

BLACK HISTORY MONTH and the American Experience



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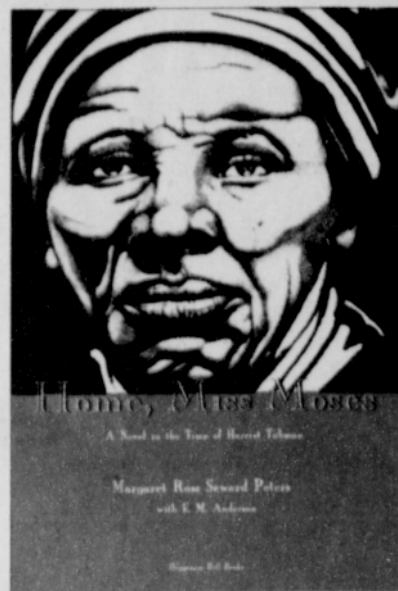
Honoring Coretta Scott King

Jaquayala Seamster (from left), Traeshell Williams and Shardea Booth of the King Elementary School Choir perform in honor of the late Coretta Scott King during a prayer service at the Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church. The wife of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. died last week at the age of 78.

Remembering "Black Moses"

Riveting book celebrates Harriet Tubman

As Americans celebrate Black History Month throughout the month of February, much attention is focused on the African-American fight for freedom and equality. At the forefront of any discussion of African-American freedom is Harriet Tubman, the most famous conductor of the Underground Railroad. Known as "Black Moses," "Grandma Moses," and "Moses of Her People," Tubman stands tall as one of American history's greatest and most important figures.



Her contributions to rectifying social injustice in America are significant. During the Civil War, Tubman served as both a cook and a nurse, and even ended up spying for the North. She helped lead hundreds of slaves to freedom during the Civil War and even led a military raid at Combahee Ferry in Colleton County, South Carolina. This event signified the first time

in U.S. history that a military operation was planned and led by a woman. In her later years, she acted as an activist for both African-Americans and women of all races. She also founded a home for the indigent aged in New York and toured as a speaker.

PBS Series on the Making of America



A scene from the current PBS series "Slavery and the Making of America" examines one of the darkest periods in the nation's history, the forced enslavement of millions of men, women and children that lasted more than 200 years.

Morgan Freeman narrates view of the enslaved

Coming to PBS, Channel 10 on Oregon Public Broadcast on Thursday, Feb. 9th and Thursday, Feb. 16 from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. is the four part series Slavery And The Making Of America, produced by Dante James and narrated by Morgan Freeman.

Dante is an incredible filmmaker who has produced many award winning films among them biographies on Marian Anderson and A. Philip Randolph. He worked with the late great filmmaker Henry Hampton at Blackside and was the executive producer of Hampton's last series This Far By Faith: African American Spiritual Journeys.

Slavery And The Making Of America tells the story of slavery from the point of view of the enslaved. The series recognizes the strength, humanity and dignity of the enslaved and redefines them as pro-active freedom fighters not passive victims.

The four-part series documents the history of American slavery from its beginnings in the British colonies to its end in the Southern states and the years of post-Civil War Reconstruction.

Drawing on a wealth of recent scholarship, it looks at slavery as an integral part of a

developing nation, challenging the long held notion that slavery was exclusively a Southern enterprise. At the same time, by focusing on the remarkable stories of individual slaves, it offers new perspectives on the slave experience and testifies to the active role that Africans and African Americans took in surviving their bondage and shaping their own lives.

Episode one opens in the 1620s with the introduction of 11 men of African descent and mixed ethnicity into slavery in New Amsterdam. Working side by side with white indentured servants, these men labored to lay the foundations of the Dutch colony that would later become New York.

Episode two profiles life from the 1740s to the 1830s when the institution of slavery continued to support economic development. As the slave population reproduced, American planters became less dependent on the African slave trade.

Episode three, which starts at the beginning of the 1800s, examines slavery's increasing divisiveness in America as the nation develops westward and cotton replaces tobacco as the country's most valuable crop.

Episode four looks at Civil War and Reconstruction through the experiences of South Carolina slave Robert Smalls. It chronicles Smalls' daring escape to freedom, his military service, and his tenure as a congressman after the war.

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