ché" Guevara (1928–1967), political agitator Fidel Castro (1926–present), President of Cuba

HOW THEY CAME UP: Ernesto "Ché" Guevara, born in Argentina to an aristocratic family, became a medical doctor. Fidel Castro was born into a wealthy Cuban family and embraced communism. Ché and Fidel met in 1955. Together they led a popular uprising against the Cuban dictator Batista, whom they overthrew in 1959. **HOW THEY FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Castro took over Cuba while Ché fought for independence in other Latin American countries. Ché could have settled down after the Cuban Revolution, but he continued to foment revolution against US-supported dictators throughout the Americas and Africa. Castro's Cuba, meanwhile, has consistently supported African liberation struggles, especially in South Africa. It's the only communist country in the Americas. **WHY THEY DID IT:** "Wherever death may surprise us, it will be welcome, provided that this, our battle cry, reach some receptive ear; that another hand reach out to pick up weapons; and that other men come forward to intone our funeral dirge with the staccato of machine-gun fire, and new cries of battle and victory."—Ché Guevara



Ida B. Wells Barnett (1862–1931), crusading journalist

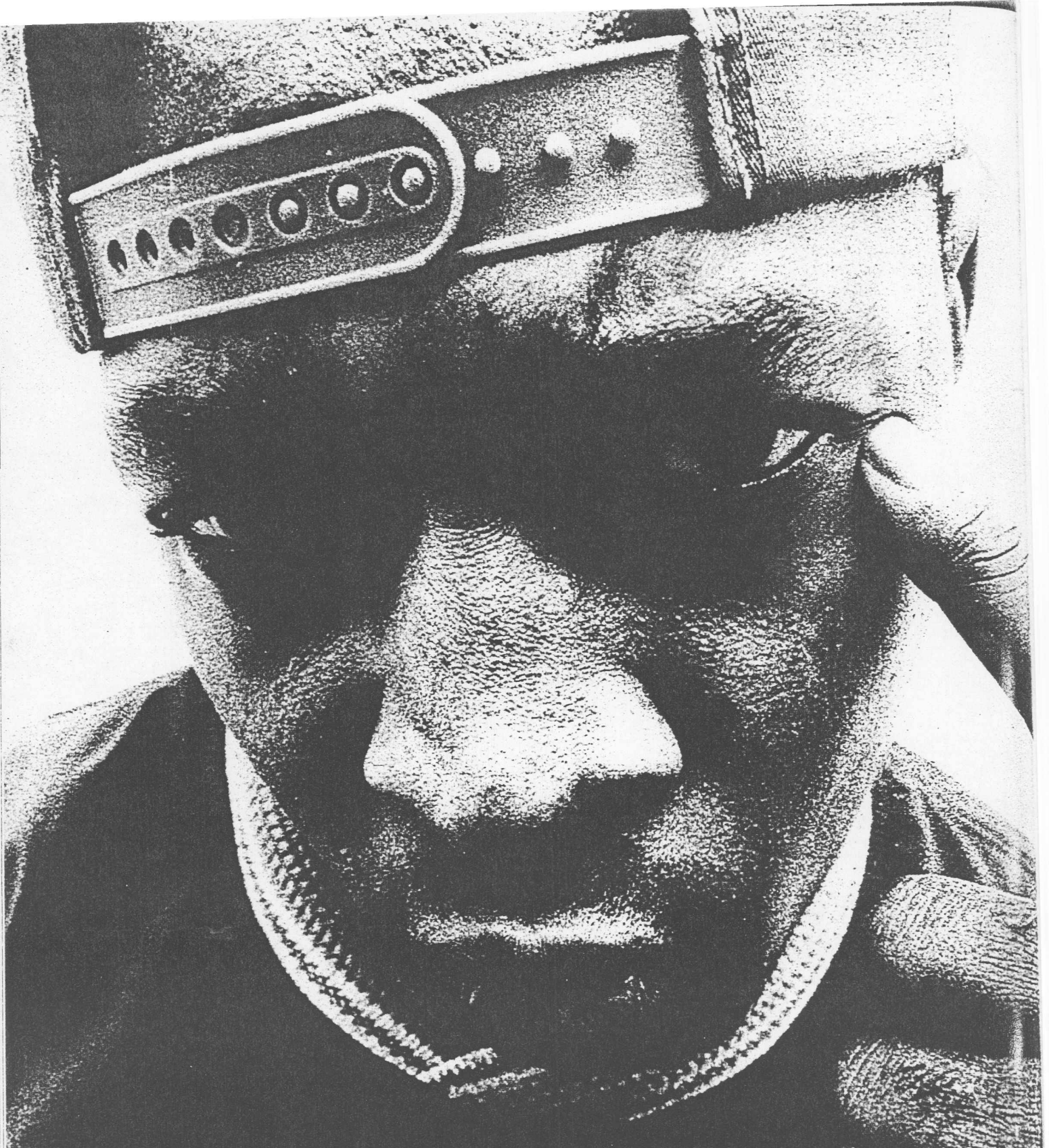
HOW SHE CAME UP: Ida Bell Wells Barnett, the daughter of a slave cook and a slave carpenter, was born in Holly Springs, MS, in 1862, the first child of eight. She attended Rust College and afterwards taught school in Cleveland County, AK and Memphis. She later became a journalist. **HOW SHE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** In 1891, she bought a newspaper in Memphis, and used its pages to combat the scourge of lynching after three of her friends were murdered. White people were outraged by her crusade. "A Winchester rifle," she wrote, "should have a place of honor in every Black home." Racists later destroyed her newspaper offices, but Wells Barnett continued to speak out across the United States and Europe against lynching laws. In 1909, she co-founded the NAACP with W.E.B. Dubois. **WHY SHE DID IT:** "Not until the Negro rises in his might and takes a hand in resenting such cold-blooded murders, if he has to burn up whole towns, will a halt be called in wholesale lynching."



LITERATURE James Baldwin (1924-1987), writer, social commentator

HOW HE CAME UP: Born in Harlem, James Baldwin was the oldest of nine children. His pops was a preacher and his moms, a factory worker. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** With candid, colorful prose that combined biography and reporting, Baldwin articulated the frustrations of a generation of Blacks and made the mainstream literary

élite give young, Black and gay writers and thinkers serious respect. **WHY HE DID IT:** "Everything now, we must assume, is in our hands. We have no right to assume otherwise. If we...do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world."



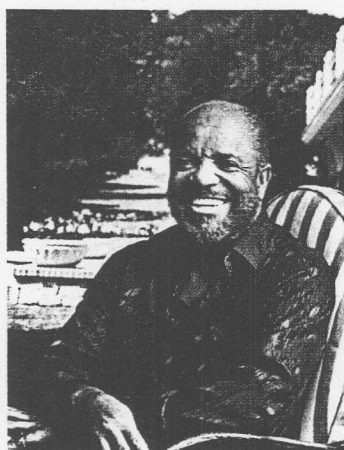
MUSIC Chuck D (1960-present). MC/political agitator

HOW HE CAME UP: Chuck D was born Carlton Ridenhour in Flushing, Queens, one of two sons born to activist parents. He grew up in an all-Black part of Long Island, reading the philosophies of the Black Panthers and Elijah Muhammad, and peeping America's shadiness in Vietnam. In 1986, he formed Public Enemy with friends from Long Island. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Chuck D originally formed Public Enemy to be the "Black Panthers of Rap," and PE's second album,

It Takes A Nation of Millions To Hold Us Back, is hip-hop's most successful political album ever. Public Enemy's fast-paced, booming beats and Chuck D's lyrics stayed consistently on message. To this day, in books and TV commentary, Chuck D fights to keep the hip-hop nation from being socially passive. He protests corporate manipulation, materialism and social decay in records, essays and onstage. **WHY HE DID IT:** "My goal is to be used as a viaduct, as a dispatcher of information."

Bob Marley (1945-1981), reggae singer and bandleader

HOW HE CAME UP: Bob Marley was born in Jamaica, the son of a white British naval officer and a Jamaican mother. Marley, a Rastafarian, formed the group Bob Marley and the Wailers with fellow musicians Peter Tosh and Bunny Wailer. Their political, spiritual and Afrocentric reggae vibes grooved millions. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Jamaica has a population of only 4 million—2 million on the island, and 2 million overseas—yet its culture is known across the globe, primarily because of the music of Bob Marley. Marley also popularized the nonviolent, African and proud tenets and styles of Rastafarianism. Without Marley, Rastafarianism—and the now-ubiquitous dreadlock hairstyle—might have remained an obscure practice shared between Jamaica and Ethiopians. Rastafarianism began when Haile Selassie I, the 225th emperor of Ethiopia, was crowned “Ras Tafari,” King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Some admirers believed Selassie to be the Messiah. Rastafarian worship inspired Bob Marley to sing the most sensual songs of political protest and Black love the world still can’t get enough of. **WHY HE DID IT:** “Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery/ None but ourselves can free our mind.”



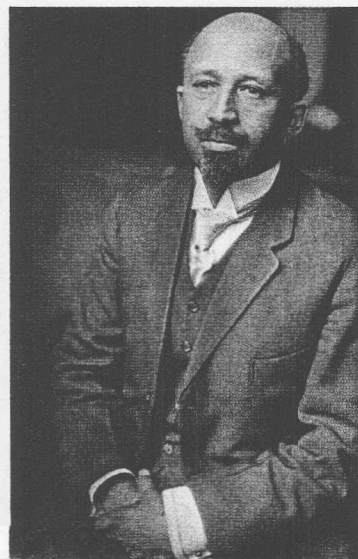
Berry Gordy (1929-present), record label CEO

HOW HE CAME UP: Berry Gordy was born in 1929 in Detroit, the grandson of a slave and one of eight children. His father ran a store and his mother was a teacher. After a stint as a boxer, Gordy got into songwriting and record producing. He decided to start his own record company after receiving a royalty check for only \$3.19. He felt he couldn’t do any worse on his own. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Gordy invented not just the name “Motown,” but made the name into an exemplar concept for the multimillion-dollar Black music company. He freaked it by sampling the business concept of car companies to build an artistic empire. He created an assembly line not of cars, but of stars. In the ‘60s, Gordy’s Motown released an endless stream of hits that proved both influential and enduring. He also recorded and released speeches by Martin Luther King Jr. and the Black Panthers. **WHY HE DID IT:** “Joe Louis was one [inspiration]—the first person who made me know what the word hero meant. His phenomenal feats had opened my imagination to the possibility of [a Black man] being somebody in this world.”

ACADEME

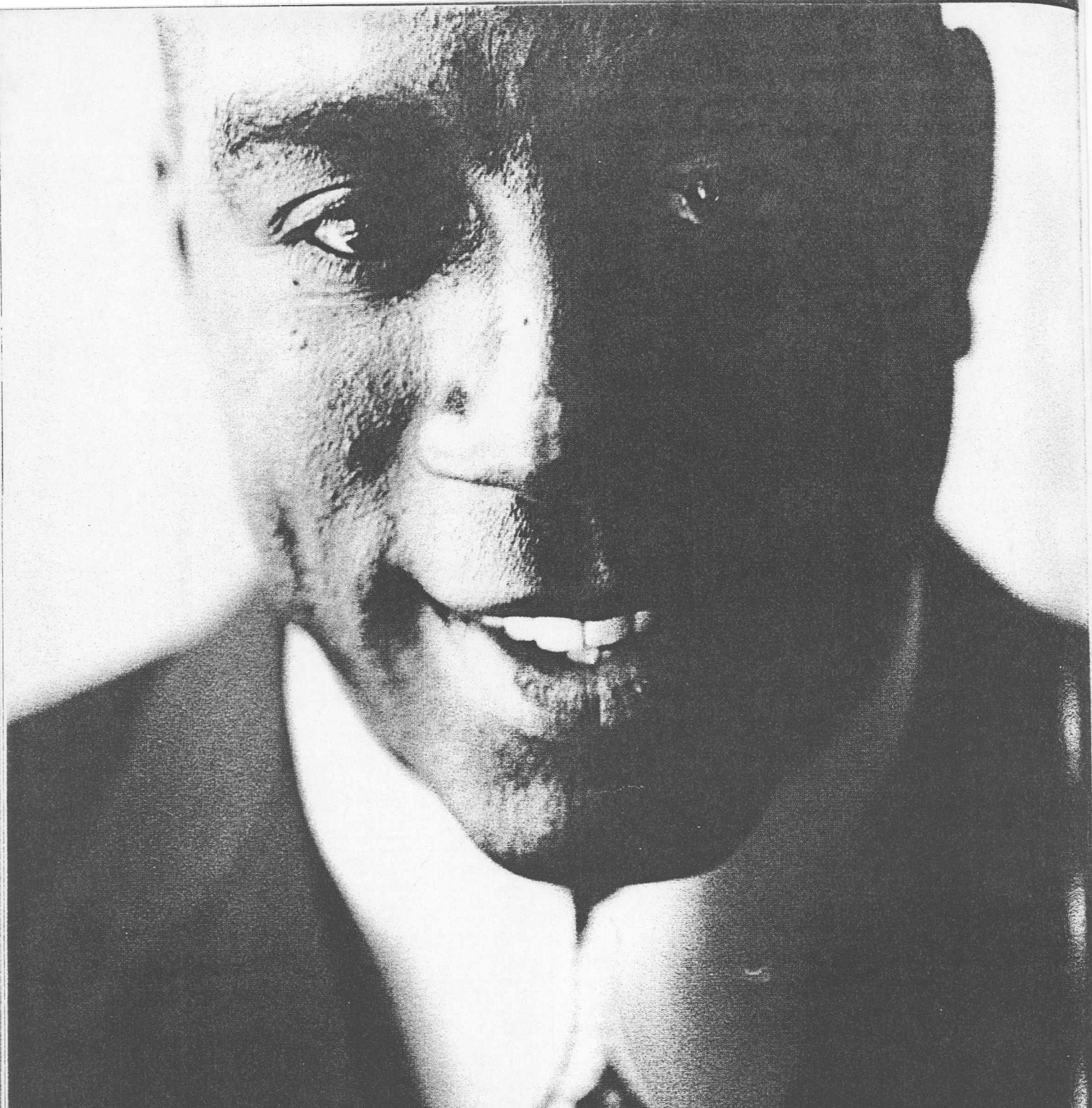
Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), educator/political theorist

HOW HE CAME UP: Booker T. Washington was born a slave on a plantation in Franklin County, VA. His mother was also a slave. Washington, his two siblings and mother joined his stepfather in West Virginia, where he worked in a coal mine and taught himself how to read. He attended school at Hampton Institute. In 1881, Washington was invited to join Tuskegee Institute as a professor. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Washington was the first HNIC (Head Negro In Charge) of American political commentators at the other turn of the century. He gained favor with whites for not overly criticizing Southern racism, and for seemingly accommodationist advice for Blacks. He insisted that you “cast down your buckets where you are” and not migrate North. “The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist folly,” Washington wrote in his audacious book, *Up From Slavery*, adding: “No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized.” **WHY HE DID IT:** “The Negro will be on a different footing in this country when it becomes common to associate the possession of wealth with a Black skin.”



W.E.B. DuBois (1868-1963), academic, political activist and author

HOW HE CAME UP: W.E.B. DuBois was born in Great Barrington, MA, the only son of a barber and a domestic. He attended Fisk University and in 1895 became the first African-American to obtain a Ph.D. from Harvard. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** DuBois was a path-breaking sociologist, a novelist, a communist, a pacifist, and a pan-Africanist. He was a founding director of the NAACP and published its newsletter, *The Crisis*. In 1900, DuBois proclaimed that “the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color-line,” and set national discussions on American racism. He urged Black folks to fight for political as well as economic progress, and pursue higher as well as practical education. His 1903 essay collection, *The Souls of Black Folks*, is considered a masterpiece for breaking down the condition of the Black man in America. An elitist, W.E.B. DuBois believed that the best-educated and progressive Black folk, “The Talented Tenth,” would lead the community. He remained a radical into old age. In 1963, DuBois quit the United States and moved to Ghana, where he died. **WHY HE DID IT:** “I want freedom for my people. I want progress; I want education; I want social medicine; I want a living wage and old-age security; I want employment for all and relief for the unemployed and sick; I want public works, public services, and public improvements.”



SPORTS

Earvin "Magic" Johnson (1959-present) professional basketball player/businessman

HOW HE CAME UP: Magic Johnson was born in Lansing, Michigan. His father worked two jobs to support his seven children. He was expected to attend the high school in Lansing that was known for its basketball, but went to an predominantly white school instead, thanks to busing. Eventually he won a basketball scholarship at Michigan State University, where he won an NCAA championship. Then he joined the Lakers, winning five NBA championships and three MVP titles in 10 years. **HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT:** Parlaying his ability to play all five positions in the NBA, Magic Johnson became the highest-paid player in the NBA in 1980. In 1991, he retired from professional basket-

ball after he discovered he was infected with HIV. Without missing a beat, Magic went on to become the first ever Black professional athlete to secure an ownership stake in the team he played for. His stake in the Los Angeles Lakers basketball franchise made him a model for post-retirement business success, but Magic's other businesses, which focus on developing major retail chains like Starbucks and Sony theaters in Black communities and employ local people, makes him a down-low political leader for the millennium. **WHY HE DID IT:** "Power comes from ownership, and until Blacks start owning more businesses and supporting those businesses, things aren't going to change."

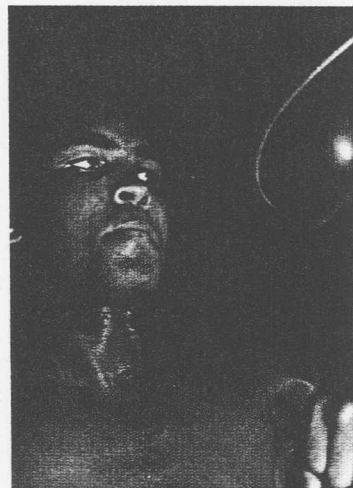
Muhammad Ali (1942-present), heavyweight champion/political agitator

HOW HE CAME UP: Muhammad Ali was born as Cassius Clay in Louisville, KY. His father was a sign-painter and artist; his mother, a domestic. They had two children. Cassius started boxing because he felt it was the quickest route to money-making. He knew too many Black men with college degrees and no jobs. Quick with his, he won the gold as a teenager at the 1960 Olympics.

HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT: Cassius Clay stunned the world when he changed his given name to Muhammad Ali and converted to the Nation of Islam. Back then, the press was getting ready to make him a hero, and the Nation was vilified for advocating Black nationalism.

Muhammad Ali then took principled, public stands against racism. He threw his Olympic medal in a river to protest segregation in Louisville, stunning the country. He continued to stun when he risked his boxing titles, his popularity and prison by refusing to fight in Vietnam.

WHY HE DID IT: "So what if I am the first Black athlete to stand up and say what I feel? Maybe I'm like the Japanese flier who sacrifices himself so others can live."



Jackie Robinson (1919-1972), major league baseball player

HOW HE CAME UP: Jackie Robinson was born in Cairo, GA, the grandson of slaves. His father was a sharecropper; but he said that his more educated mother was the pillar of the family. Robinson had four siblings. He attended the University of California at Los Angeles, where he lettered in four sports, including baseball. During World War II, he joined the Army and became an officer despite Jim Crow laws against that. In 1945, Robinson joined the Negro Leagues.

HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT: Though not a "fanatical integrationist," in 1947, Jackie Robinson became a major-league baseball player with the Brooklyn Dodgers, the first Black player ever to play the "national pastime" in the majors. To survive, he had to endure racial epithets from players and fans and even death threats to become a star player. After baseball, Robinson became a conservative spokesman for Black causes, including the NAACP, sometimes locking horns with the likes Paul Robeson, Malcolm X and the Black Panthers, although he admired them all to some degree.

WHY HE DID IT: "A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives."

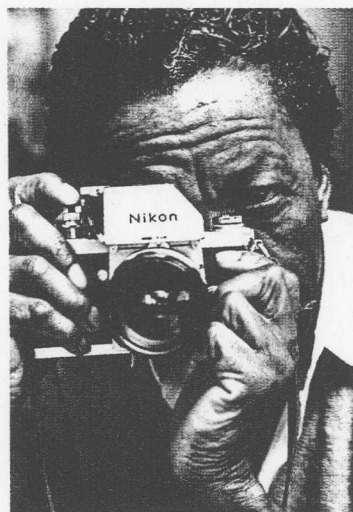
THE VISUAL ARTS

Gordon Parks (1912-present), photographer

HOW HE CAME UP: Gordon Parks was born in Fort Scott, KS, in 1912, the youngest of 15 children. His mother was a domestic and his father a farmer. Parks began his career as a photographer for *Life*, photographing gang leaders in Harlem and famous politicians in Europe. In the '60s, *Life* assigned him to cover the "Prophets of Rage": Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panthers. Thus Gordon Parks became the visual chronicler of the post-World War II political Black movements. He is a painter, writer, musician and cinematographer.

HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT: Parks became America's leading photographer as *Life*'s first African American photographer. He immortalized for all to see snapshots of African Americana that the world had slept on. He photographed the marches of the Civil Rights Movement and the icons of Black Power: poets, actors, and politicians. Parks is also renowned for *The Learning Tree*, a novel that eventually broke ground for African American filmmakers. In 1988, then-President Ronald Reagan presented Parks with the National Medal of Arts.

WHY HE DID IT: "My good friend, I've got a 35-millimeter camera in my pocket. You've got a .45 automatic in yours. But I feel my weapon is probably more powerful than yours."



Spike Lee (1957-present), film director

HOW HE CAME UP: Spike Lee was born in Atlanta and grew up in Brooklyn, the oldest of six children. His father is a jazz musician, his mother a teacher. He attended Morehouse College, where his mass communications major led him to film. He then entered New York University's film school where he began a prolific, colorful and political filmmaking career.

HOW HE FLIPPED THE SCRIPT: Spike exploded the myth that Black films can't sell to mainstream audiences. His first film, *She's Gotta Have It*, premiered in 1986 to critical applause, but Spike really blew up three years later with *Do the Right Thing*. Some critics feared that the movie would start race riots. Spike's films continued to create controversy and even change popular culture. His film *Malcolm X* created X-steria—generating Black power paraphernalia on everything from X-caps (Bill Clinton even wore one) to X-potato chips. The phrase "jungle fever" became part of the national dialogue after the Spike Lee film explored the prospects of Black-and-white love. He opened the door for a generation of Black filmmakers and actors who thrived in the '90s.

WHY HE DID IT: "Controversial or political subject matter can work well at the box office."