



During the 1970's, Aretha Franklin reigned as the "Queen of Soul," with her gift for capturing life's paradoxes - pain and failure accompanied by hope, and struggle by affirmation through song. She continues to top the charts, singing R&B and Gospel.

1854, she toured Canada and some of her writings appeared in the *Provincial Freeman*, an anti-slavery newspaper. Her keen sense of humor earned her the name "The Bronze Muse." She was considered one of the most eloquent women of her time.

African Americans have made huge gains in literature in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nobel Literature Prize winner Toni Morrison became the first African American Woman to achieve this honor. The Nobel Committee stated that Morrison's novels give "life to an essential aspect of the American reality." They con-



Hazel Scott became the first African American to host her own nationally syndicated musical variety television program called "The Hazel Scott Show" in 1950. She was married to Adam Clayton Powell Jr., firebrand preacher, congressman and civil rights revolutionary.

tinued saying she "delves into the language itself, a language she wants to liberate from the fetters of race. Ms Morrison won the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for fiction for her book *Beloved*. Morrison's wide range of tales and styles earned her many other coveted writing awards, showing the rich literary ability of the African American Woman.

**Music**

Early African American music was grounded in religious affiliation. Slaves used religious music to help them forget their everyday struggles, singing spirituals that told them of the promises in the

hereafter. Freedom fighters like Harriet Tubman would use lyrics to warn slaves; she was back and ready to "steal away to Jesus" with more slaves.

Considered one of the most important developments in African American music was the emergence of "Rhythm and Blues." R&B, as it came to be known, set the foundation for rock and roll, soul, disco, funk, jazz, fusion, rap, and more recently, "smooth" or contemporary jazz. Many R&B lyrics speak of life in the South through a nostalgic view or associate hardships with the Northern urban life.

During the "Rock and Roll" era of the 1950's and 1960's, many talented African Americans did a quantum leap from poverty to fame and fortune. One of the early greats, Chuck Berry, rocketed from R&B to rock'n'roll with his *Like a Maybellene* and "Johnny B Good." His style was said to have influenced many rock performers, including the Beatles and Rolling Stones. After his last big hit in 1972, "My ding-a-ling," his popularity declined.

Tina Turner surprised the country with her huge comeback during the 1980's. After a violent breakup with her husband Ike, who in 1951 created "Rocket 88" (the first ever rock'n'roll record), Tina is still belting out songs and packing in the crowds at her concerts.

Other African American music artists like James Brown, Jim Hendrix, and

Brown, Jim Hendrix, and many others became legends over night. Michael Jackson, child heartthrob would go on to make more money than anyone before him, while his sister Janet followed close behind. An unfortunate brush with child sex abuse allegations ended his career overnight.

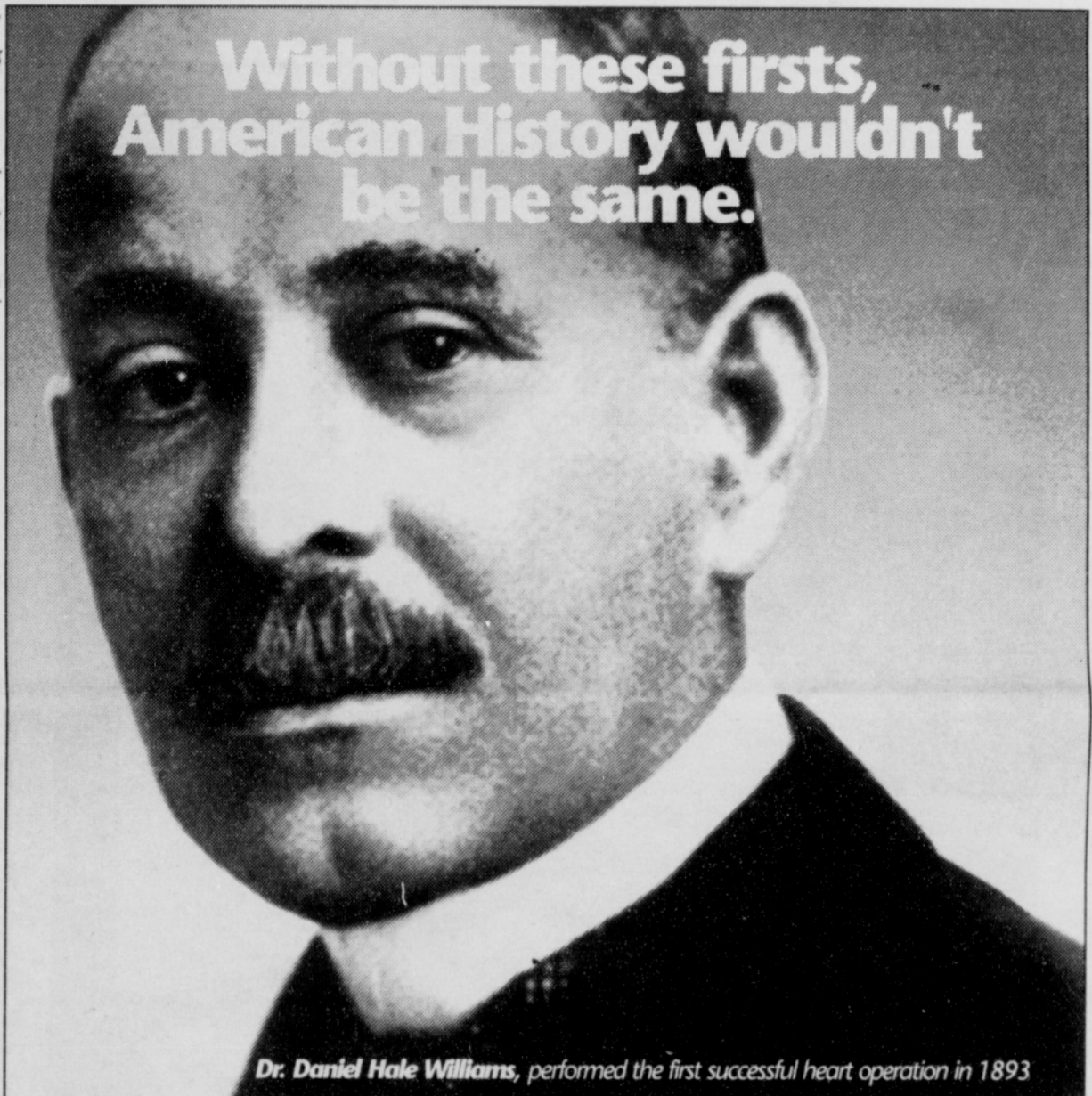
During the last part of the twentieth century, there was a consider-

able rise of African American female singers making number one hits. Anita Baker, Sade, Tina Turner, Natalie Cole, and numerous other black females dominated the music industry.

**Film and Television**

Symbolic of the struggle of the African American with discrimina-

tion in this country, early films included *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in 1909 and *The Nigger* in 1915. During the 1920's, African Americans worked hard with independent film studios to create more realistic images of blacks and their culture. Oscar Micheaux, Noble Johnson, William "Bill" Foster, and other early pioneers in the industry fought hard to keep racism at a minimum, publish-



Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, performed the first successful heart operation in 1893

- **Madame C.J. Walker**, first self-made American woman millionaire
- **Hyman S. Thomas**, invented the potato chip, originally known as the Saratoga chip
- **Matthew A. Henson**, first man to set foot on the North Pole
- **Jessie Jarue Mark**, first woman to earn a doctorate in botany
- **Isaac Murphy**, won the very first Kentucky Derby
- **Dr. Charles Drew**, discovered the method for preserving blood plasma
- **Jewel LaFontant Mankarious**, first woman to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court
- **Yvonne Clark**, first woman to earn B.S. in chemical engineering at Harvard
- **Louis Armstrong**, first to sing in "scatting" style
- **Otis Boykin**, invented guided missile device
- **Jane Wright**, pioneered several advances in the field of chemotherapy
- **Frederick Mckinley Jones**, inventor of portable X-ray machine
- **William A. Hinton**, developed first test for syphilis
- **Norbert Rillieux**, developed the first system for refining sugar
- **S. Boone**, invented the first ironing board
- **Frank Grant**, inventor of the baseball chinguard
- **L.D. Newman**, inventor of the hairbrush
- **Shelby J. Davidson**, created the first adding machine
- **William Warwick Cardozo**, pioneered the study of sickle cell anemia
- **Kurtis Blow**, first rap artist

You can't talk about Black history without talking about American history. Let's remember the African Americans who helped build America.



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