



February 12, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Further information regarding historic significance of buildings within proposed historic district south of Union Square –70 Fifth Avenue, headquarters of the NAACP, *The Crisis Magazine*, Du Bois & Dill Publishing, and 80 Fifth Avenue, headquarters of the National Gay Task Force

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Dear Chair Carroll,

I write to share with you further information regarding the extraordinary significance of 70 and 80 Fifth Avenue, two buildings in [our proposed historic district south of Union Square](#), in this case specifically relating to the African American and LGBT civil rights movements. As you know from [prior information](#) we have submitted, this area holds a remarkable place in the history of New York and the nation in relation to progressive and transformative social and political movements, the publishing industry, and the arts. No. 70 Fifth Avenue housed the headquarters of the oldest and largest national African-American civil rights organization, the NAACP; *The Crisis Magazine*, the oldest black-oriented magazine in the world and a vital voice of the civil rights movement for a century which showcased remarkable writing and art; and W.E.B. DuBois and Augustus Granville Dill's publishing house, which printed *The Brownies' Book*, the very first magazine published for African American children, and Elizabeth Ross Hayne's *Unsung Heroes*. Just a block to the north, No. 80 Fifth Avenue housed the very first national LGBT civil rights organization, the National Gay Task Force (now the National LGBTQ Task Force), which fought groundbreaking battles and scored decisive national victories for a civil rights movement still in its early stages and facing incredible challenges.

These organizations were located here at critical, seminal moments in their history, when their agendas were highly controversial and faced widespread opposition, and yet they accomplished extraordinary changes and undertook groundbreaking campaigns which affected the lives of millions and altered the course of history in our country. Their location here, mere feet from one another and from the headquarters of the leading [women's suffrage organization in New York](#) in the late 19th century, was no coincidence; beginning in



80 Fifth Avenue (foreground right) and 70 Fifth Avenue (background left), 1923, via NYPL. The New York City Woman Suffrage League Headquarters at 10 East 14th Street is just out of view to the left.

Location of buildings within proposed historic district south of Union Square





70 Fifth Avenue ca. 1940, via NYC DOF.

the 19th and throughout the 20th centuries, this area south of Union Square was an unparalleled center of progressive political organizing, as well as publishing, media, commerce, and the arts, which drew these kinds of organizations. These two entities left a lasting imprint upon our city and our nation, and their work remains as relevant today as it was in the prior century.

70 Fifth Avenue, aka 2-6 West 13th Street – Headquarters of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) *The Crisis* Magazine, and DuBois and Dill Publishing – This striking 12-story Beaux Arts style office building was constructed in 1912 by architect Charles Alonzo Rich for publisher and philanthropist George A. Plimpton. Other than minor ground floor alterations, the building is almost entirely intact to its original century-old design. Upon that basis alone, it is arguably worthy of inclusion in a historic district or landmark designation.

However, the building's significance is greatly enhanced by having served as the headquarters of the NAACP (founded Feb. 12, 1909) and *The Crisis* Magazine from 1914 until the mid-1920s, when they moved up the block to the no-longer-extant 69 Fifth Avenue (some evidence suggests [as early as 1923](#), while other evidence indicates [as late as 1926](#) – see also [here](#)), and DuBois & Dill Publishing, which published the first magazine for African American youth. This was a time of extraordinary growth, accomplishment, and challenges for both the NAACP and its affiliated *The Crisis* magazine, funded and edited by W.E.B. DuBois. Both were focused on the epidemic of lynchings of African-Americans and race-based violence taking place at the time, discrimination in voting, housing, and employment faced by African-Americans, and the proliferation of demeaning, derogatory, and dehumanizing representations of African Americans in media such as *The Birth of A Nation*. At the same time their tenancy here coincided with and reflected a flowering of black culture with the Harlem Renaissance, and growing African American aspirations for greater freedom and opportunity emanating in part from participation in World War I and the principles of democracy and self-determination which were the premise for the United States' joining the conflict, and the Great Migration which began at this time and saw more African Americans living in the North, Midwest, and West, where they encountered both new opportunities and new obstacles.

NAACP Headquarters – The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded in 1909 as a bi-racial social justice organization seeking to end bias and discrimination against African Americans and ensure their



W.E.B. DuBois in 1918.

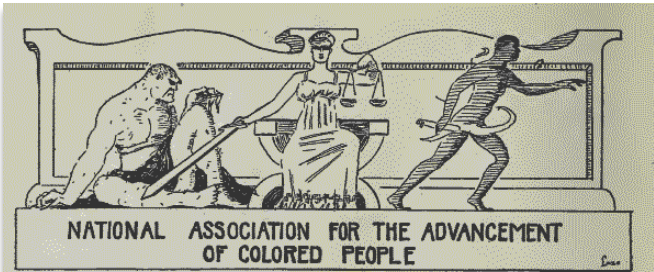
equality of opportunity in the United States. Founded by Dr. Henry Moskowitz, Mary White Ovington, William English Walling, Bishop Alexander Walters, Rev. William Henry Brooks, W.E.B. DuBois, and Ida B. Wells, among others, the new organization's first public meeting was

held a few blocks away at the Great Hall of Cooper Union. DuBois was named the organization's Director of Publicity and Research, and founded what would be the official organ of the NAACP, *The Crisis* magazine. During this time, the status of civil rights for African Americans was arguably deteriorating in many ways in the United States; lynchings were commonplace and occurred with impunity; states were introducing legislation to ban interracial marriages; and in his first year in office (1913), President Woodrow Wilson officially introduced segregation into federal government agencies, establishing separate workplaces, bathrooms, and lunchrooms for blacks and whites.

It was into this challenging environment that the NAACP emerged when it established its headquarters here at 70 Fifth Avenue in 1914. While other national organizations had been established to advance civil rights for African Americans, none lasted more than a few years, and none had the broad and growing institutional support the NAACP attracted. Having grown rapidly in just five years to have twenty-four branches and three thousand members, the organization was in need of more space, which brought them to 70 Fifth Avenue, a newly-constructed commercial building at 13th Street

just below Union Square. Among the organization's first campaigns while at 70 Fifth Avenue was to challenge the newly-instituted segregation within the federal government with a highly-publicized "Open Letter to President Wilson." At this time the NAACP also succeeded in securing the repeal of an American Bar Association resolution barring the admission of black lawyers, and in the opening of the women's suffrage parade in Washington D.C. to black marchers.

In 1915, their second year at 70 Fifth Avenue, the NAACP launched its campaign against D. W. Griffith's film *The Birth of A Nation*, which opened February 8 of that year, arguing that it distorted history and slandered the entire black race. The wildly successful film was credited with the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan and an increase in violence against African



TO THE PRESIDENT.

New York, August 15, 1913.

TO WOODROW WILSON, President of the United States.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, through its board of directors, respectfully protests against the policy of your administration in segregating the colored employees in the departments at Washington. It realizes that this new and radical departure has been recommended, and is now being defended, on the ground that by giving certain bureaus or sections wholly to colored employees they are thereby rendered safer in possession of their offices and are less likely to be ousted or discriminated against. We believe this reasoning to be fallacious. It is based on a failure to appreciate the deeper significance of the new policy; to understand how far reaching the effects of such a drawing of caste lines by the Federal government may be, and how humiliating it is to the men thus stigmatized.

Never before has the Federal government discriminated against its civilian employees on the ground of color. Every such act heretofore has been that of an individual State. The very presence of the Capitol and of the Federal flag has drawn colored people to the District of Columbia in the belief that living there under the shadow of the national government itself they were safe from the persecution and discrimination which follow them elsewhere, because of their dark skins. To-day they learn that, though their ancestors have fought in every war in behalf of the United States, in the

fiftieth year after Gettysburg and emancipation, this government, founded on the theory of complete equality and freedom for all citizens, has established two classes among its civilian employees. It has set the colored apart as if mere contact with them were contamination. The efficiency of their labor, the principles of scientific management are disregarded, the possibilities of promotion, if not now, will soon be severely limited. To them is held out only the prospect of mere subordinate routine service without the stimulus of advancement to high office by merit, a right deemed inviolable for all white natives as for the children of the foreign born, of Italians, French and Russians, Jews and Christians who are now entering the government service. For to such limitation this segregation will inevitably lead. Who took the trouble to ascertain what our colored clerks thought about this order, to which their consent was never asked? Behind screens and closed doors they now sit apart as though leprous. Men and women alike have the badge of inferiority pressed upon them by government decree. How long will it be before the hateful epithets of "Nigger" and "Jim Crow" are openly applied to these sections? Let any one experienced in Washington affairs or any trained newspaper correspondent answer. The colored people themselves will tell you how soon sensitive and high-minded members of their race will refuse to enter the government service which thus decrees what is to them the most hateful kind of discrimination. Indeed, there is a widespread belief among them that this is the very purpose of these unvarnished orders. And wherever there





The 1917 Silent March on Fifth Avenue.

Americans; its prominence was raised by being shown at the White House by President Woodrow Wilson, the first such showing ever in the presidential residence. That same year the NAACP participated for the first time in litigation to advance its agenda – the beginning of a long and storied history of the NAACP changing the national landscape through the courts, which of course included the landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* Supreme Court

decision, ending legal segregation and the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ in this country. The NAACP’s founding President (1909-1929) Moorefield Storey successfully argued the case of *Guinn vs. U.S.* before the Supreme Court, striking down a ‘grandfather clause’ in the Oklahoma Constitution which effectively barred most black men from voting by limiting the franchise to literate men or those whose ancestors were eligible to vote before January 1, 1866. The NAACP also filed an amicus curiae brief in the case.

In 1916, the NAACP responded to the mutilation, burning, and lynching of an illiterate seventeen year old black farmhand in Waco, Texas accused of raping and murdering a white woman. Labeled “The Waco Horror” by the NAACP, the organization sent an investigator to Texas whose report, including pictures of the horrifying act, was published in *The Crisis* and distributed not only to the magazine’s 42,000 subscribers, but 700 white newspapers, members of congress, and affluent New Yorkers in an effort to gain support for the NAACP’s newly established anti-lynching fund. The NAACP’s anti-lynching organizing brought national attention to the oft-overlooked crime, and mobilized political and business leaders in both the north and south to speak out against this de facto state-sanctioned domestic terrorism.

In 1917, following the brutal East St. Louis race riots in which between forty and two hundred fifty African Americans were killed, thousands were made homeless from the burning of their homes, and thousands eventually left the city, the NAACP organized a silent protest down Fifth Avenue of

THE SHAME OF AMERICA

Do you know that the United States is the Only Land on Earth where human beings are BURNED AT THE STAKE?

In Four Years, 1918-1921, Twenty-Eight People Were Publicly BURNED BY AMERICAN MOBS

3436 People Lynched 1889 to 1922

For What Crimes Have Mobs Nullified Government and Inflicted the Death Penalty?

The Alleged Crime	The Victim	Why Have Men Victims Died?
Murder.....	1388	Not having set of mind for white but to save
Crime against the Person.....	213	Being a relative of a person who was lynched
Crime against Property.....	402	Jealousy or other motive
Miscellaneous Crimes.....	402	Being a member of the Non-Partisan League
Summit of Crime.....	176	"Taking back" to a white man
	2486	"Sounding" white man.

Is Rape the "Cause" of Lynching?

OF 4,000 people lynched in this country, only 271, or less than 7 per cent, were even accused of the crime of rape.

83 WOMEN HAVE BEEN LYNCHED IN THE UNITED STATES

Do lynchings outside that they were treated for "the most other"?

AND THE LYNCHERS GO UNPUNISHED

THE REMEDY

The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill Is Now Before the United States Senate

<p>The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill was passed on January 20, 1922, by a vote of 220 to 153 in the House of Representatives</p> <p>The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill Provides:</p> <p>That relative state officers and activities shall be held in Federal Court as follows of those states to act, and that a county in which a lynching occurs shall be fined \$10,000, recoverable in a Federal Court.</p> <p>The Principal Objections Raised against the Bill in open the Grand of Constitutional:</p> <p>The Constitutionality of the Dyer Bill Has Been Affirmed by—</p> <p>The Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives</p> <p>The Judiciary Committee of the Senate</p> <p>The United States Attorney General, legal adviser of Congress</p> <p>Judge Guy B. Cook, of the Department of Justice</p>	<p>The House has been petitioned to pass the Dyer Bill by—</p> <p>25 Lawyers and Judges, including two former Attorneys General of the United States</p> <p>10 State Supreme Court Justices</p> <p>10 State Comptrollers</p> <p>2 Ambassadors, 20 Bishops and prominent clergymen</p> <p>2 Members of Congress, north and south</p> <p>The American Bar Association at its meeting in San Francisco August 3, 1921, adopted a resolution asking for further legislation by Congress to punish and prevent lynching and such violence.</p> <p>Thirty State Commissions of 1921-22 of these Commissions have consented to their party platform a demand for national action to stamp out lynching.</p> <p>The Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill is now intended to operate the public, but to secure to every person accused of crime that by due process of law.</p>
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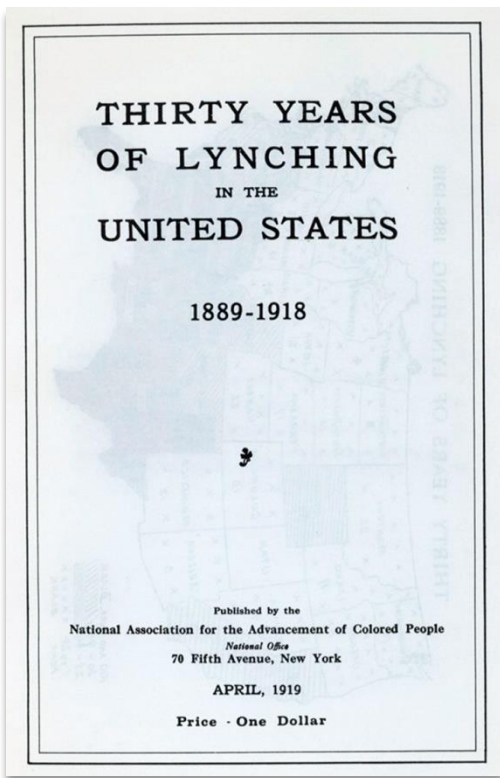
THE DYER ANTI-LYNCHING BILL IS NOW BEFORE THE SENATE TELEGRAPH YOUR SENATORS TODAY YOU WANT IT ENACTED

If you want to help the organization which has brought us rights the nation should include, the organization which is fighting for 100 per cent. Americanism, see for names of the people some of the time, but for all of the people, white or black, all of the time.

Send your check to J. E. SPENCER, Treasurer of the

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
35 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR IN PART BY THE ANTI-LYNCHING CRUSADERS.



nearly 10,000 African American men, women, and children. They marched to only the sound of muffled drums, carrying signs with messages such as “Thou Shalt Not Kill,” “Make America safe for democracy” and “We march because we want our children to live in a better land.” This was the [first protest of its kind in New York City, and only the second instance of African Americans publicly demonstrating for civil rights](#) (the NAACP’s protests against *Birth of A Nation* and the Silent March, organized from their headquarters at 70 Fifth Avenue, were arguably the first large public demonstrations for African American civil rights in the country). That same year the NAACP succeeded in getting the Supreme Court to rule that ordinances restricting where African Americans could live, as had been passed in an increasing number of localities including Baltimore and Louisville, were unconstitutional violations of the 14th Amendment, and won the battle to allow African Americans to be commissioned officers in World War I, allowing six hundred

African Americans to achieve that rank.

In 1918, the NAACP secured passage of an amendment to the New York State Civil rights law protecting African Americans – their first such statewide success which they used as a model for progress in other states in subsequent years. After bitter resistance, the NAACP also finally secured from President Woodrow Wilson a public pronouncement against lynching, which he had previously refused to do. That same year an anti-lynching bill was introduced in the House based on a bill drafted by NAACP co-founder Albert E. Pillsbury. The bill called for the prosecution of lynchers in federal court, and made state officials who failed to protect lynching victims or prosecute lynchers punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. It also allowed the victim’s heirs to recover up to \$10,000 from the county where the crime occurred.

In 1919, the NAACP released its landmark report “Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918,” in which it listed the names of every African American, by state, whom they could document had been lynched. This continued to bring unprecedented attention to this longstanding and uncontrolled epidemic of violence in America. In the aftermath of the end of the First World War and the subsequent unrest and intolerance which gripped the nation, twenty-six race riots erupted across the country during that “Red Summer,” and a record number of lynchings took place. Membership in the NAACP grew to about 90,000 and



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The 1936 image of the NAACP's 'A Man Was Lynched Yesterday' flag from their headquarters at 69 Fifth Avenue. Their former headquarters at 70 Fifth Avenue, where by multiple accounts they began flying the flag, is visible just to the right.

circulation of *The Crisis* grew to over 100,000 after it published W.E.B. DuBois' "Returning Soldier," a report documenting the indignities suffered by black servicemembers in France at the hands of the U.S. military.

In 1920 the NAACP led investigations into and exposed U.S. military atrocities and abuse in Haiti following the American occupation of the Caribbean nation, arguing for American withdrawal and making it a campaign issue in the election of 1920 seized upon by

successful candidate Warren G. Harding. The passage of the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote gave the NAACP the opportunity to highlight the continued disenfranchisement of black women and men. They demanded that congress investigate the systematic denial of the vote to African Americans in the South in the 1920 election, and that where such discrimination was found, those elected to congress not be seated. The revived Ku

Klux Klan's publication *The Searchlight* announced that the NAACP, which was increasingly active in the South, was its arch enemy.

Multiple accounts also say that the NAACP began flying its iconic flag printed with "A Man Was Lynched Yesterday" in simple white sans-serif letters against a plain black background from its headquarters in 1920, and continued to do so until 1938, when they were forced to remove it or face eviction. While the sole photographic record of this appears to be an image from 1936 when the flag flew from their next location just up Fifth Avenue at No. 69 (demolished), if this frequently-cited date is correct, then the this powerful campaign began at 70 Fifth Avenue.

In 1921 the NAACP secured the reintroduction of federal anti-lynching legislation in the new congress, and met with new President Warren G. Harding to lobby for his support, an end to segregation in federal employment, independence for Haiti, and action

FOR THE GOOD OF AMERICA

Do you know that the United States is the Only Land on Earth where human beings are BURNED AT THE STAKE?

In Four Years, 1918-1921, Twenty-Eight People were publicly BURNED BY AMERICAN MOBS

3436 People Lynched, 1889 to 1922

For What Crimes Have Mobs Nullified Government and Inflicted the Death Penalty?

The Alleged Crimes	The Victims	Why Some Mob Victims Died:
Murder	1288	Not turning out of road for white way to auto
Rape	571	Being a relative of a person who was lynched
Crimes against the Person	615	Jumping a labor contract
Crimes against Property	323	Being a member of the Non-Partisan League
Miscellaneous Crimes	453	"Talking back" to a white man
Absence of Crime	176	"Insulting" white man
	3436	

Is Rape the "Cause" of Lynching?

Of 3436 people murdered by mobs in our country, only 571, or less than 17 per cent, were even accused of the crime of rape.

83 WOMEN HAVE BEEN LYNCHED IN THE UNITED STATES

Do lynchers maintain that they were lynched for "the usual crime?"

AND THE LYNCHERS GO UNPUNISHED

There were four lynchings in eight days after the failure to pass the Dyer Anti-Lynching bill. One of the victims being publicly burned at the stake.

TO MAINTAIN CIVILIZATION IN AMERICA

AND FOR THE GOOD NAME OF THE NATION BEFORE THE WORLD

YOU

CANNOT ESCAPE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Will You Not at Least Aid the Organization Which Has Been Fighting for Ten Years to Wipe Out Our Shame?

Send your check to J. E. SPINGARN, Treasurer of the

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

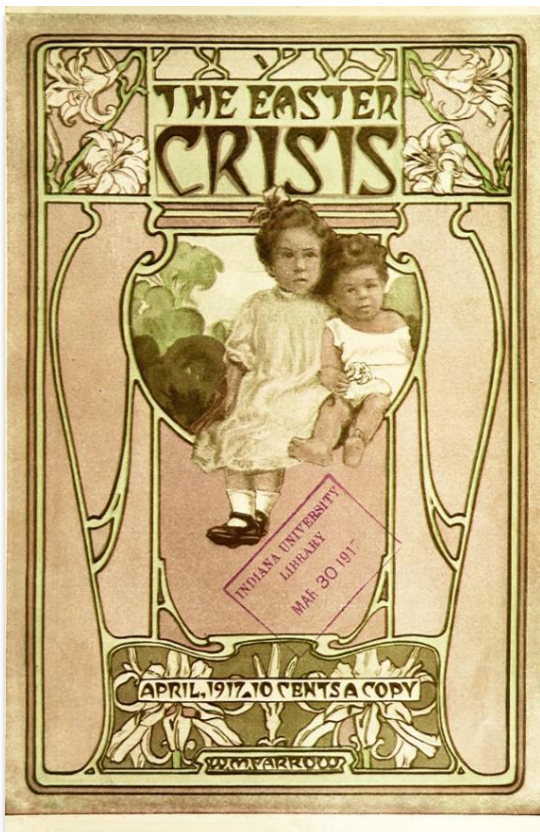
70 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

against the disenfranchisement of African Americans throughout the country. The following year, the anti-lynching legislation was finally approved by the House by a vote of 230 to 119, after a vigorous campaign by the NAACP which included placing ads in newspapers across the country entitled “The Shame of America.” While the bill died in the Senate after a filibuster by Southern Democrats, congressmen in New Jersey, Delaware, Michigan, and Wisconsin who voted against the measure were defeated in the election of 1922 after their stance was made an issue in their campaigns.

In 1923, the NAACP had another successful case before the U.S. Supreme Court when they appealed the convictions of twelve African American men sentenced to death and sixty-seven to long prison terms by an all-white jury. Those sentences had resulted from bloody riots in Arkansas in 1919 precipitated by a white mob attacking a mass meeting of black farmers trying to organize a union, in which as many as two-hundred blacks and twenty whites were killed. In *Moore v. Dempsey* those convictions were overturned, ruling that the defendants’ mob-dominated trials were a violation of the due process guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. The landmark decision reversed the court’s previous ruling in the 1915 case of Leo Frank, a Jewish man convicted of murdering Mary Phagan, a 13-year-old employee of the Atlanta pencil factory that he managed, on specious evidence in what was

widely seen as a case motivated by anti-Semitism. Later, Frank’s death sentence was commuted by Georgia’s governor, which led a mob to storm the prison and lynch Frank. As a result of the *Moore* ruling, Frank’s lawyer Louis Marshall joined the NAACP’s legal committee. That same year the NAACP began what would be a successful legal challenge (handed down by the Supreme Court in 1927) against southern state’s “white primary” laws, which precluded black candidates from running in Democratic primaries, which were tantamount to the general election in those states.

The Crisis Magazine – Called “[the most widely read and influential periodical about race and social justice in U.S. history.](#)” *The Crisis* (originally subtitled ‘A Record of the Darker Races’) was founded by W.E.B. DuBois as the house magazine of the NAACP. The periodical called unprecedented attention to the lives and plight of African Americans, providing a forum for DuBois’ uncompromising philosophy of racial equality. In its first issue, DuBois said its purpose was to be “first and



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

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During the last three days of August the daily press reported the following:

August 28: Eli Cooper, a Negro, was shot to death in a church at Ocmulgee, Ga., by a mob. The church was then burned. Other churches and a lodge hall in the vicinity were burned.

August 30: A mob stormed the jail at Knoxville, Tenn., in search of Maurice F. Mays, a Negro, who had been arrested on suspicion in connection with the murder of a white woman. The mob looted the jail, released prisoners, captured large quantities of confiscated whiskey and raged through the streets of the city. Race rioting developed.

August 31: Lucius McCarthy, a Negro, accused of an attack on a white woman, was lynched at Bogalusa, La., his body dragged through the streets and then burned.

The N. A. A. C. P. combats race rioting, mob violence and race discrimination. It has 270 branches and 70,500 members. Its strength should be doubled and quadrupled. If you want to form a branch in your community, write to the National Office, 70 Fifth Ave. But first join. Sign the blank below.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE National Office, 70 Fifth Ave., New York City

Date.....1919

The CRISIS is sent without further charge to members paying two dollars or more.
Major J. E. Spingarn, Acting Treasurer,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

SIR:

I enclose \$..... in payment of membership dues for one year in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, with the stipulation that one dollar of any amount remitted herewith in excess of one dollar is for one year's subscription to THE CRISIS.

Name

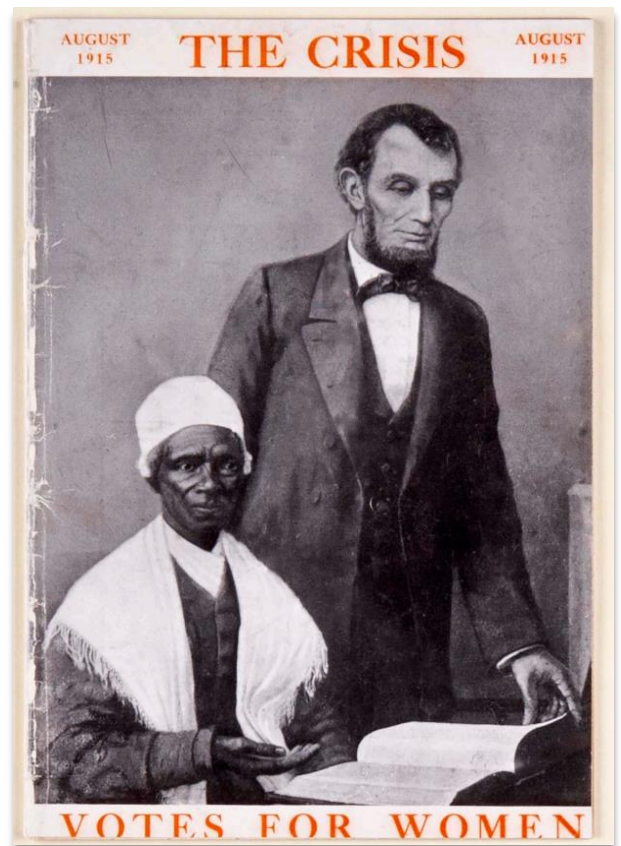
Street

City and State

First hand information regarding the assault upon the secretary of the National Association at Austin, Texas, August 22, can be obtained from the following three leaflets:

The National Secretary in Texas and an Account of the Texas Branches, by John R. Shillady.
Is Mob Violence Texas' Solution of the Race Problem? by Mary White Ovington, reprint from The Independent.
In Texas, by James Weldon Johnson, reprint from the New York Age.
These leaflets are five cents for the three. One Dollar for bunches of 25.

foremost a newspaper” that would “record important happenings and movements in the world which bear on the great problem of inter-racial relations, and especially those which affect Negro-Americans;” provide “a review of opinion and literature,” and “stand for the rights of men, irrespective of color or race” and vigorously defend the “highest ideals of American democracy.” Particularly during its years at 70 Fifth Avenue (1914-1923), *The Crisis* was an incomparable showcase for black writers and artists, containing the first publication of the writings of Langston Hughes, as well as works by Zora Neale Hurston, Countee Cullen, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Arthur Schomburg, and Jean Toomer. From an initial circulation of 1,000 in its first year of publication, the



magazine's circulation peaked while at 70 Fifth Avenue in 1919 at over 100,000, making

it more popular than established journals like *the New Republic* and *the Nation*, while also growing from twenty to nearly seventy pages. According to DuBois, its mission was to pursue “the world-old dream of human brotherhood.”

From its founding in 1910 *The Crisis* included both hard-hitting reporting about injustices faced by African Americans and DuBois' pointed commentary – about lynching, Jim Crow, and the failures of political leadership to address these issues, as well as exposing readers to relevant international issues, such as the non-violent passive



resistance efforts for Indian independence being led by Mahatma Gandhi in 1922. But starting in 1918 while published out of 70 Fifth Avenue, *The Crisis* also came to include a rich and influential array of literature and art. That was largely reflective of the influence of Jessie Redmon Fauset, an African-American editor, poet, essayist, novelist, and educator dubbed by

National Association for the ... Advancement of Colored People.

The Ku Klux Are Riding Again!

BACK TO LIFE AND VERY ACTIVE AFTER FORTY YEARS! This is the thrilling story that one hears today in various parts of the South. The old Klan with its white-robed citizens going out to maintain the supremacy of the white race, as depicted by Thomas Dixon and his satellite, D. W. Griffith, has again come to life. Read this article printed in a daily in Montgomery, Ala.:

"KU KLUX KLANSMEN SUGGEST SILENT PARADE!"

"The city of Montgomery was visited last night by a Ku Klux Klan that bore all the earmarks of the ancient honorable order that placed white supremacy back in the saddle after a reign of terror for several years by Negroes and scalawags."

About one hundred white-robed figures silently paraded through the town and, as the paper specially mentioned, went into that section where the Negroes lived. The Klan, according to the paper from which we quote, is the only authorized organization of its kind in existence, having a charter from the state and the governor.

Montgomery is not the only city in Alabama in which demonstrations of the Ku Klux Klan have been made; Mobile, Birmingham, Troy and some smaller towns have seen it and there are indications of a revival of the Klan in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida and South Carolina.

In Tennessee it is being revived under a new name, the Columbian Union. The Chattanooga Times of December 12 made this statement on the subject:

"ORGANIZER OF KU KLUX GETS BUSY LOCALLY."

The spirit of the KU KLUX KLAN seems embodied in this Columbian Union, a new secret order originally chartered in Nashville, which is being organized in Chat-

tanoga by Arthur Mills, Majestic Viceroy. The purposes of the order are mysteriously surrounded with the traditions of the past, and are among the most unusual of any secret organization yet attempted. That the organizers anticipate racial troubles following the demobilization of the soldiers is indicated in the literature of the order, and Mr. Mills is outspoken in the belief that some such organization is necessary, especially in the South, when the Negro troops are mustered out and returned to their homes.

Allegiance to the United States, the support of the president and the suppression of enemy propaganda, are among the strict requirements of the order.

Prominent among the members of the Columbian Union are many important officials in state and city governments and influential business men. Mr. Mills declares that the Union will be the greatest society ever organized in the South and will be the most important factor in getting the government completely in the hands of the white race and making permanent white supremacy.

What purpose is back of the revival of this Klan?

Ostensibly it is revived for reasons of patriotism, to apprehend all slackers in the purchase of Liberty Bonds and Thrift Stamps. But for that purpose such an organization should have been alert long ago. On the contrary, the Ku Klux are first reported to us this autumn and the Columbian Union is a very recent secret order. Apprehending slackers North, South, East and West, has been the great stay-at-home sport of the war, but the Ku Klux, as their name implies, gave little time to this task, as compared with the other set before it, the keeping of the Negro in his place—the place of a submissive worker of an inferior race.

The CRISIS

Vol. 19—No. 3

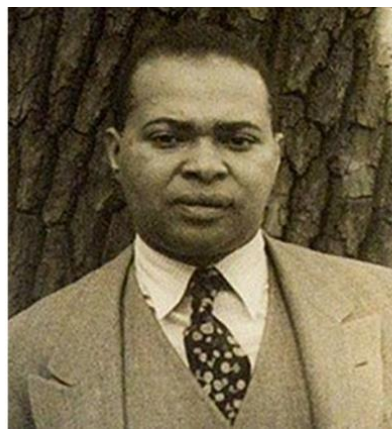
JANUARY, 1920

Whole No. 111



ONE DOLLAR AND A HALF A YEAR

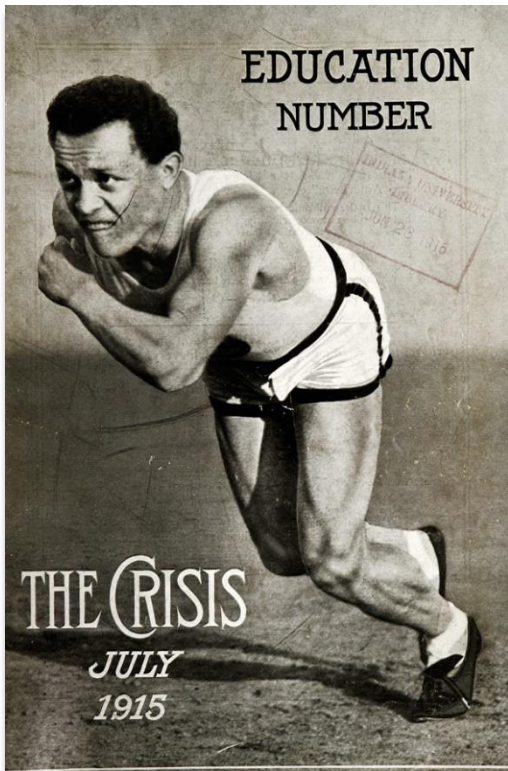
FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY



Contributing writers to *The Crisis* included (l. to r.) a young Langston Hughes, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Countee Cullen, and Zora Neale Hurston.

Langston Hughes “the midwife of the Harlem Renaissance,” who began contributing to the magazine in 1912 and served as its literary editor from 1918 to 1926. By many accounts, she was also the main force keeping the magazine operating during that time, as DuBois was travelling the world. Both she and DuBois also introduced photography, painting, and drawing into the magazine as a means of communicating its message and giving a forum for expression to African Americans.

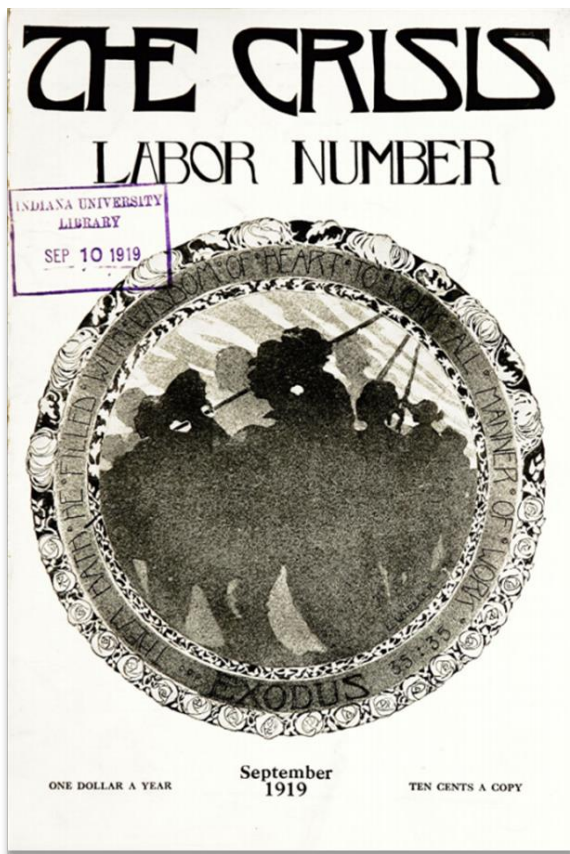
In addition to civil rights and the arts and literature, *The Crisis* had a special emphasis upon education, promoting the rise of African-American colleges and African American studies (DuBois himself would teach the very first course in African American history just feet from here at The New School in 1948). DuBois reported heavily upon both the successes and challenges of Black colleges and universities, and dedicated two issues of the magazine each year specifically to the topics of education and youth respectively. *The Crisis* also had a special focus during these years on promoting the emerging black cinema.



DuBois and *The Crisis* also had a notable commitment to gender equality. Aside from the significant role given to Fauset, the magazine showcased the works of many female writers and artists. And DuBois made that support explicit in his political writings as well; in 1911 in the pages of *The Crisis* he wrote that “Every argument for Negro

suffrage is an argument for women's suffrage; every argument for women's suffrage is an argument for Negro suffrage; both are great moments in democracy. There should be on the part of Negroes absolutely no hesitation whenever and wherever responsible human beings are without voice in their government. The man of Negro blood who hesitates to do them justice is false to his race, his ideals and his country.”





**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

President
MOORFIELD STOREY

Secretary
JOHN E. SHILLADY

Chairman Board of Directors
MARY WHITE O'VINGTON

Director of Publications and Research
DR. W. E. B. DuBOIS

Acting Treasurer
MAJOR J. E. SPINGARN

Field Secretary
JAMES WELDON JOHNSON

Assistant Secretary
WALTER F. WHITE

FACING FACTS—
The war is ended—the peace terms signed by Germany—President Wilson is home again after fighting for the rights of the oppressed peoples of Europe—

YET IN AMERICA—
Thirty-six Negroes are known to have been lynched since the armistice was signed last November—one of them a woman—six of the others lynched by being burned at the stake.
Negroes are disfranchised in whole or in part in at least fourteen states of the Union.
Negroes are "Jim-Crowed" in all states of the South.
Negroes are deprived of their just share of school funds.
Negroes are robbed and exploited and then dared to resent it.
Negroes are kept out of lucrative and dignified positions in many instances for no other reason than their color.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT DEMOCRACY IS ONLY FOR THE WHITE RACE?
If you do, then you should not be a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
But, if you believe that justice and freedom belong to all races then you should be a member.

**HELP END THE FARCE MASQUERADING AS DEMOCRACY
BY JOINING THE ASSOCIATION WHICH IS FIGHTING
TO END DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF RACE—**

**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF COLORED PEOPLE** National Office, 70 Fifth Ave., New York City

Date..... 1919

The CRISIS is sent without further charge to members paying two dollars or more.
Major J. E. Spingarn, Acting Treasurer,
70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

SIR:
I enclose \$..... in payment of membership dues for one year in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, with the stipulation that one dollar of any amount remitted herewith in excess of one dollar is for one year's subscription to THE CRISIS.

Name

Street

City and State

In fact, DuBois' perspective sometimes put him at odds with the more moderate and still predominantly White leadership of the NAACP at the time. *The Crisis* gave him an opportunity to express this more uncompromising perspective; DuBois sharply criticized President Wilson for segregating the Federal government in the pages of *The Crisis* before and more bluntly than the NAACP. *The Crisis* also called for an outright ban on the film *The Birth Of A Nation*, based upon its distortion of history and glorification of the Ku Klux Klan and its flagrant denigration of blacks.



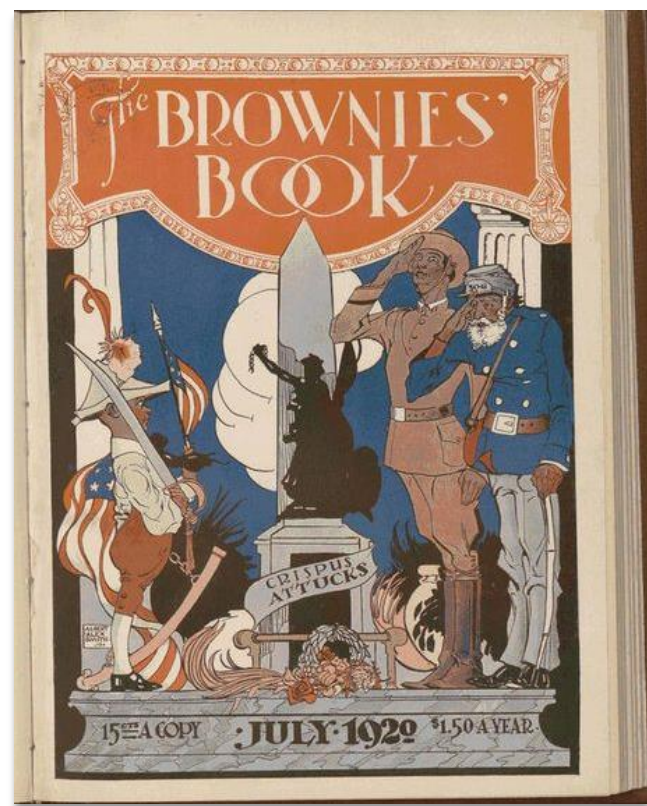
DuBois (standing in front of door) and staff at the offices of *The Crisis* at 70 Fifth Avenue.

DuBois and Dill Publishing – W.E.B.

DuBois and his business partner Augustus Granville Dill created a short-lived but highly impactful publishing house, located for its entire existence at 70 Fifth Avenue/2 East 13th Street. The enterprise furthered DuBois' mission of inspiring African Americans with stories of their peers and predecessors, as well as guiding them to a better future. These highly personal projects built upon the work he was already doing through the NAACP and especially *The Crisis*.

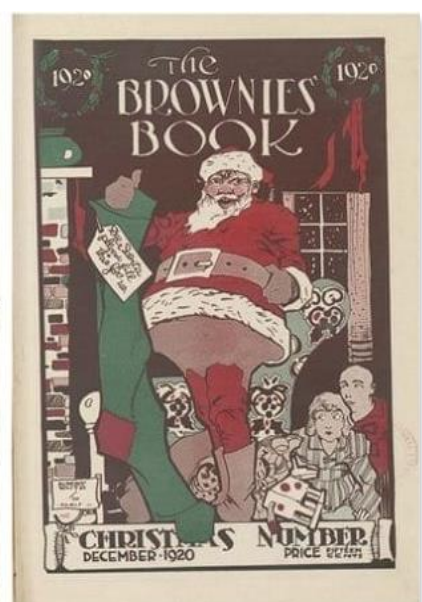
The Brownies' Book magazine was a collaboration of DuBois, Augustus Granville Dill, and Jessie Redmon Fauset, who served as literary and managing editor of the magazine, published by DuBois and Dill. Growing out of the youth and education issues of *The Crisis*, it was the first magazine ever made for African American youth. The monthly focused heavily on promoting standards of gender, class and racial behavior and pride, using photographs, art, and literature to inspire young African-American children.

The magazine's message was consistently to do well in school, take pride in one's appearance, and learn about one's heritage, often citing African folk tales and drawing on other aspects of traditional African culture. One of the goals of the magazine was to dispel the "[grotesque stereotypes](#)" of the "[Dark Continent](#)," a disparaging term used for Africa and its people. African American children were frequently exposed to such portrayals along with the white children who were the implied audience in contemporary children's literary works.



In the October 1919 issue of *The Crisis* in which DuBois first announced that publication of *The Brownies' Book* would begin in January of the following year, he also laid out its agenda:

- *To make colored children realize that being "colored" is a normal, beautiful thing.*
- *To make them familiar with the history and achievements of the Negro race.*
- *To make them know that other colored children have grown into beautiful, useful and famous persons.*
- *To teach them a delicate code of honor and action in their relations with white children.*
- *To turn their little hurts and resentments into emulation, ambition and love of their homes and companions.*
- *To point out the best amusements and joys and worth-while things of life.*
- *To inspire them to prepare for definite occupations and duties with a broad spirit of sacrifice.*



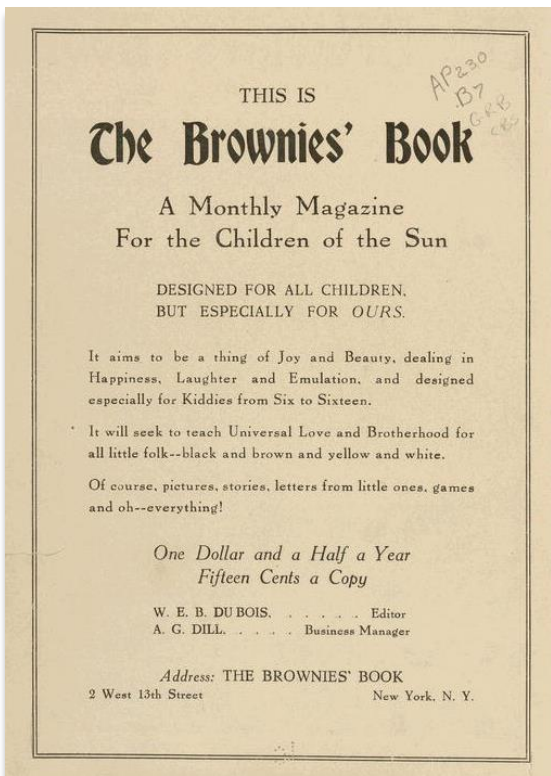
Like *The Crisis*, *The Brownies' Book* had covers showcasing the work of prominent black artists. While utilizing games and music to engage its young audience, the magazine also included literature, poetry, information on current events, and biographies of successful African Americans, including Sojourner Truth, Phillis Wheatley (a slave seized from Africa at age 7, who in the 18th century became the first African American woman to publish a book of poetry), and popular Vaudeville entertainer Bert Williams.

The first issue featured a photo of African American children marching in protest of lynchings and racist violence in the Silent March of 1917. DuBois had a regular column called "As the Crow Flies" relating current events to children; Fauset had an advice column called "The Judge;" and a regular feature was a section called "Little People of the Month," showcasing the artistic and academic achievements of children submitted by readers. Notable authors published in *The Brownies' Book* included Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen, Winifred Davidson, Effie Lee Newsome and Georgia Douglas Johnson.

The magazine published Hughes' high school graduation picture along with those of other high school graduates, and was the first publication to print Hughes' poetry.



Jessie Redmon Fauset



There was little advertising; the modest amount included was often for literature geared towards black children which typically could not be found in bookstores. Because of this, the magazine was almost entirely dependent upon subscriptions to maintain it. In spite of Fauset, DuBois, and Dill's best efforts, it never gained enough subscriptions to become financially self-sufficient, and ceased publication in December of 1921.

DuBois and Dill Publishing's other celebrated product was **Elizabeth Ross Haynes' *Unsung Heroes* (1921)**, a book about "the lives of seventeen men and women of the Negro race told in a way to inspire the children of our time." The seventeen biographies chosen by Haynes, herself a pioneering African American activist and social worker, included those who were almost entirely unknown in the early 1920s, and those who had not been given their historic due. These included Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Paul

Lawrence Dunbar, Alexandre Dumas, Crispus Attucks, Benjamin Banneker, Booker T. Washington, Toussaint L'Ouverture, and Phillis Wheatley.



By the mid-1920s DuBois and Dill Publishing House ceased operations, and the NAACP and *The Crisis* moved to new quarters just up the block at 69 Fifth Avenue (northeast corner of 14th Street) where they remained for decades (the building was demolished in the 1950s).

*

While the NAACP's headquarters was gone from the area by the mid-20th century, the neighborhood south of Union Square continued its role as an incubator for pioneering civil rights and social justice organizations, much as it had begun to well before the NAACP's arrival in 1914. In 1973, in the wake of the Stonewall Riots and the burst of activism which followed, a newly-founded national civil rights organization located just up the block from the old NAACP headquarters. Like the NAACP, it played a similar role in launching national organizing to spearhead an emerging civil rights movement facing tremendous challenges while also energized by increased expectations for equal treatment and an end to blatant and deeply ingrained discrimination.

*

80 Fifth Avenue and the National Gay Task Force headquarters:

This elaborately-detailed Renaissance Revival style office building was designed in 1908 by Buchman and Fox. Its striking architecture alone at this prominent intersection makes it worthy of consideration for landmark/historic district designation.

However, 80 Fifth Avenue is additionally significant for having housed from its founding in 1973 until 1986 the headquarters of what was then known as the National Gay Task Force (which



80 Fifth Avenue today.



Press conference in 1973 announcing the formation of the National Gay Task Force, the first national gay rights organization in the United States. NGTF co-founders (l. to r., front row) Ron Gold, Dr. Howard Brown, Dr. Bruce Voeller, and Nathalie Rockhill (l. to r. back row) Martin Duberman, Barbara Gittings, Frank Kameny.

became the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 1985, and is now the National LGBTQ Task Force). The Task Force was the very first national LGBT rights organization in the United States, accomplishing groundbreaking changes in those first dozen or so years and laying the foundation for many more in the years which followed, as well as initiating battles for civil rights which are still being fought today. This was the Task Force's very first headquarters and its only in New York, and it remained here for more than a dozen years until it moved to the nation's capital in 1986.

The New York Times
 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1973

Psychiatrists, in a Shift, Declare Homosexuality No Mental Illness

By RICHARD D. LYONS
 Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15—The American Psychiatric Association, altering a position it has held for nearly a century, decided today that homosexuality is not a mental disorder.

The board of trustees of the 20,000-member group approved a resolution that said in part, "by itself, homosexuality does not meet the criteria for being a psychiatric disorder."

Persons who are troubled by their homosexuality, the trustees said, will be classified as having a "sexual orientation disturbance" should they come to a psychiatrist for help.

"We will no longer insist on a label of sickness for individuals who insist that they are well and demonstrate no generalized impairment in social effectiveness," the trustees said.

The trustees defined "sexual orientation disturbance" as a category for "individuals whose sexual interests are directed toward people of their own sex and who are either disturbed by, in conflict with or wish to change their sexual orientation."

The semantics of the resolution and exactly how it differed from the association's previous position were challenged by re-

Continued on Page 25, Column 1

The Task Force's accomplishments during the time they were located here represented several giant leaps forward for LGBTQ Americans. After employing tactics like staffing booths at the American Psychiatric Association's Convention to challenge the group's official categorization of homosexuality as a mental illness, in 1973 the Task Force secured the removal of homosexuality from the APA's official Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, reducing a significant stigma attached to LGBT people and paving the way for further legal reforms. In 1975 the Task Force advocated for the successful ruling by the U.S. Civil Service Commission eliminating the longtime ban upon gay people serving in federal government employment, ending decades of witch hunts against government workers suspected of being gay which dated back to the McCarthy era and before.

In 1977, the Task Force brokered another historic first – the very first meeting of any LGBT group with the White House. The meeting directly resulted in changes in policies at the Bureau of Prisons and the Public Health Service, while also initiating policy discussions that would continue for decades and contributed to the incorporation of support for gay rights within the Democratic Party platform. In 1978, the Task Force got the U.S. Public Health Service to stop certifying gay immigrants as "psychopathic personalities."

Also during its time at 80 Fifth Avenue, in the late 1970s the Task Force staff conducted the first national survey of corporate hiring policies (called Project Open Employment) to determine whether U.S.

employers explicitly barred discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This was followed a few years later by another of survey municipal police departments, laying the groundwork for successful campaigns, beginning at this time and continuing to this day, to secure protections by government and private employers against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (and eventually gender identity as well).



National Gay Task Force members after the historic 1977 White House meeting.



Toward that end, the Task Force was instrumental in drafting and securing introduction of the very first federal gay rights bill in Congress in 1975 by local Congressmembers Bella Abzug and Ed Koch, as well as several other representatives. While the bill did not pass then and still has not passed the entire Congress (a current more limited version, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, has passed both the Senate and the House, but not in the same session), it has been consistently reintroduced in various forms in the forty-five years since, gaining increasing support. This bill, first put forward by the Task Force, has become the

Koch and Abzug, both Congressmembers from Greenwich Village representing neighboring

districts, were often rivals, but came together to introduce the first federal gay rights legislation in 1975.

basis for non-discrimination laws passed by 22 states and the District of Columbia, as well as hundreds of cities, counties, and localities throughout the United States (the question of whether discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity is allowed by federal law remains a subject of debate nearly a half century later).

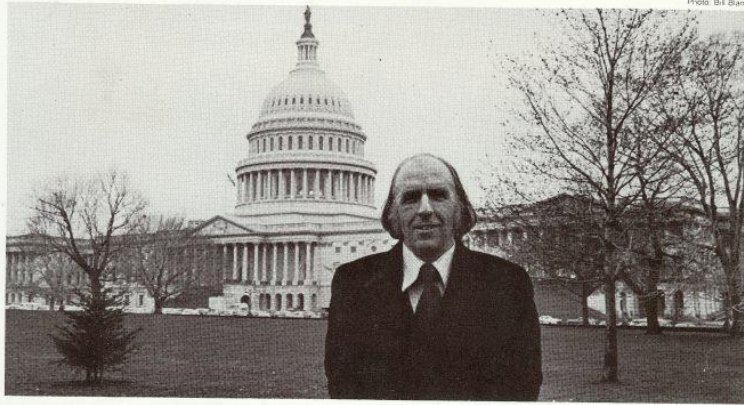
During its years at 80 Fifth Avenue, the Task Force also played a critical role in winning support from the mainstream women's movement for lesbian and gay rights, which had previously been cool or even hostile to including or supporting the lesbian cause. This most famously manifested itself in 1969 when NOW President Betty Friedan warned of the 'Lavender Menace' faced by the women's movement becoming too closely associated with lesbians, and dropped the organization's connections to lesbian groups. The Task Force successfully campaigned for a lesbian rights resolution at the 1975 national convention of the National Organization for Women, reversing NOW's prior stance. In 1977 Task Force co-Executive Director Jean O'Leary and women board members obtained endorsement of lesbian and gay rights from the U.S.-sponsored conference for International Women's Year. O'Leary was also the only openly lesbian delegate on President Carter's



International Women's Year Commission.

The Task Force also began the national response to an epidemic of hate crimes against LGBT individuals during its time here. In 1982, it began its Anti-Violence Project, which focused on data-gathering on anti-LGBT hate crimes when almost no other entities were collecting such data, producing reports that were regularly cited as authoritative on the subject of homophobic violence. That same year they set up the first national telephone crisis line designed to provide assistance to people who had been harassed or assaulted, and in 1984 the Task Force issued the first comprehensive report on hate crimes directed at the gay community nationally. During their time at 80 Fifth Avenue the Task Force also laid the groundwork for securing passage of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act by the

Join the People of NGTF



Franklin E. Kameny

PROFILE: At home on Capitol Hill, in court rooms, and in legislative chambers, his long and effective advocacy of Gay rights has won him praise from both ally and adversary.

QUOTE: "We all know that *Gay is Good*. It's up to us to get out there and make it better—much better!"

MEMBER: The National Gay Task Force

REASON: "The need for some kind of informal, non-authoritarian, voluntary machinery for helping to centralize and coordinate Gay Movement activity, and for dealing with non-local concerns of broad implication has long been recognized. NGTF held out and has met the promise of meeting that need."

HOME: Washington, D.C.

PROFESSION: Gay Activist and Lecturer

OTHER INTERESTS: Science, Law, Civil Liberties, Politics, Classical Music, Gardening.

MOST RECENT ACHIEVEMENT: Appointment to District of Columbia Human Rights Commission and Reversal of United States Civil Service Commission anti-Gay policy.

NGTF National Gay Task Force, Dept. C, Rm. 506, 80 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011, Tel.: (212) 741-1010

Yes, I would like to join NGTF. Enclosed is my contribution for:

- \$15 Basic Member
- \$25 Contributing Member
- \$50 Sustaining Member
- \$100 Supporting Member
- \$500 Lifetime Member
- \$1000 Sponsor
- \$25 Household Member (for two)
- \$5 Limited Income Member

I understand that I will receive the NGTF newsletter, IT'S TIME, with my membership.

Please keep my name and mailing confidential.

cst

Name	Address
City	State Zip

Anita Bryant, 1977.

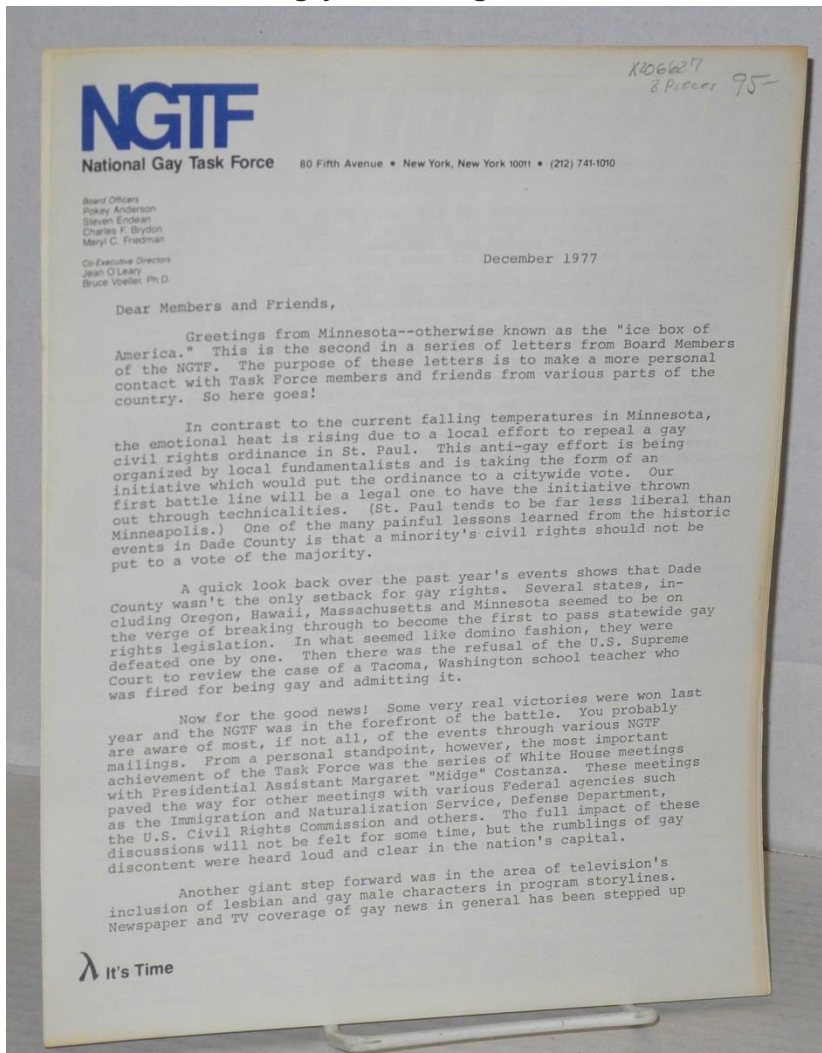
House of Representatives in 1987-- the first federal law to address sexual orientation (the bill was finally passed by both houses and signed into law in 1990).

Throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Task Force also led national response to a growing backlash against gay rights laws and increasing gay and lesbian visibility. Right-wing groups and the newly-constituted 'Moral Majority' were leading campaigns to repeal gay rights laws in Miami-Dade, St. Paul, Minnesota, Wichita, Kansas, and other locales across the country, and to prevent states from Hawaii to Massachusetts from passing gay rights laws. Anita Bryant, who said "What these people really want, hidden behind obscure legal phrases, is the legal right to propose to our children that theirs is an acceptable alternate way of life... I will lead such a crusade to stop it as this country has not seen before" led a campaign called "Save Our Children." Its intent -- often successful -- was to block or repeal laws prohibiting employment discrimination against lesbians and gay men, using fear of recruitment of children into "the homosexual lifestyle" as an



organizing tool. These efforts laid the groundwork for the right wing's promotion of anti-gay referenda in the 1990s and 2000s, and their more recent efforts against bills which prohibited discrimination based upon gender identity.

The Task Force also led the successful opposition to the so-called 'Family Protection Act' introduced in Congress at the behest of the Moral Majority in 1981, which would have had disastrous consequences for LGBTQ Americans if enacted. The bill would have banned federal funding of any organization which in any way supported gay rights or even preached tolerance of gay people; allowed any state, local, or private entity to fire teachers on the basis of sexual orientation; amended the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to specify that anti-gay discrimination is legal; and prohibited



any federal agency and the federal government itself from enacting or enforcing any non-discrimination measures based upon sexual orientation – illustrating the steep barriers the Task Force faced, and overcame, at the time.

In 1985, the Task Force secured the favorable Supreme Court decision of *NGTF v. Oklahoma*, which partially overturned a law prohibiting gay teachers from discussing gay rights – one of the few positive Supreme Court decisions regarding LGBT rights during a decade that saw a significant backlash against gay and lesbian rights.



During its time at 80 Fifth Avenue, the Task Force also took a lead role in the fight against AIDS, at a time of indifference at best, and overt hostility and discrimination at worst, from many institutions and branches of government. The Task Force's Executive Director, Dr. Bruce Voeller (who lived nearby at [186 Spring Street](#)), conducted early research establishing that condoms prevent the spread of AIDS, and established the use of the term Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, rather than the inaccurate and stigmatizing "Gay Related Immune Deficiency" -- the name by which what came to be called AIDS was originally known. In 1983



The Task Force's Kevin Berrill testifying before Congress regarding anti-gay hate crimes and violence, 1985.



Task Force Director Virginia Apuzzo being arrested for protesting in front of the White House, 1984

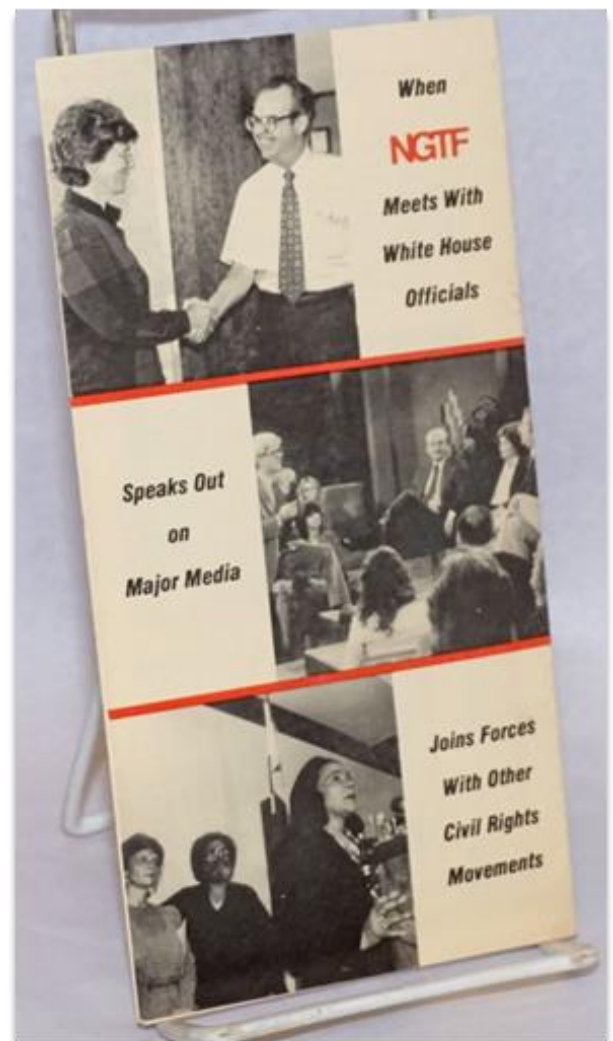
the Task Force hired the [first AIDS lobbyist from a gay organization to work the halls of Congress and federal agencies](#). That same year the Task Force's Executive Director Virginia Apuzzo testified before Congress to excoriate the Reagan Administration for the lack of federal response to AIDS. In 1984, she and others raised funds to launch the AIDS Action Council, the country's first advocacy organization focused on public policy and funding to meet the AIDS crisis, securing the first federal funding for community-based AIDS education and helping to negotiate FDA approval of the first HTLV-III antibody test. All of this work took place at a time when thousands of people, initially largely gay men in cities like New York, were being infected with HIV and eventually dying from AIDS, with little to no federal government response or assistance.

From the beginning of its existence, the Task Force also

lobbied heavily for overturning the ban on gays serving in the military, and advocated for fair treatment for gay and lesbian servicemembers who were still being dishonorably discharged by the thousands simply on the basis of their sexual orientation.

With the tremendous growth of the Task Force during its thirteen years at 80 Fifth Avenue and the increasing need for a day-to-day presence in Washington D.C. to respond to the AIDS crisis and other federal legislative matters, the organization moved its headquarters to the nation's capital in 1986. Its time at 80 Fifth Avenue, however, was one of historic accomplishments, challenges, and laying the groundwork for decades of advocacy and social change which would follow.

*



The NAACP and the National Gay Task Force both located in the area south of Union Square in part because of the synergy of like-minded organizations in the area and the bevy of publishers, artists, and writers nearby which supported their activities. They also both located here early in their existence because this area was easily accessible to a broad cross-section of New Yorkers and provided cheap, ample space. In their early days each organization would combat epidemics of violence, workplace and housing discrimination, a framework of jurisprudence which treated those they represented as less than equal under the law, and laws which failed to protect and often actively discriminated against them. Both faced government entities which were frequently indifferent at best and hostile at worst, but cultivated alliances with other communities of interest, particularly the women's movement (or in the case of the NAACP, the women's suffrage movement) and a small but growing number of supporters in elected office.

Both groups also formed and located here at a time when they faced increasing backlash and attacks upon their rights – the NAACP from the resurrected Klan and the hostile forces in state, local, and federal government which were in many ways ascendant in the 1910s and 20s; and the Task Force from the organized religious right opposition to gay rights in the late 1970s and the stigma and hostility which emanated from the AIDS crisis in the 1980s. It should also be noted that there was much cross-pollination and cooperation between the two movements; many of the key figures involved with the NAACP and *The Crisis* while at 70 Fifth Avenue were gay themselves, including Augustus Granville Dill, Langston Hughes, and Countee Cullen. And African American civil rights leaders like Coretta Scott King were not only strong supporters of LGBT rights, but she was a featured speaker at the Task Force's annual conference in the 1980s where she highlighted the commonality of the African American and LGBT civil rights struggles, and all civil rights struggles. The NAACP has been a vocal opponent of anti-LGBTQ discrimination, and spoken out in favor of the legalization of same-sex marriage, federal legislation banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, and against the recently-enacted ban upon transgender Americans serving in the military.

The architecturally striking and almost entirely intact more-than-a-century-old buildings at 70 and 80 Fifth Avenue are significant for more than just their architecture. The organizations and individuals who chose to locate here had a profound effect upon the culture and blazed trails still being traveled today. The combination of political organizing, publishing, art and writing which converged here were no mere coincidence, as this area was a center and mecca for all these activities. The fact that two such impactful organizations located their headquarters here as they began their journey and grew to national prominence more than a half century apart shows how deeply rooted this area's role in shaping society and the course of history was. On these bases and many others previously shared with the Commission, I urge you to move ahead with historic district designation of this area as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera
State Senator Brad Hoylman
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Community Board 2, Manhattan
NAACP
National LGBTQ Task Force
Historic Districts Council
NY Landmarks Conservancy
Municipal Art Society
Victorian Society in America, NY Chapter