



SHIRLEY CHISHOLM

1924 - 2005

Shirley Chisholm was born in Brooklyn to two immigrant parents and the oldest of four sisters. She went to an all-girls high school and graduated cum laude from Brooklyn College in 1946. She was skilled in debate and many of her teachers encouraged her to go into politics, but she said she faced a double handicap being both a woman and black



FRANCES PERKINS

1880 – 1965

Frances Perkins was born and raised in Massachusetts. She Graduated from Worcester Classical High School with a mostly male class. She later graduated from Mount Holyoke College, as president of the class of 1902. She taught physics and biology for several years in Illinois where she then became involved in the social settlement movement which got her interested in social reform. She moved to New York City in 1907 and earned a master's degree in sociology and economics from Columbia University. When her husband lost his inheritance she left her volunteer work and worked to support her husband and children.



BESSIE A. BUCHANAN

1902 – 1980

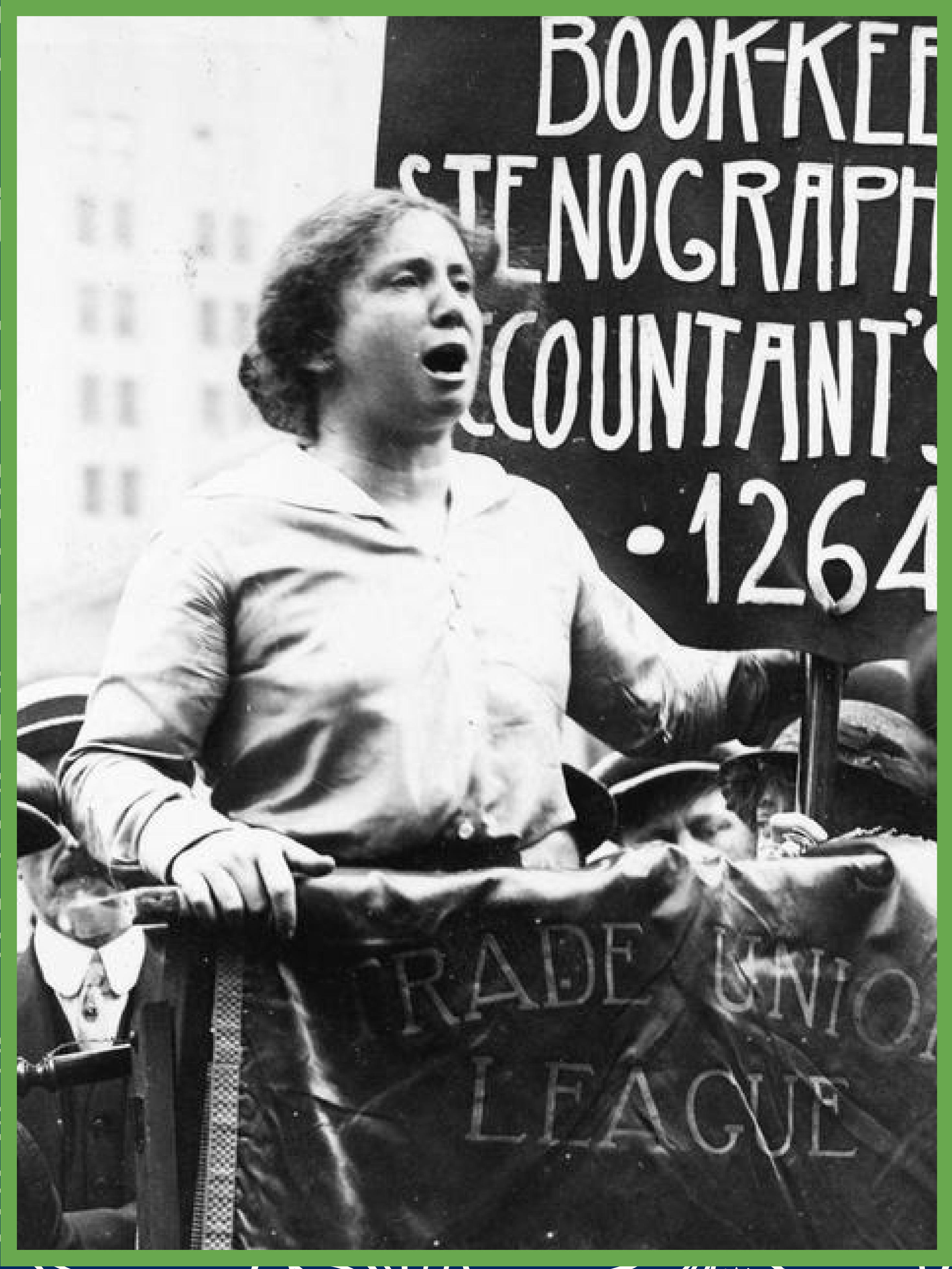
Bessie A. Buchanan was raised in New York City with her five sisters and one brother. From a young age, she had an interest in singing and dancing. When she was 19, she appeared in the original *Shuffle Along*, the first successful musical comedy with an all-African American cast. As she got older, she frequently went to and performed at popular Harlem nightclubs. She met her husband Charlie Buchanan at the Savoy Club while she was working as a dancer and got married in 1929. She was also an active participant in the Women's Civic Club in Harlem, which was an informal social organization that worked on community projects.



CONSTANCE BAKER MOTLEY

1921 – 2005

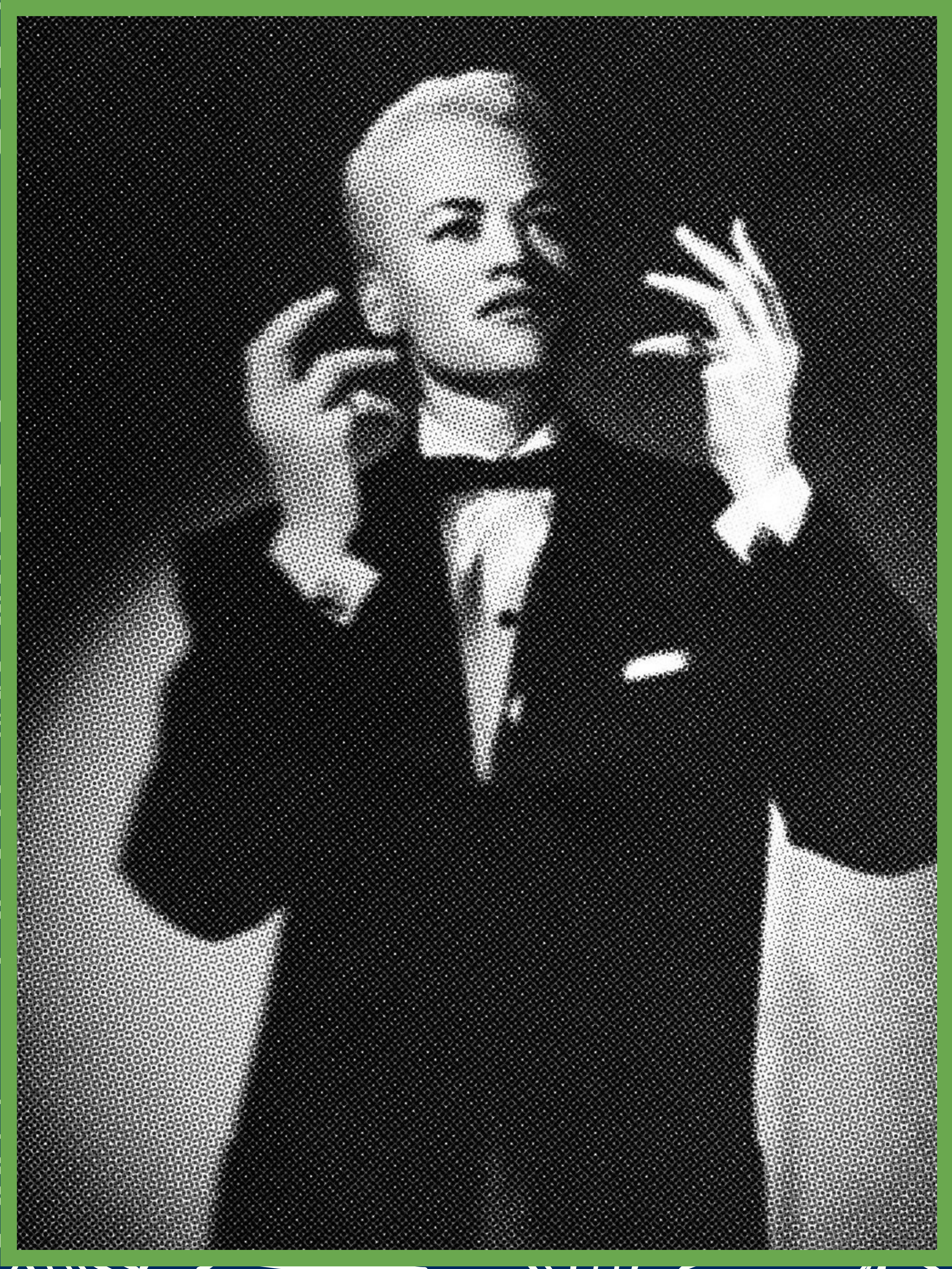
Constance Baker Motley was the ninth of twelve children. She was born to immigrant parents from Nevis, a Caribbean Island. When she was 15 years old, she read James Weldon Johnson and W.E.B. DuBois, which inspired her interest in Black history. During her time in high school, she was president of the New Haven Negro Youth Council. She began her higher education at Fisk University, a historically Black college in Tennessee. She continued her education at New York University, earning her bachelor's degree in 1943. She then earned her Juris Doctor degree in 1946 from Columbia Law School.



ROSE SCHEINDERMAN

1882 - 1972

Rose Schneiderman was born to a religious Jewish family in Poland. In 1890 the family migrated to New York City's Lower East Side. After her father died in 1892, her family was in extreme poverty. In order to help support her family, she left school after 6th grade and began working as a cashier in a department store and a lining stitcher in a cap factory. In 1902, her and her family briefly moved to Montreal where she developed an interest in both radical politics and trade unionism.



STORMÉ DELARVERIE

1920 – 2014

Stormé deLarverie was born to a White father and a Black mother. She was never given a birth certificate, so she was never fully sure of her actual birthdate. Growing up, she encountered a lot of bullying from her peers. When she was a teenager, she rode jumping horses with the Ringling Brothers Circus but stopped after she injured herself falling off a horse. She came out as a lesbian when in 1938 when she was 18 years old. Later in life, she lived with her partner Diana until her death in the 1970s.

According to her friend, after Diana's death, deLaverie carried an image of her everywhere she went.



ANTONIA PANTOJA

1922 - 2002

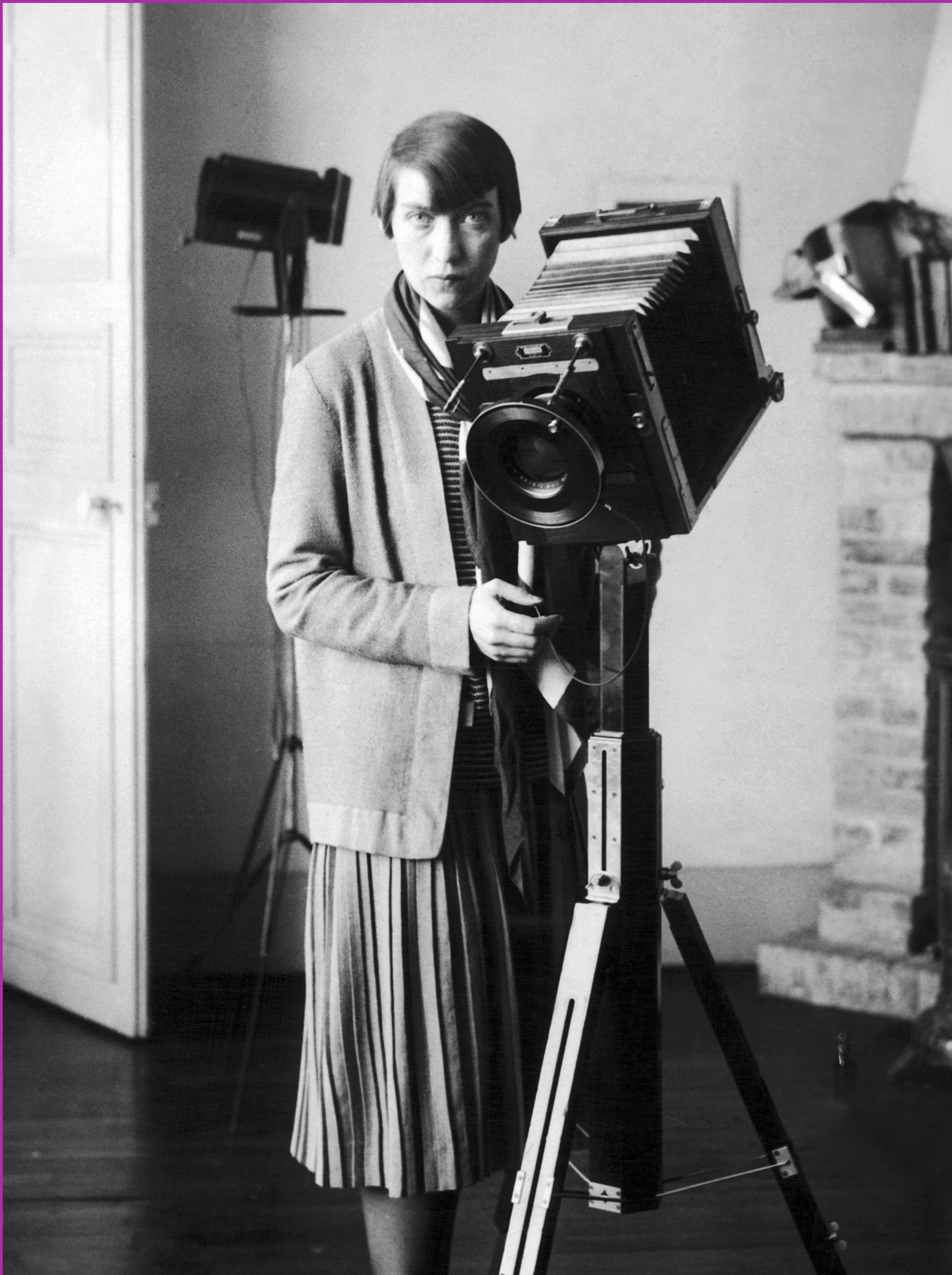
Antonia Pantoja was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico where she attended primary and secondary school. With the financial help of her neighbor, she attended the University of Puerto Rico where she earned her teacher's certificate in 1942. After graduating, she moved to New York City. When she first arrived she worked as a welder in a factory. After earning a scholarship, she graduated from Hunter College with a bachelor's degree in sociology in 1952. Afterwards, she attended Columbia University School of Social Work and earned her master's degree in 1954.



HESTER C. JEFFREY

1842 - 1934

Hester C. Jeffrey was born to free African American parents in Virginia. She was able to be educated in Virginia. While she was a teenager, she was considered an accomplished musician. In 1860, she moved to Boston with her brother to live with her uncle. Five years later, she married her husband Jerome Jeffrey. Because Jerome Jeffrey's father was an activist in Rochester, she moved there with her husband in 1891.



BERENICE ABBOTT

1898 – 1991

Berenice Abbott was born in Ohio and was raised by her divorced mother. She went to Ohio State University for two semesters but left early when her professor was fired because he was a German teaching an English class. After leaving, she moved to New York City where she studied painting and sculpture. In 1921, she moved to Paris in order to study sculpture with Emile Bourdelle, a French sculptor and teacher. She then became an assistant to Man Ray, an influential photographer. He hired her because he wanted an assistant who had no prior experience with photography. During her time working for Ray, Abbott took portraits of other artists and fell in love with photography.



ETHEL WATERS

1896 - 1977

Ethel Waters was born in Pennsylvania as a result of the rape of her teenage African-American mother. She was raised by her grandmother in poverty who worked as a housemaid. During her childhood, she moved around a lot; she never stayed in the same place for more than 15 months. She explained that she never really felt loved by her family. Waters was married at the age of just 13, but she soon left her husband after abuse. After singing at a party when she was 17, she was invited to work at the Lincoln Theatre in Baltimore. Clearly, Waters had a very difficult childhood, but was able to bounce back and become extremely successful.



FANNY BRICE

1891 – 1951

Fanny Brice was born in Manhattan to a Jewish immigrant mother and an Alsatian immigrant father. In 1908, Brice dropped out of school to work in a burlesque revue. Brice had three husbands throughout her life. Brice got married to her first husband, a local barber, in her teens, but was divorced just three years later. Next, she married a professional gambler who was in prison for many years after being convicted of bond theft. Later, she married a stage producer, but was divorced again in 1938.



JUDITH JAMISON

1943 -

Judith Jamison was born and raised in Philadelphia. When she was very young, she was taught to play the violin and the piano by her father. She began her dance training at the Judimar School of Dance when she was just six years old. Her first classes were in classical ballet and modern dance. When she turned eight, she began pointe, tap, and acrobatics classes. She graduated from Judimar School of Dance at the age of 17. Shortly after, she began her high education at Fisk University. After three semesters she transferred to Philadelphia Dance Academy (now University of the Arts) to expand her dance training.



ELIZABETH BLACKWELL

1821 – 1910

Elizabeth Blackwell was born in England. Growing up, she was well educated by private tutors in England until her family moved to New York in 1832. After her father's death, her family lived in poverty, which prompted her and her sister to open a private school to make a living. After being rejected from many medical schools, she was accepted at Geneva Medical College. Townspeople and much of the male student body harassed her during her time there because she was a woman; she was at first even prohibited from attending classroom demonstrations.



MARY SHANLEY

1896 - 1989

Mary Shanely was born to an Irish-American family in Manhattan. Her family was poor but was able to make do with what they had. She was described as an amazing storyteller and a lot of fun by her great-nephew. She was recently portrayed by Rachel McPhee in a one-woman show called "Dead Shot Mary". The show depicts the highlights of Shanely's life and career.



BRENDA BERKMAN

1951 -

Brenda Berkman was born in Minneapolis. From a young age, she became aware of sexism in her everyday life; her little league application was denied solely because she was a girl. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from St. Olaf College, her M.A. from Indiana University, and her J.D. from New York University Law School. She later went on to earn her M.S. in fire protection management from City University of New York.



ISABELLA GOODWIN

1865 - 1943

Isabella Goodwin was born in Manhattan to parents that owned a restaurant on Canal street. It is reported that when she was young, she wanted to become an opera singer. At the age of 19, she married a police officer. She had six children with him, but only four ultimately survived. Furthermore, she became a widow at the age of just 30. Clearly, she encountered great hardship in her personal life, but was impressively able to make history in her professional life.