

Episode 7: Robert Guthrie and the Search for Psychology's Hidden Figures

5 Minute History Lesson

Teacher's Guide

The Cumming Center's 5 Minute History Lessons (5MHL) are a series of short films about interesting people and stories from the psychology's history. The 5MHL's use archival documents, photographs, sound recordings, and films housed in the Archives of the History of American Psychology to tell the stories of individual psychologists and psychological research.

The 5MHL Scavenger Hunt activities are meant to be used by instructors to provide a broad understanding of a variety of topics. Scavenger hunts can be done in class (face-to-face or virtual) or assigned as homework projects.

Instructors can determine the depth of the project and should allow 30-45 minutes. The scavenger hunts can simply be completed by students, or they can serve as a jumping off point for more in-depth class discussions. Suggested discussion points are included.

Instructions and answer sheets are found for *Episode 7: Robert Guthrie and the Search for Psychology's Hidden Figures* on the following pages.

Episode 7: Robert Guthrie and the Search for Psychology's Hidden Figures

5 Minute History Lesson

Level: high school students, undergraduate college students

Time: 30-45 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this activity students will:

1. have a general understanding of the life and work of Robert Guthrie
2. students will observe that cultural bias has caused underrepresented and marginalized groups to be excluded from the historical record of psychology specifically and American history broadly
3. have a basic understanding of how archival materials can be used to tell a story

BEFORE the 5 Minute History Lesson (5MHL) [5 minutes]:

Ask your students what they already know about the Robert Guthrie. Make note of their responses for later discussion.

DURING the 5 Minute History Lesson [15-25 minutes]

Link: <https://youtu.be/HFIfv8pFEqk>

Students should watch the Robert Guthrie 5MHL without taking notes. Students should watch the Robert Guthrie 5MHL a second time and simultaneously complete the scavenger hunt.

AFTER the 5 Minute History Lesson [15 minutes]

Initiate a discussion using the following questions or ask your students to answer them in short answer form:

KNOW What is something you learned from the video that you did not know previously? Why does this stand out to you as interesting?

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DO/APPLY a SKILL Robert Guthrie took an undergraduate history of psychology course with Joseph Awkard. According to the video Awkard, "...decried psychology's obsession with studying the differences in people..." and noted the science was used "...to reinforce racial prejudice." How might *confirmation bias* apply to what Awkard is saying here?

FEEL/UNDERSTAND In considering many of his own professors Guthrie noted these Black psychologists were "little known and not very formally educated. They didn't have PhD degrees. They couldn't." Consider the lack of opportunities in the field of psychology without a doctoral degree. How would this have impacted the career paths of early Black psychologists?

1: The book for which Robert Guthrie is most well-known was divided into two sections. What was the title of the book and what did the two sections cover?

Answer: "Even the Rat Was White: A Historical View of Psychology" (1976). Part I – a history of scientific racism and psychology's role in the reinforcement of white supremacy and Part II – biographical accounts of 20 Black psychologists who received their doctoral degrees before 1946.

2. In 1920 Francis Cecil Sumner became the first African American to receive a PhD in psychology. How many doctoral degrees did American universities grant between 1876-1920? How many of those degree recipients were African American?

A. 10,000 doctoral degrees; 11 Black PhDs

3. What did psychologist Martin David Jenkins' research show?

A. The range of IQ scores for Blacks and whites was comparable.

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4. What did Mamie Phipps Clark's research illustrate? Why was this research so important?

A. Clark's doll studies illustrated, "the negative affect of segregation on the self-esteem of Black children." The studies were cited in the Supreme Court case Brown v Board (1954) that ended segregation in the US.

5. When was the Association of Black Psychologists founded?

A. 1968