

World History: 1981 to 2006

1981

Howard Thurman, the theologian and mystic who influenced the creation of the non-violent Civil Rights Movement, transitions

1981

Mari Evans publishes *Nightstar*.

1981

Gayl Jones publishes *Song for Anninho*.

1982

Ben Ammi publishes *God, The Black Man and Truth*.

1982

Charles Fuller wins the Pulitzer Prize for “A Soldier’s Play.”

1982

Ntozake Shange publishes *Sassafras, Cypress, and Indigo*.

1982

August Wilson opens his play “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom;” it moves to Broadway to become his first Broadway play.

1983

Guion S. Bluford, Jr. is the first African American astronaut in space.



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1983

In a racially charged campaign, Harold Washington is elected the first African American mayor of Chicago.

1983

Gloria Naylor wins an American Book Award for *The Women of Brewster Place*.

1983

Alice Walker wins an American Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize for *The Color Purple*.

1983

President Shagari is re-elected in Nigeria.

1983

Another Nigerian coup occurs and Major-General Mohammadu Buhari seizes power.

1983

Ernest J. Gaines publishes *A Gathering of Old Men*.

1984

Numerous demonstrations take place throughout the United States to protest apartheid and to urge boycotts against South Africa.

1984

Wynton Marsalis becomes the first artist to win a Grammy award in both jazz and classical categories in the same year.



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1984

Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

1984

Amiri Baraka's *The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones* is published.

1984

Rev. Jesse Jackson makes a competitive run for the U.S. presidency.

1985

After another Nigerian coup, the new leader is Major-General Ibrahim Babangida.

1985

Russell Simmons founds Def Jam Records.

1985

The Apollo Theater, for 50 years Harlem's major showcases for African-American musical talent, reopens after a \$10 million, fifteen-month renovation.

1985

The movie *The Color Purple* is released; the film adaptation is protested by many prominent African Americans for negative representations of Black men and Black family life.

1985

Sonia Sanchez receives an American Book Award for *homegirls & handgrenades*..



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1986

James Brown, Ray Charles, and Fats Domino are among the first group of inductees into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

1986

Wole Soyinka is awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.

1986

Dr. Cheikh Anta Diop dies on February 7th.

1986

August Wilson's Broadway play *Fences* wins the Pulitzer Prize.

1986

Spike Lee releases his critically acclaimed independent film *She's Gotta Have It*.

1987

Surgeon Dr. Benjamin Carson is the first to successfully separate Siamese twins joined at the head.

1987

Frederick D. Gregory is the first person of African ancestry to command a space shuttle.



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1987

Rita Dove receives a Pulitzer Prize for her poetry collection *Thomas and Beulah*.

1987

Terry McMillann publishes *Mama*.

1987

Reginald Lewis buys Beatrice International Foods for just under \$1 billion on August 6th.

1988

Terry McMillan wins an American Book Award for her novel *Mama*.

1988

Toni Morrison receives a Pulitzer Prize for her novel *Beloved*.

1988

MTV premieres "Yo MTV Raps," a significant event in light of accusations of racism leveled at MTV by African world artists.

1988

Rev. Jesse Jackson again campaigns for the Democratic Party nomination for President of the United States.



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1989

Bill White becomes the president of Major League Baseball's National League.

1989

Huey P. Newton is murdered by a crack dealer.

1989

Ronald H. Brown is named Chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

1989

Sculptor Martin Puryear represents the US at the Sao Paulo Biennial in Brazil and wins first prize.

1990

F.W. de Klerk pledges to eliminate Apartheid and releases Nelson Mandela.

1990

Namibia becomes independent following a long struggle to end South African occupation.

1990

Charles Johnson receives a National Book Award for his novel *Middle Passage*.

1990

August Wilson wins a Pulitzer Prize for his play "*The Piano Lesson*."



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1990

George W. Carver and Percy Julian admitted into National Inventor's Hall of Fame.

1990

L. Douglas Wilder of Virginia becomes the first African American elected governor.

1990

"In Living Color," conceived and produced by Keenan Ivory Wayans, wins an Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series.

1991

The Persian Gulf War begins in January. Known as "Operation Desert Storm," the war lasts until the end of February. General Colin Powell, the first African American head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is the mastermind of the U.S. war effort.

1991

Natalie Cole's album "Unforgettable," featuring twenty-two songs by her late father, becomes a best-seller.

1992

After November elections, the Congressional Black Caucus grows to a record 40 members.

1992

Dr. Mae Jemison travels into space on the space shuttle Endeavor.



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1992

A racial rebellion sweeps across Los Angeles following the Rodney King case verdict.

1992

Derek Walcott is awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.

1992

Anthony T. Browder publishes *Nile Valley Contributions to Civilization*.

1992

Terry McMillan's *Waiting to Exhale* is published; it remains on the New York Times best-seller list for months.

1992

John Singleton is first African American nominated for an Academy Award for best director, and his film, *Boyz n The Hood*, is the first by a Black American to be nominated for best screenplay.

1993

Multi-party elections in Nigeria are annulled by Babangida, who later resigns.

1993

In Nigeria's seventh modern-age coup, General Sani Abacha assumes power.

1993

Toni Morrison wins the Nobel Prize for literature.



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1993

Arthur Ashe's autobiography *Days of Grace: A Memoir* is published.

1994

Llaila O. Afrika publishes *Nutricide: The Nutritional Destruction of the Black Race*.

1994

Nelson Mandela takes office as South Africa's first Black president.

1994

A plane crash kills leaders of both Burundi and Rwanda, unleashing ethnic killing.

1995

Over one million men gather in Washington D.C. for the Million Man March.

1996

Nigeria wins the Gold Medal in 1996 Olympic Football (Soccer).

1996

Entertainer Tupic Shakur is killed.

1997

Kofi Annan of Ghana becomes the seventh secretary-general of the United Nations.

1997

Tiger Woods wins The Masters, breaking several golf records in the process.



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1997

Laurent Kabila is declared president of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

1997

Rap Star Biggie Smalls is killed.

1997

The first made-in-Nigeria saloon car known as Z-600 is launched in Owerri.

1997

Over one million women gather in Philadelphia for the Million Woman March.

1997

Freedom Neruda and Christine Anyanwu win International Press Freedom Prize

1998

Five African nations compete in the Football World Cup.

1998

Sani Abacha in Nigeria is poisoned; he is replaced by Abdulsalam Abubakar.

1998

Thousands of Africans are killed or injured by Arab bomb attacks in Kenya and Tanzania.



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1999

Al-Hajj Malik Shabazz is the subject of a U.S. Post Office commemorative stamp.

1999

Michael Jordan retires from professional basketball.

1999

Nigeria celebrates its new democracy with presidential elections.

1999

Venus and Serena Williams win separate major professional tennis tournaments on the same day.

1999

Nigeria hosts FIFA World Youth Football championship.

1999

Nigeria's elected President, Olusegun Obasanjo, is sworn in on May 29th, ending 15 years of military rule.

2000

Ghana, Nigeria and four other nations sign an agreement to share a common currency within three years.

2000

Venus Williams wins Wimbledon.



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2001

Arab extremists use jet airplanes as terrorist weapons: they crash planes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a third plane crashes in Pennsylvania. Thousands of people are killed.

2002

Actors Denzel Washington and Halle Berry win the Academy Awards' "Best Actor" and "Best Actress" Oscars. Washington wins for the movie "Training Day," and Halle Berry wins for "Monster's Ball." Both movies are criticized by some for their negative portrayals of African Americans.

2003

Former U.S. Senator and Ambassador Carole Moseley Braun campaigns for the democratic nomination for the U.S. presidency; but she will drop out of the race a year later when she gets few votes during the early primaries.

In the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks of 2001, the United States goes to war in Iraq. Many of America's allies oppose the war.

2003

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell tells the United Nations Security Council that Saddam Hussein is an imminent threat to world and urges support for an attack on Iraq



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2003

The United States, Britain, Australia and Poland officially invade Iraq

2003

The Columbia Space Shuttle explodes on re-entry

2003

Liberia's autocratic president Charles Taylor forced to leave civil-war ravaged country

2003

The South African Government gives the families of more than 19,000 victims each \$3,900; the total is \$85 million.

2003

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo defeats his opponent Muhammadu Buhari

2003

President Bush announces U.S. victorious in war in Iraq.

2003

African leaders attempt to mediate the conflict in Zimbabwe

2003

The government of Maine passes legislation for universal health care for its citizens



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The Bush administration admits that its intelligence about weapons in Iraq was flawed

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Former treasury secretary, Paul O'Neill said that the Bush administration had been planning an attack against Iraq since the first days of Bush's presidency

2004

Secretary of Education Rod Paige, an African American, compared the National Education Association to a terrorist organization

2004

Former Counterterrorism Director Richard Clarke says that throughout 2001, Bush's inner circle failed to heed his warnings of an imminent attack by al-Qaeda

2004

On April Fool's Day, the Bush administration admitted that it failed to give the commission investigating the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks thousands of pages of national security papers from the Clinton administration.

2004

Condoleezza Rice tells the committee that President Bush was warned of suspicious activity by terrorists in the U.S. before the attacks

2004

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld apologized to Iraqis who endured torture by members of the U.S. military.



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New evidence introduced by documentary filmmakers into murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till prompts officials to reinvestigate the civil rights era case.

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Justice Department reopens the 1955 murder case of Emmett Till based on new findings by documentary filmmakers

2004

Life expectancy in Africa has dropped to under 40 years of age

2004

Bush says that he thinks the war on terror can not be won: "I don't think you can win it, but I think you can create conditions so that those who use terror are less acceptable in parts of the world."

2004

Kwesi Mfume resigns as head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

2004

President Bush nominates former New York City police commissioner Bernard Kerik to replace Tom Ridge; Kerik withdraws, citing the hiring of an undocumented worker. Kerik is currently (as of 2007) under investigation for a variety of illegal activities

2004

The Bill and Malinda Gates Foundation announces plans to donate more than \$42 million to fight malaria.



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2005

Countries from across the world aid Asia after the devastating tsunami hits

2005

President Bush is sworn in for a second term

2005

Hurricane Katrina wreaks catastrophic damage on the Gulf coast; more than 1,000 die and millions are left homeless. Americans are shaken not simply by the magnitude of the disaster but by how ill-prepared all levels of government are in its aftermath

2005

Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, I. Stuart Libby, is indicted with obstruction of justice and perjury in connection with a White House leak investigation

2005

It is revealed that in 2002 President Bush signed a presidential order to allow the National Security Agency to spy on Americans suspected of being connected to terrorist activity without warrants.

2005

Condoleezza Rice is confirmed as secretary of state. She's the first African American woman to hold the position



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2005

A report from a bipartisan group of state legislators labels No Child Left Behind Act as unconstitutional and says its requirements block school-improvement programs

2005

Zimbabwe President Mugabe commences “Operation Restore Order,” a program of bulldozing of shacks, workshops, and market stalls throughout Zimbabwe

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2005

The United States Senate apologizes for not enacting anti-lynching legislation

2005

A California jury finds Michael Jackson innocent of child molestation charges

2005

Suffering from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, and both the lack of support and bungling of support offered from the federal government the storm ravaged city of New Orleans slides toward chaos



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~~2006~~

~~The House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate extend the~~

2006

Citing confidentiality, the Bush administration refuses to turn over documents concerning its inept response to Hurricane Katrina

2006

Vice President accidentally shoots a friend in the face with buckshot during a hunting accident—Cheney is not charged with breaking any law

2006

The Republican controlled House of Representatives issues “A Failure of Initiative,” a 520 page report which says the handling of the Hurricane Katrina disaster was inept at every level of government

2006

African American Ray Nagin is re-elected as Mayor of New Orleans

2006

Sadam Hussein, the President of Iraq, is found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by hanging

