


We truly appreciate everyone's involvement.
This War on Oppression will only be won as one mass
movement.

- **Spotlight - by DonnaMarie Woodson**
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Our Mission Statement

The continual unification of as many organizations as possible, starting at the local level and branching out to both the state of North Carolina and then the entire nation.

Spotlight

Women's History Month 2023



By
DonnaMarie Woodson

Every year, March is designated Women's History Month by Presidential Proclamation. The month is set aside to honor women's contributions in American history.



Did You Know?
Women's History Month
started as Women's
History Week . . .

Women's History Month
began as a local
celebration in Santa Rosa,

California. The Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women planned and executed a “Women's History Week” celebration in 1978. The organizers (Women's History Activists Molly Murphy MacGregor, Mary Ruthsdotter, Maria Cuevas, Paula Hammett and Bette Morgan) selected the week of March 8 to correspond with International Women's Day. The movement spread across the country as other communities initiated their own Women's History Week celebrations the following year.

In 1980, a consortium of women's groups and historians—led by the National Women's History Project (now the National Women's History Alliance)—successfully lobbied for national recognition.

In February 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th, 1980, as National Women's History Week.



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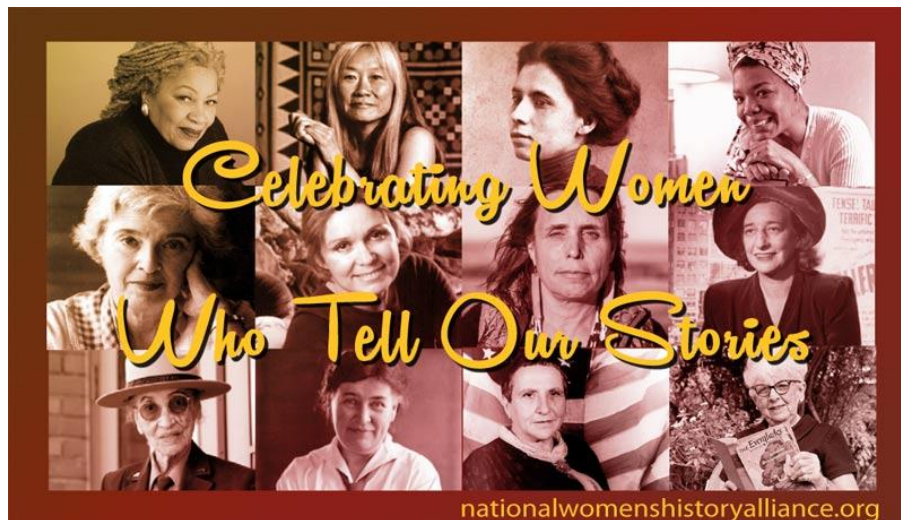
From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this nation. Too often the women were unsung and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well.

*President Jimmy Carter's Message designating
March 2-8, 1980 as National Women's History Week*

Today, the National Women's History Alliance is known nationally as the only clearinghouse providing information and training in multicultural women's history for educators, community organizations, and parents-for anyone wanting to expand their understanding of the historic contributions of women.

**The 2023 National Women's History Theme
“Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories”**

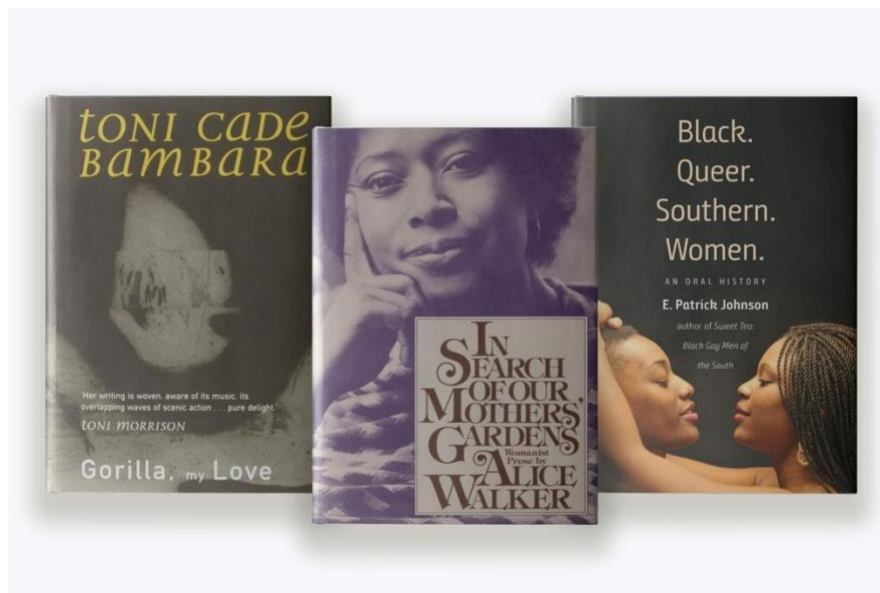
The National Women's History Alliance, which spearheaded the movement for March being declared National Women's History Month, has announced the women's history theme for 2023, “Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories.”



Top: Toni Morrison, Maxine Hong Kingston, Jovita Idar, Maya Angelou

Middle: Gerda Lerner, Gloria Steinem, Winona La Duke, Lillian Hellman

Bottom: Betty Soskin, Willa Cather, Gertrude Stein, Marjory Stoneman Douglas



From the earliest storytellers through pioneering journalists, our experiences have been captured by a wide variety of artists and teachers. These include authors, songwriters,

scholars, playwrights, performers, and grandmothers throughout time. Women have long been instrumental in passing on our heritage in word and in print to communicate the lessons of those who came before us. Women's stories, and the larger human story, expand our understanding and strengthen our connections with each other.

Today and over the years ahead, The National Women's History Alliance's dedication and shared desire to give voice to the voiceless are critical to keeping us informed, entertained and aware.



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Editorial

The Weaponization of the Word “Wokeness”

By
Tarik Kiley

2/26/2023

What is “wokeness?” In a generally political sense, it is being concerned and being aware of social justice issues, racism, discrimination, and inequality. It particularly considers these social



issues as problems that need to be remedied. The term “woke” has also been associated with African American

vernacular English. For example, one should stay “woke” when fighting police brutality and racial injustice.

Unfortunately, the word “woke” has also been weaponized by the far right in American politics. The far right suggests that being “woke” is existing in a state of liberal indoctrination.

One of the major proponents of seeing “wokeness” as liberal indoctrination is Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida. He has even gone so far as to codify anti-wokeness into law. According to the



palmbeachpost.com, “The Stop the Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (Stop WOKE) Act [from] Gov. Ron DeSantis...empowers citizens to go after “woke indoctrination.” The bill blunts what he has warned is liberal ideology influencing the teaching of

history in schools and coursing through corporate diversity training. Stop WOKE prohibits any teaching that could make students feel they bear personal responsibility for historic wrongs because of their race, color, sex or national origin, and blocks businesses from using diversity practices or training that could make employees feel guilty for similar reasons.”

Still, guilt is a subjective term, and if anyone feels guilty about their history, perhaps their history should not be repeated. If you feel guilty about historic racism, then perhaps that racism was wrong, and you should feel guilty about it, so that you as a person of the next generation doesn’t commit the same atrocities?

It seems as if DeSantis has used the legislative process to deny the teaching of actual history, and facts about racism, so that no one feels “guilty” about it. This shows how far the right in the Republican Party has truly shifted. They don’t even want to feel guilty about something as wrong as racism throughout history.



So, now the far right uses the term, “woke” as an insult. They use the term to speak about people they consider to be “liberals” in a derogatory manner. They see wokeness, particularly, as an attack on free speech. It is often used to defend far right conservatives

who say racially and culturally insensitive things. According to the palmbeachpost.com, “‘Woke’ also [is] tied in conservative media to the phrase “cancel culture,” as public figures who [have] said insensitive or racial things (not woke, in other words) [have] faced a backlash and occasionally loss of income or influence because of it, something conservative commentators [have] considered a violation of First Amendment rights and an infringement of their personal freedoms.” It is clear here that the far right wants to practice racism without suffering any consequences for practicing racism. So, the far right has twisted and weaponized the word “woke” to mean people who cannot or will not tolerate differing viewpoints.

The use of the word “wokeness,” as an insult by the far right, is part of the next generation of words being used to excuse racism and social injustice. Before, “wokeness,” there was the idea of “political correctness,” used in the sense that far right conservatives couldn’t speak certain words because they were, “politically incorrect”—somehow offensive to the political left wing.

This word of words is also about power. Calling people with liberal values, “woke” is a way to discredit them, and is also a way to not have to be faced with the idea of sharing power. If people who are “woke” have legitimate concerns about racism and social injustice, then the far right will be forced to face this head on and acknowledge that they need to share power and change some of their political philosophies and values.

"The word “woke” has moved from its rhetorical roots in the Black community to become weaponized today to pass legislation undoing much of the social justice progress benefitting marginalized populations."



Still, it is important for all Americans to be conscious of how certain words are used. For example, the far right throws around the word, “Socialism,” when any public policy that benefits working people is suggested or adopted. While history has proven that socialism doesn’t work in practice, every idea that benefits ordinary people, such as access to affordable healthcare, housing, education, living wages and childcare, is not necessary being proposed by some socialist bogeyman. Some policies simply help other people and are motivated by compassion.

When it comes to the use of words, particularly when used in a derogatory manner, it is important to not only understand the definition(s) of the word(s) being used, but also to understand how the term(s) are being used to discredit a whole group of people. If you label a whole group of people, in this case, as “woke,” then you

can short circuit their arguments, and not actually have to address them in any reasonable manner. When you don't have to address someone's argument, then you are putting yourself in a position where you don't have to consider or change your own behavior.

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Announcements



Democrats of North Mecklenburg:

Monthly Meeting

Thursday, March 3rd at 6:30 PM via Zoom

Democratic Women of North Mecklenburg County

March Membership Meeting

Wednesday. March 8th

Caldwell Presbyterian Church

6:30 pm – Meet and Great

7:00pm Program

N. Meck Progressives

Monthly Meeting, Monday, March 13th

6:30 pm

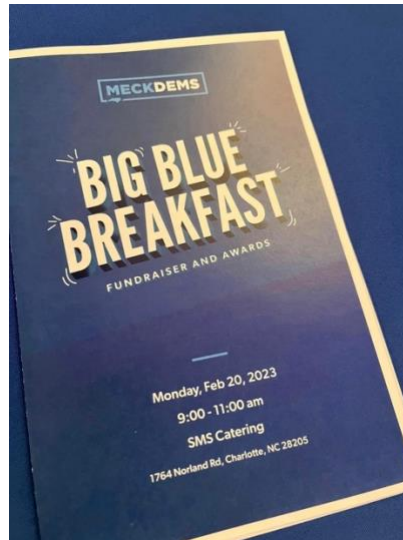
Speaker - Lori Downey

Red Wine and Blue



**Please submit your group events to donnamarie93@gmail.com
by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the Announcements.**

Happenings Gallery



The Executive Corner:

**Rev Rodney Sadler, Joel Segal, DonnaMarie Woodson
Rev Glencie Rhedrick**

Coalition of United Progressives-CharMeck Chronicle

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