

REFLECTIONS
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ON RACE

BROOKLINE
THEN AND
NOW

Brookline Celebrates
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

JANUARY 21, 2019

PROGRAM

Bernard Greene	Welcome
Leontyne Price	<i>Lift Every Voice and Sing</i>
Testostatonos	Now by Miguel MLK by U2
MLK In His Own Words featuring Alexandra Whitfield, soprano Regie Gibson, literary performer Elizabeth Whitfield, violin Lisa Kempskie, viola Jane Sheena, cello	<i>His Truth Is Marching On</i> by Vartan Aghababian
Zvi A. Sesling	<i>Beverly Hills, Chicago</i> by Gwendolyn Brooks
R. Harvey Bravman	<i>Brookline: Facing Civil Rights</i> a documentary film by R. Harvey Bravman
Patricia Wen and Bernard Greene	Discussion: Race in Metro Boston, Then and Now
Bernard Greene	Closing Remarks

PRESENTERS



Bernard Greene is the chair of the MLK Celebration Committee. He is a member of the Brookline Select Board and former general counsel legal counsel to the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, a state environmental finance agency in the Department of the State Treasurer. He has lived in Brookline since 2003 and is married with two adult children. Selectperson Greene graduated from Swarthmore College and Boston College Law School.

About *In His Own Words*: Commemorating Martin Luther King's life 50 years after his death, five Boston composers (Alexandra Whitfield, soprano, Regie Gibson, literary performer, Elizabeth Whitfield, violin, Lisa Kempskie, viola and Jane Sheena, cello) have crafted compositions based on the words of Dr. King to reflect the kind of service that Dr. King might have led as a minister. Today's performance is just one part of an hour-long, one-of-a-kind program that the group has been performing in the Boston area. Regie Gibson is an award-winning poet, singer, teacher and artistic director. This is the third time he has performed at Brookline's MLK Day event.

Zvi A. Sesling, the Poet Laureate of Brookline, is an award winning poet whose poetry is in online and print journals in the U.S., India, Ireland, France, England, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, Canada and Israel. He publishes Muddy River Books and edits Muddy River Poetry Review. Mr. Sesling is the author of three volumes of poetry, *The Lynching of Leo Frank*, *Fire Tongue* and *King of the Jungle*, as well as two chapbooks, *Across Stones of Bad Dreams* and *Love Poems From Hell*. He lives in Brookline with his wife Susan J. Dechter.

“Today [as we] remember and celebrate [MLK], we must remember that we have realized only half of his dream.”

—Julian Bond

PRESENTERS

Patricia Wen is the editor of the Spotlight Team, the Boston Globe's investigative unit that includes six reporters. She took over in 2017 after having previously worked as a reporter on the team more than two decades ago.

Over the years, Wen has specialized in covering social service, legal and medical issues. She has been a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize three times—in 2004 for feature writing, in 2013 as part of a team for national reporting, and in 2018 as Spotlight editor overseeing a seven-part series on race issues in Boston. Wen has also twice won the Casey Medal for coverage of children and family issues, each time in the category of major projects in large publications.

Before joining the Globe, she worked at The Star-Ledger in Newark, NJ and The Advocate in Stamford, CT. A native of East Lansing, Michigan, and a Harvard graduate, she is married with three children.

Testostones of Brookline High School

Brandon Chin, Daniel Zilberman, Ben Kiel, Arman Marchiel, Isaiah Wood, Harrison Chang, Kevin Liao, Trevor Resnikoff, Jack Flood, Oliver Fox, Ethan Mamenta, Francisco Figueiras, William McCormick, Omer Kitov, Diego Echeverria De Cordova

"I have...learned that the inseparable twin of racial injustice is economic injustice...The gospel at its best deals with the whole man, not only his spiritual well-being, but his material well-being...[It] is concerned about the slums that damn him, the economic conditions that strangle him and social conditions that cripple him." – MLK, April, 1960

THE FILM

About Brookline: Facing Civil Rights

The documentary film Brookline: Facing Civil Rights was commissioned and inspired by the Brookline MLK Celebration Committee. We hope that we may find a way to capture the Civil Rights Movement memories and emotions of other Brookline residents.

R. Harvey Bravman, Producer and Director, owns ADW Video Productions and is the founder of BrooklineHub.com and the Brookline Youth Awards, now in its 9th year. Held at the Coolidge, the Brookline Youth Awards is an opportunity for Brookline residents to hear about the character, challenges, and dreams of its young people through the power and intimacy of video interviews. Harvey also produced and directed, Soul Witness, The Brookline Holocaust Witness Project. After several sold out Coolidge screenings, Soul Witness will be back on February 28 to support the Coolidge's capital campaign.

Featuring:

Michael Dukakis is a graduate of Brookline High School. In the 1960s, Mike [Mike?] volunteered as a Housing Tester in Brookline. Mike served on the first Brookline Fair Housing Committee, became Chairman of the Democratic Town Committee, served for 8 years in the Massachusetts House of Representatives and as governor from 1975 – 1979 and 1983 – 1991. . For the last several years, Mike has served as a professor of political science at Northeastern University.

Ruth Ellen Fitch was the first Black female partner at a Boston law firm. Before attending law school, she was the first full-time Director of the METCO program in the Brookline Public Schools. She also taught Black literature at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

THE FILM

Bobbie Knable served as Chairperson of the Civil Rights Committee of the West Side Manhattan Democrat Club before taking a position at the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) [When?]. She later served as Dean of Students at Tufts University from 1980 to 2000. Bobbie's husband Norman Knable was a nuclear physicist for NASA. She is a longtime Town Meeting Member and serves on the Advisory Committee and the MLK Day Celebration Committee.

Diana McClure was the Co-founder of Freckles Associates with her husband, Edward McClure. The Freckles Association helped young people and organizations discuss racial and cultural differences. A friend of Martin Luther King, Jr., Edward served as a Community Relations Specialist with the U.S. Department of Justice for 24 years, most notably during the Boston Desegregation Busing Crises in the 1970s

Mark Gray was a member of one of only three African-American families that lived in Brookline during the 1950s [Is this true?]. Mark became Vice President of his Junior and Senior classes at Brookline High School. Mark served in Vietnam and was very active in the Civil Rights Movement. He served as the General Counsel of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs during the second Dukakis Gubernatorial Administration and is currently a Town Meeting Member.

Julia Wilson, a schoolteacher and children's book author, is a Brookline resident. Julie's husband John Wilson grew up in Roxbury and was a celebrated African-American artist and a professor at Boston University. They moved to Brookline in 1965. John's work is displayed in major museums throughout the U.S. His statue of Martin Luther King, Jr., can be seen in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. A different sculpture of MLK by Wilson will be dedicated in Brookline's Town Hall on January 27. John's art was made available for the making of Brookline: Facing Civil Rights by Martha Richardson Fine Art, Boston.

THE FILM

Editor Robert Kirwan
Director of Photography Nolan Yee
Associate Editor Danielle Myers
Associate Producers Caitlin (Haynes) Starr & Karen Chase
Sound Mixing Douglas Stevens
Archival Photo Research Katie McGovern and Danielle Myers

Special thanks to
Brookline Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations
Brookline Community Foundation
Brookline Hub
Brookline Teen Center
Lunch Specials Music
Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation
The Coolidge Corner Theatre
Ken Liss, Brookline Historical Society

Archival Photos of Brookline provided by
Brookline Public Library

Photos of John Wilson and his art provided by
Martha Richardson Fine Art

"Human progress is neither automatic, not inevitable. Every step toward the goal of justice requires the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals....History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of the period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."
— MLK: "I've Been to the Mountaintop", April, 1968

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968), a Baptist minister, was the face of the Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 1960s, working to end racial segregation and discrimination through civil disobedience and other nonviolent means.

Martin Luther King, Jr. lived in Boston beginning in 1951 when he began his studies of ethics and philosophy at Boston University. He became "Dr. King" by earning a Ph.D. in systematic theology from BU in 1955.

During these years, Howard Thurman was named dean of the University's Marsh Chapel. King attended sermons there but also turned to Thurman as his mentor and spiritual advisor. Among the lessons that inspired him most were Thurman's accounts of a visit to Mohandas Gandhi in India years earlier. It was Dean Thurman who educated King in the mahatma's ideas of nonviolent protest that helped sow the seeds of change in the U.S. and beyond.

King led the successful year-long 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, during which he was arrested and his home bombed. He helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957. He favored direct action in support of voting rights and in opposition to segregation of schools and public facilities.

He helped organize the 1963 nonviolent protests in Birmingham, Alabama, where demonstrators were met by police with attack dogs and clubs. He was arrested and placed in solitary confinement, from which he wrote "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."

"Many of the ugly pages of American history have been obscured and forgotten. A society is always eager to cover misdeeds with a cloak of forgetfulness, but no society can fully repress an ugly past when the ravages persist into the present. America owes a debt of justice which it has only begun to pay. If it loses the will to finish or slackens in its determination, history will recall its crimes and the country that would be great will lack the most indispensable element of greatness – injustice."

– MLK: "Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community," 1967



At the 1963 March on Washington, he delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech before 250,000 march participants. This speech established his reputation as one of the greatest orators in American history.

The combined efforts of civil rights groups resulted in the Voting Rights Act of 1965. King helped to organize the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches, and the following year he and SCLC took the movement north to Chicago to oppose segregated housing. In the final years of his life, King spoke out frequently against poverty and the Vietnam War, alienating some liberal allies with a 1967 speech titled "Beyond Vietnam."

In 1968, King and SCLC embarked on the Poor People's Campaign, to increase economic rights for the poor. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had come to speak in support of striking sanitation workers.

In 1964, King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for combating racial inequality through nonviolent resistance. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1977) and the Congressional Gold Medal (2004). The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., was dedicated in 2011.

Wikipedia (edited)

A bronze sculpture of Dr. King, by noted Brookline artist John Wilson will be installed and dedicated on January 27, 2019 at 3:00 p.m. in Brookline's Town Hall.

MLK COMMITTEE

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee Mission Statement

Each year, MLK Day provides an opportunity for Brookline residents to remember a hero martyred in the effort to achieve equality in America. Despite his sacrifice and that of many others who participated in the Civil Rights Movement, and despite the progress made in the nearly 50 years since his death, full equality has not been achieved. Brookline's MLK Day Celebration is an expression of the Town's commitment to racial equality. During the year, the Committee sponsors and plans events that bring us together to celebrate our diversity, to learn from one another, to better understand how racial inequality divides us, and, most importantly, how we may work together to achieve the goal of equality.

Members

Bernard Greene (chair), Jack Curtis, Rob Daves, Caitlin Haynes (staff), Ann Kamensky, Bobbie Knable, Bill Mitchell

The MLK Committee has posted information on the MLK Committee webpage about the people and the organizations that participated in the Civil Rights Movement. Suggestions to include additional educational information are welcome. Our e-mail address is BrooklineMLKCommittee@gmail.com.

Brookline's Commitment to Workforce Inclusion and Diversity

In keeping with its commitment to increase diversity, the Town of Brookline has pledged to make available to the public its annual report on the racial and gender composition of its workforce. The latest Annual Workforce and Inclusion and Diversity Report can be found on the Human Resources Department webpage on the Town's website.

SPECIAL THANKS

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee thanks the following businesses, organizations, and individuals for their commitment to making this event as well as the book and food drives a success.

Mark Anastasio	Chobee Hoy
Brookline Booksmith	Coolidge Corner Theatre
Brookline Select Board	Gillian Jackson
Brookline Food Pantry [?]	Nick Lazzarro
Brookline Interactive Group (BIG)	Kristin Leader Design
Brookline Department of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations	League of Women Voters of Brookline
Brookline Police Department	Mel Kleckner
Brookline Public Schools	More Than Words
Brookline Senior Center	Red Sun Press
	Tim Sullivan

"When the Constitution was written, it declared that the Negro was 60 percent of a person. Today, another formula seems to declare that he is to be considered 50 percent of a person. Of the good things in life, the Negro has approximately one-half those of whites. Thus, the Negroes have half the income of whites, and half of all Negroes live in substandard housing. Of the negative experiences of life, the Negro has a double share: there are twice as many unemployed and the rate of infant mortality among Negroes is double that of whites."

– MLK

As you leave this celebration... it is important that you keep these things in mind: the movement for equality for all Americans didn't begin with Dr. King, and it has not ended with him. Whenever you feel discouraged by how much remains to be done to fulfill the goal of equality, think of what has already been accomplished—and what it cost many individuals—working singly and together to bring us to this point. And whenever you feel your efforts don't count—that it doesn't matter whether you vote or read a newspaper, keep informed about the issues, take advantage of every educational opportunity, work to promote equal opportunity—you risk wasting the fruits of all of those sacrifices and those gains won at such high cost. If the lives taken are not to be lost in vain, you must add your efforts to those of Martin Luther King to lead the people into the Promised Land.

—Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee

As we honor the courageous leaders of the struggle for civil rights, let us also remember the people who joined the fight and strengthened the demands for equality. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee invites Brookline residents to share their experiences and memories of the Civil Rights movement. Please contact us with your stories and your suggestions for future events at BrooklineMLKCommittee@gmail.com.

"I trust the American people's desire to no longer be defined by our differences:...while we may have different stories, we hold common hopes. We may not look the same or come from the same place, but we want to move in the same direction – towards a better future for our children and grandchildren."

—Barack Obama

Lift Every Voice And Sing

Lyrics by James Weldon Johnson
Music by John Rosamond Johnson

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise,
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea
Sing a song full of faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the day that hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet,
Come to the place on which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

Suggested reading list for young adults on the Civil Rights Movement

About MLK

The Dream: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Speech That Inspired a Nation by Drew D. Hansen

Explores the fascinating, little-known history of King's legendary address. (paperback)

Let the Trumpet Sound: A Life of Martin Luther King, Jr. by Stephen B. Oats

A definitive one-volume biography. (paperback)

- Winner of the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Book Award

About the Civil Rights Movement

March by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin; illustrations by Nate Powell
Congressman John Lewis, a major civil rights leader, presents a vivid first-hand account of his lifelong struggle for civil and human rights. (a graphic novel trilogy / paperback)

- Book One spans John his youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with MLK, and the Nashville Student Movement's fight to tear down segregation through nonviolent sit-ins.
- Book Two From the Freedom Riders to the bombing of the Birmingham church in 1963, a turning point that contributed to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Book Three In 1963, when the Civil Rights Movement caught the country's full attention, an army of activists launched campaigns, such as Freedom Vote and Mississippi Freedom Summer the fight for voting rights came to a showdown with Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama.

- 2016 National Book Award for Young People's Literature
- 2017 Coretta Scott King Author Award

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice by Phillip Hoose

Before Rosa Parks, there was Claudette Colvin, an impassioned teenager, who in March 1955, refused to give her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. A year later she was a key plaintiff in a landmark case that swept away the legal underpinnings of Jim Crow. The first in-depth account of an important yet largely unknown civil rights figure. (paperback)

- 2010 National Book Award for Young People's Literature
- 2010 Newbery Honor Book

Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Russell Freedman
Eyewitness reports, iconic photographs, and primary sources tell the stories of the heroes who stood up against segregation. (paperback)

- A Jane Addams Peace Association Honor Book

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

Having left his rough neighborhood, Justyce McAllister, an honor student, is scorned by his former peers or ridiculed by his new classmates. He looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for answers and starts a journal to Dr. King. Then one day Justyce goes driving with his best friend—windows open, music blaring, , sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who's under attack. (fiction / paperback)

- A New York Times bestseller

Free At Last: A History of the Civil Rights Movement and Those Who Died in the Struggle by Sara Bullard; introduction by Julian Bond

This history of the civil rights movement captures the turbulent years of struggle through stories and photos. (paperback)

– Available in libraries and bookstores –

Beverly Hills, Chicago

Gwendolyn Brooks, 1917 - 2000

("and the people live till they have white hair")

– E. M. Price

The dry brown coughing beneath their feet,
(Only for a while, for the handyman is on his way)
These people walk their golden gardens.
We say ourselves fortunate to be driving by today.

That we may look at them, in their gardens where
The summer ripeness rots. But not raggedly.
Even the leaves fall down in lovelier patterns here.
And the refuse, the refuse is a neat brilliancy.

When they flow sweetly into their houses
With softness and slowness touched by that everlasting gold,
We know what they go to. To tea. But that does not mean
They will throw some little black dots into some water and add sugar and the juice
of the cheapest lemons that are sold,

While downstairs that woman's vague phonograph bleats, "Knock me a kiss."
And the living all to be made again in the sweatingest physical manner
Tomorrow. . . . Not that anybody is saying that these people have no trouble.
Merely that it is trouble with a gold-flecked beautiful banner.

Nobody is saying that these people do not ultimately cease to be. And
Sometimes their passings are even more painful than ours.
It is just that so often they live till their hair is white.
They make excellent corpses, among the expensive flowers. . . .

Nobody is furious. Nobody hates these people.
At least, nobody driving by in this car.
It is only natural, however, that it should occur to us
How much more fortunate they are than we are.

It is only natural that we should look and look
At their wood and brick and stone
And think, while a breath of pine blows,
How different these are from our own.

We do not want them to have less.
But it is only natural that we should think we have not enough.
We drive on, we drive on.
When we speak to each other our voices are a little gruff.

Gwendolyn Brooks (1917 – 2000), one of the most highly regarded, influential, and widely read poets of 20th-century American poetry, was the first Black author to win the Pulitzer Prize.