

NARA BLACK HISTORY BASIC TRAINING

Feb 5 – James Baldwin

[James Baldwin](#) was born on August 2, 1924 in Harlem, New York. Disheartened over racism in America, Baldwin moved to Paris at the age of 24 where he began his professional writing career. Over the course of his long career, Baldwin wrote short stories, plays, essays, and novels that discussed the themes of race, class, religion, masculinity, and sexuality; among them: *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953) and *Giovanni's Room* (1956). In 1957, Baldwin returned to the US in order to participate in the emerging civil rights movement. He used his platform to critique and bring attention to racial inequalities in America. Baldwin debated leading white intellectuals and made television appearances to further discuss this issue. Baldwin was also interviewed by Black psychologist Kenneth Clark in 1963, for the [Negro and the American Promise](#) program.



“To be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a rage almost all the time.”

Viewing:

- ✓ I Am Not Your Negro. Magnolia Pictures, 2017
- ✓ [James Baldwin Debates William F. Buckley](#), 1965
- ✓ [James Baldwin Discusses Racism, The Dick Cavett Show](#), 1969

Reading:

- ✓ [James Baldwin: The Writer & the Witness](#), face to face
- ✓ *Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and its Urgent Lessons for Our Own* (Crown), 2020
- ✓ *James Baldwin: A Biography* (Arcade), 2015

Inspired by [GirlTrek](#)