

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

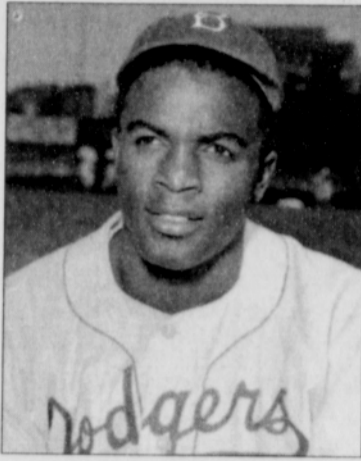
## Jackie Robinson Breaks Color Barrier Branch Rickey helps make it possible

BY JUNE POTTER ACOSTA  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Jackie Robinson was a man of courage and forbearance, of great athletic talent, and academic achievements, too. He will forever be known as the man who integrated baseball and thereby the entire spectrum of professional sports in the U.S.A.

He was born in Cairo, Ga., on Jan. 31, 1919. Early in his childhood, following abandonment by his father, he and his siblings were taken by their mother to live in Southern California.

Robinson showed a broad variety of athletic skills. He achieved early greatness at Pasadena City College and then U.C.L.A. In his junior year, he withdrew from the university to join the military (still, at that time, segregated) and was honorably discharged as a First Lieutenant from the U.S. Army in



Jackie Robinson

1945 at the end of World War II.

Almost immediately, he signed a contract with the Monarchs, a Kansas City, Mo. team of the Negro American League. That same year, fortuitously, he came under the tutelage of Branch Rickey, manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers (later, in 1958, to be moved to Southern

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Branch Rickey

California and known as the Los Angeles Dodgers).

Rickey was an idealist who foresaw the integration of Major League Baseball as the right and moral way to go. From the perspective of a business man, intuitive and visionary, he also recognized that segregating black players to a black league put a lid on fan support to the black community.

Television has just emerged. The logical joining of sports and televi-

sion to the financial benefit of all loomed ahead.

Rickey signed Robinson to play for the Montreal Royals, a minor league team which was part of the Dodger farm team system. After one season with the Royals, Rickey moved Robinson to the Dodgers in April 1947.

Like a good and caring father, Rickey cautioned Robinson that the transition would not be easy. He would be exposed to verbal

taunts and insults. Rickey's instructions were simple and direct: "Just play ball".

Robinson spent almost 10 years with the Dodgers, until 1956, mostly as a second baseman, achieving an excellent scoring record. He was also known as a daring base runner.

Eventually, he was totally accepted by his teammates, impressed by his stats. Fans, too, were slowly learning to appreciate his talent.

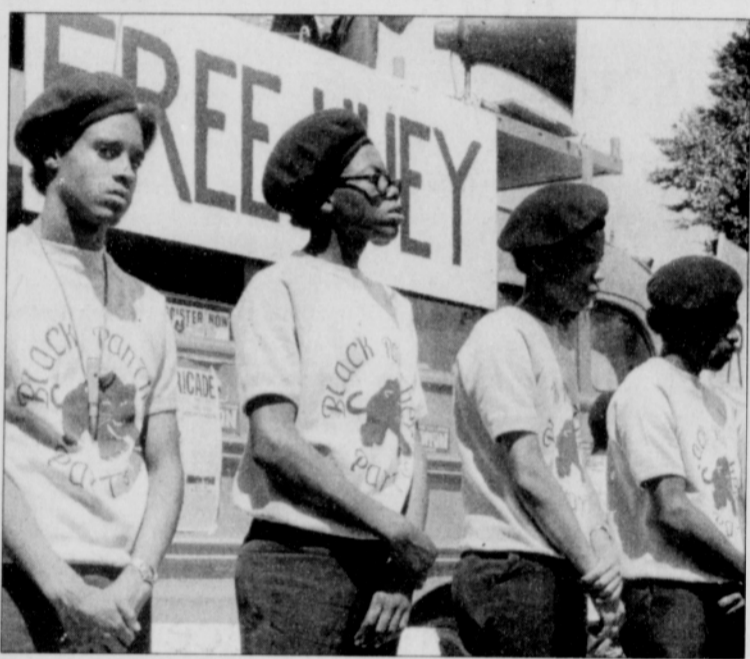
Near the end of his playing days,

he was traded to the Giants. It was a disappointment and a hurt. Later, in his autobiography, he confessed his belief that if he had been white, there would have been no trade, and he would have retired as a Dodger. Rickey would have never allowed the trade, but was not longer part of the ball club.

Robinson went on to business success, serving as an executive with a New York City restaurant chain. In 1962, he was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame, again, the first black player, and on the first vote after eligibility.

Politically, he was Republican, and served as a special assistant for Civil Rights with Gov. Nelson Rockefeller of New York.

Robinson's legacy is immeasurable. His influence has been and remains far-reaching. Jackie Robinson was truly a great American!



**Standing on My Sisters' Shoulders** -- An award-winning documentary that looks at the Civil Rights movement in Mississippi from the point of view of African-American women, Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bread and Roses Center, 819 N. Killingsworth St. Hosted by Radical Women. Dinner with a vegetarian option available at 6 pm for a sliding scale donation. For more information, rides or childcare, call 503-240-4462.

**Black Panthers Photo Exhibit** -- Reflections and Talking Drum Coffee and Books, 446 N.E. Killingsworth St., presents Portland native Eve Crane's Black Panthers photo exhibit chronicling the movement through 1967 and 1968. This visually impacting exhibit will be on display throughout the month of February.

### Black History Month Attractions

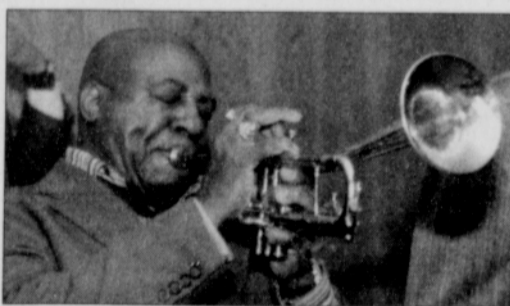
**Facets of Africa** -- The Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 N. Interstate Ave., presents a host of celebrations for 'Black History' month including: vibrant storytelling of African culture, the stunning images of 'Tribal Women' and colorful paintings of Maasai warriors.

**Films at Mt. Hood** -- Mt. Hood Community College features the history of African Americans in a free public film series. Malcolm X plays on Wednesday, Feb. 21 and The Rosa Parks Story shows on Wednesday, Feb. 28. Each of these films begins at 6:30 p.m. in Room AC1600.



**Cascade Festival of African Films** -- A litany of hope, clashes and love are found in the films at Portland Community College's 17th Annual Cascade Festival of African Films. Showings are scheduled at various locations through March 3 honoring Black History and Women's History. For more information, visit the festival website [africanfilmfestival.org](http://africanfilmfestival.org).

**Racial Justice Activist** -- Jesus Estrada, local activist, "Coalition Building for Racial Justice," will speak from 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. in Multimedia Classroom building, Room 6 at Washington State University-Vancouver.



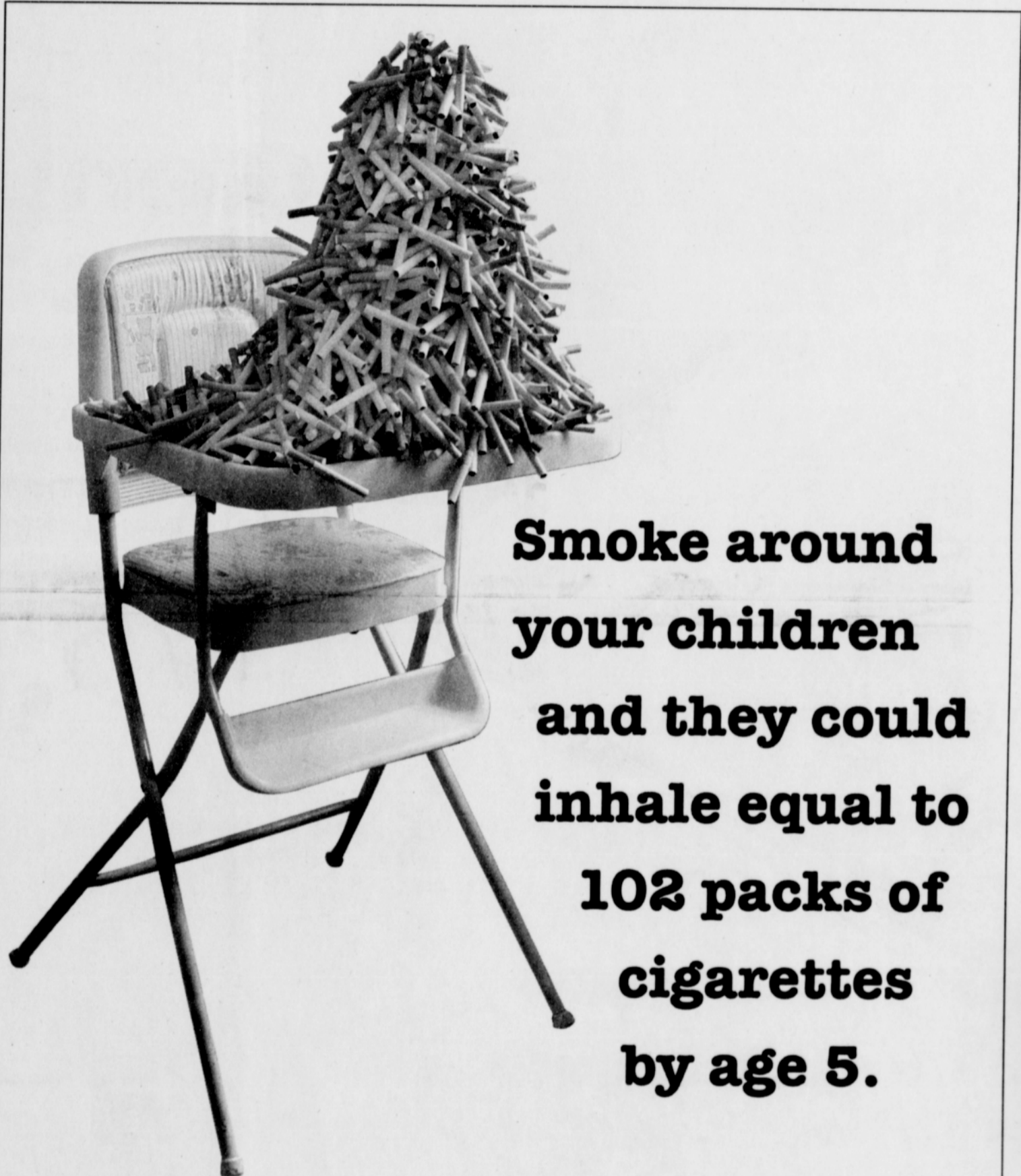
**Life, Culture through Music** -- Nordstom's presents photos by Kamoinge, a New York-based group of photographers, at its Lloyd Center store throughout the month to celebrate

Black History Month. The exhibit illustrates black life and culture through music over the past 40 years.

**Diversity Expert** -- Jamie Washington is a nationally known speaker, consultant, and a diversity leadership trainer will lead a workshop titled "We're all in This Together: Coalition Building across Difference" on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 6 p.m. in Smith Hall in Albany Quadrangle at Lewis and Clark College.



**Thought Provoking Scholar** -- On Monday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m., African American activist and thought provoking scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah will give a talk titled "Cosmopolitanism" in Agnes Flanagan Chapel at Lewis and Clark College.



**Smoke around your children and they could inhale equal to 102 packs of cigarettes by age 5.**

**Everyone has the right to breathe clean air, especially our children.**

