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"Race in Space"
A Conversation About
Equality and Civil Rights

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CENTER FOR AIR & SPACE LAW

**THURSDAY, 18 JUNE 2020
@ 11AM EST
@ 5PM CEST**

Race in Space

A Conversation About Equality and Civil Rights



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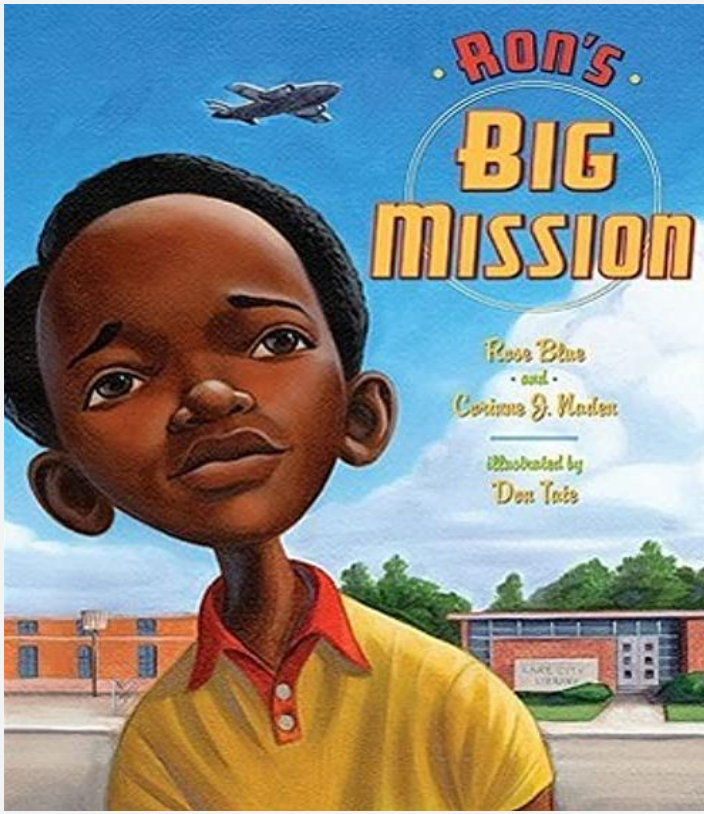
THE DARK STAR: BLACK REPRESENTATION IN SPACE

Jarard P. Williams

Juris Doctorate

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Ronald The Child



- Ronald Erwin McNair was born on October 21, 1950, in Lake City, South Carolina.
- McNair's interest in space was piqued by the launch of the Russian satellite Sputnik in 1957, and boosted by the appearance of Star Trek on TV years later, its multi-ethnic cast pushing the boundaries of what was possible for a small-town African-American boy.

Ronald The Student



- After initially considering majoring in music at NC A&T, McNair eventually came back around to his love for science, graduating magna cum laude in 1971 with a B.S. in physics.

- McNair then went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a Ford Foundation fellow. Adjusting to the new environment proved a challenge for McNair, who came from a historically black undergraduate school.
- He later faced a potentially career-altering obstacle when two years of specialized laser physics research for his doctorate was stolen, but he managed to produce a second set of data in a year, and earned his Ph.D in physics in 1976.

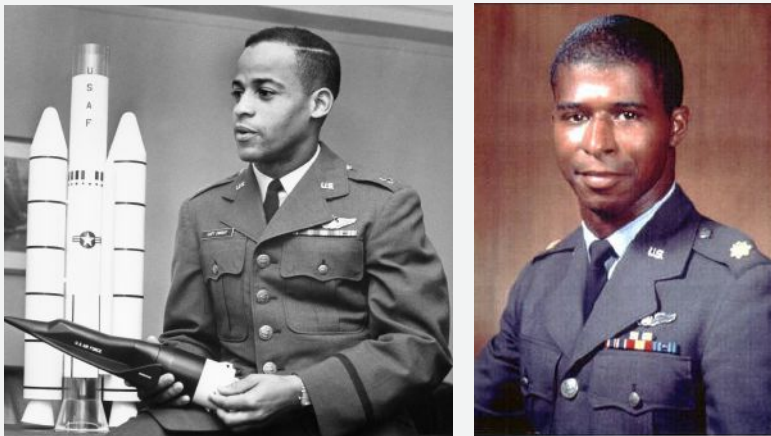
Ronald The Astronaut



- Ronald first started to think seriously about becoming an astronaut when he got a flyer in the mail in 1976. However, it wasn't until 1978 that he applied, whilst still working at Hughes Research Labs.
- 10, 000 people applied in 1978, and only 35 were successful. McNair was one of them, but once again disaster struck. A car accident left him seriously injured, and doctors feared he wouldn't recover in time for NASA training.
- In February 1984, Ronald made his maiden voyage as an astronaut aboard the Challenger shuttle on mission STS-41 B. The mission deployed two communication satellites and tested numerous pieces of equipment and technology. Ronald had primary responsibility for various experiments on the 191-hour flight which orbited the earth 122 times.
- After 73 seconds, the Challenger exploded at 46, 000 feet in the air, to the horror of people watching all around the world. All 7 astronauts on board died, Ronald was just 35 years old.

Setting The Foundation

Before Ronald E. McNair there were two men who aspired to be astronauts as well. This is the lost history that aids in lack of representation in space.



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Ed Dwight | Years of service: 1953–1966

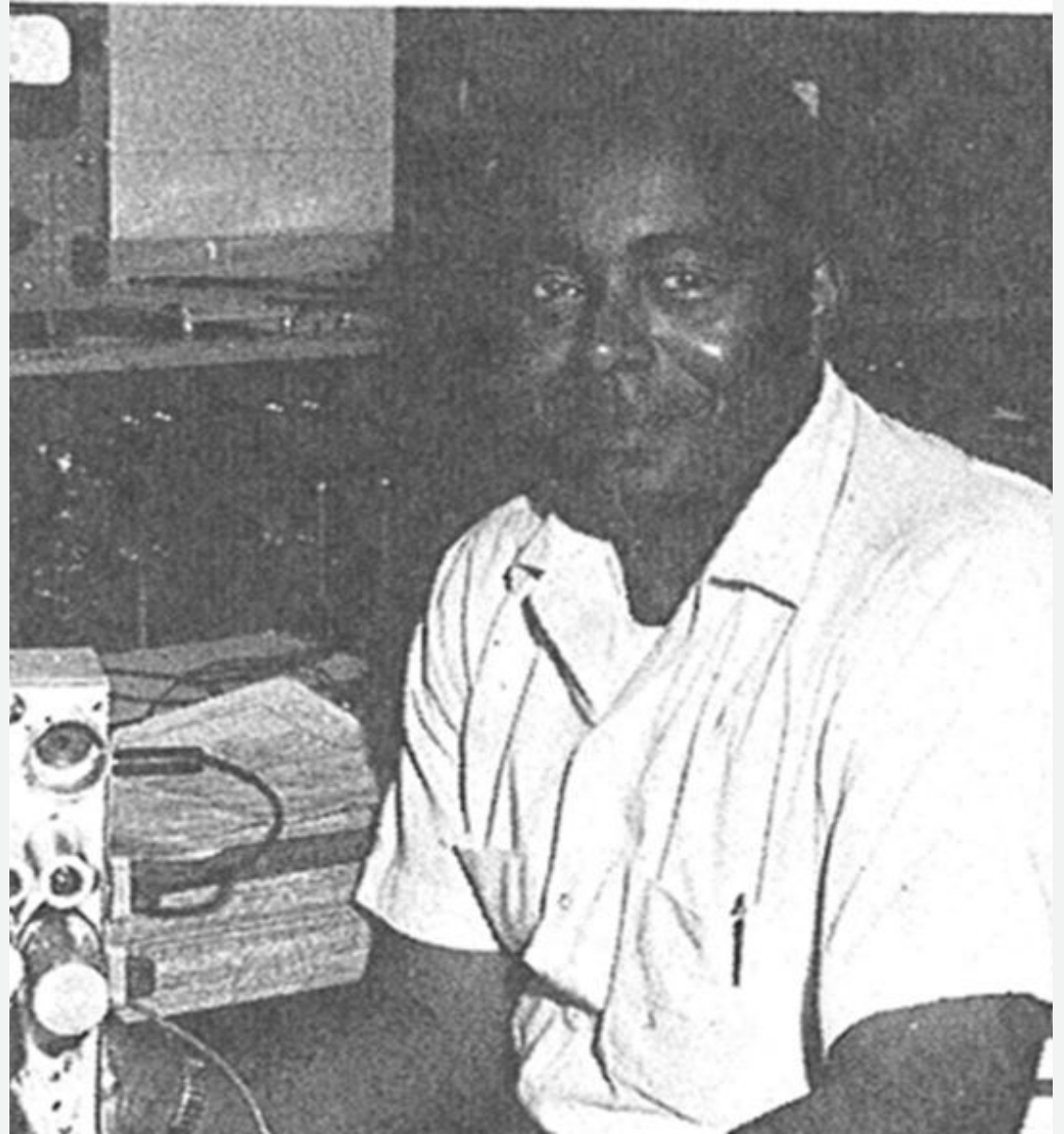
- the first African American to enter the Air Force training program from which NASA selected astronauts.
- In 1961, the Kennedy administration selected Dwight as the first African American astronaut trainee. His selection garnered international media attention, and Dwight appeared on the covers of news magazines such as Ebony, Jet, and Sepia
- Dwight proceeded to Phase II of ARPS but was not selected by NASA to be an astronaut. He resigned from the Air Force in 1966, claiming that racial politics had forced him out of NASA and back into the regular officer corps

Robert H. Lawrence | Years of service: 1955–1967

- The USAF selected Maj. Robert H. Lawrence, Jr., on June 30, 1967, as a member of the third group of aerospace research pilots for the MOL Program. Lawrence thus became the first African-American to be selected as an astronaut by any national space program.
- While serving as an instructor for another pilot practicing landing techniques later used in the Space Shuttle program, Lawrence perished in a crash of an F-104 Starfighter supersonic jet on December 8, 1967, at Edwards Air Force Base, CA. Although both men ejected from the crash Lawrence did not survive, the promising career of the pilot-scientist suddenly extinguished

Breaking The Barrier: Julius Montgomery

In 1956, he had become the first African-American who was not a janitor to be hired to work at the Cape Canaveral space facility in Florida. He was part of a team of technical professionals, known as "range rats," who repaired the electronics in malfunctioning ballistic missiles and satellite equipment.



NASA & Diversity

There is a short list of steps NASA took to promote equal employment in the year before the 1964 Civil Rights Act became law: The agency created a contractors' group in Alabama that used its money and influence to make sure African-Americans got space jobs. NASA hired Charlie Smoot, called the "first Negro recruiter" in official agency histories, to travel the nation persuading black scientists and engineers to come south. The Marshall Space Flight Center invited representatives of the historically black colleges to Huntsville in 1963, and a year later opened the agency's college cooperative education program—in which students alternated semesters at school with semesters at Marshall—to blacks.

As a result, Walter Applewhite, Wesley Carter, George Bourda, Tommy Dubone, William Winfield, Frank C. Williams Jr., and Morgan Watson arrived at Marshall to become the embodiment of Johnson's plan for jobs in the South.



Evolution of Representation



Arnaldo Tamayo Méndez | The First Black Man

- Tamayo was selected as part of the Soviet Union's seventh Intercosmos program on March 1, 1978. His backup in the Intercosmos program was fellow Cuban José López Falcón. Tamayo would spend the next two and half years in training for the mission.
- Tamayo, along with Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Romanenko, was launched into space aboard Soyuz 38 from Baikonur Cosmodrome on September 18, 1980. After docking with Salyut 6, Tamayo and Romanenko conducted experiments in an attempt to find what caused space adaptation syndrome (SAS), and perhaps even find a cure, and on the crystallisation of sucrose in microgravity, for the benefit of Cuba's sugar industry.



Evolution of Representation



Class of 1978: Ronald E. McNair , Guion Bluford and Fred Gregory,

- Guion Stewart Bluford became the first African American in space and Ronald E. McNair became the second. Bluford made it to space just five months before McNair and Méndez made it as the first black man the year they were brought into NASA.

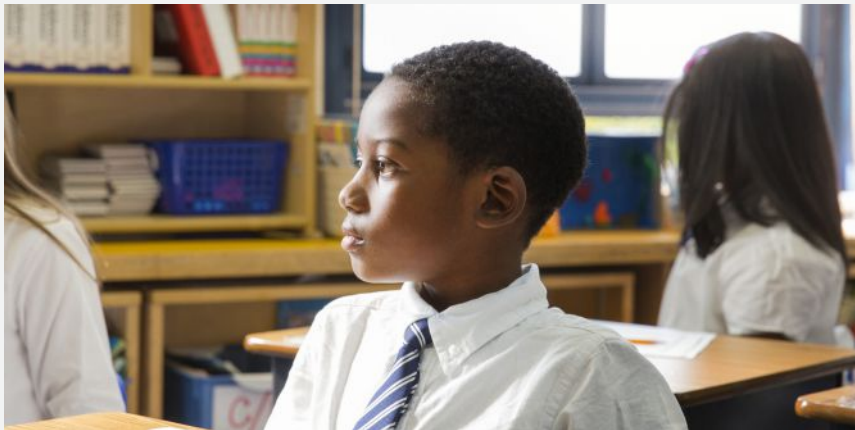
- Bluford's first mission was STS-8, which launched from Kennedy Space Center, Florida, on August 30, 1983. This was the third flight for the Orbiter Challenger and the first mission with a night launch and night landing
- Bluford then served on the crew of STS-61-A, the German D-1 Spacelab mission, which launched from Kennedy Space Center on October 30, 1985. This mission was the first to carry eight crew members, the largest crew to fly in space and included three European payload specialists. This was the first dedicated Spacelab mission under the direction of the German Aerospace Research Establishment (DFVLR) and the first U.S. mission in which payload control was transferred to a foreign country (German Space Operations Center, Oberpfaffenhofen, Germany).



NASA & Diversity

Guion S. Bluford Jr-688 hours
Charles F. Bolden Jr-680 hours
Mae C. Jemison-190 hours
Bernard A. Harris Jr.-438 hours
Joan E. Higginbotham-308 hours

Standard Career Choices For Black Youth



- Generally speaking, most black youth are not told that they can be the next Ronald E. McNair or even Julius Montgomery. They are pushed toward career goals that often involve some type of athleticism or musical ability. As stated before, Ed Dwight was someone who initially had the public eye but was buried in the depths of history because of he was deemed “unqualified” and often times dealt with substantial backlash from leading commanders telling him he just “was not good enough.”
- This is a narrative that is not only constantly repeated but what often results in the fact that there have been 572 people who have flown into space — 356 of them Americans — just 14 were African-Americans. Because there is a sense of impossibility when it comes to becoming a black astronaut in those communities.

Law Assisting More Representation

The proposal that I have in how the law can assist in helping provide more black representation starts at the state level. I propose that state's add into the curriculum the teachings of black aerospace professionals feats. Either adding them to the civil rights portion of the history books or speaking to their feats in the same breath as the first moon landing.

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Protecting African Americans In Space

Though the Outer Space Treaty speaks to human rights and the protection/benefit of all mankind. Those words are very similar to the language in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty."

I propose that in order to protect and to preserve diversity in a human community in space that we ensure that the UNCOPOUS adopt a resolution providing that the declaration applies to humans in space but furthermore as it pertains to domestic regulations, there should be an adoption of this language as part of the licensing process.

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Three Ways to Combat Systemic Racism

- Join the people in the streets protesting and advocate for reconstruction through redistribution
- Actively hold colleagues accountable for their contribution to institutional corruption and use your influence to fight it
- Promote and support diverse leadership

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CONCLUSION



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US DOMESTIC SPACE LAW



Links & Sources: <https://www.ajc.com/news/local/remembering-challenger-astronaut-ronald-mcnair/q1UUrhXAeYUTl841MkarxM/>
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Race in Space: How did we get here? What can I do?

Yvette Butler, Esq., Assistant Professor of Law

University of Mississippi School of Law

June 18, 2020

Roadmap

- How did we get here?
- How does racism manifest in the U.S. and elsewhere?
- What can I do about it?

How did we get here?

- United States Civil Rights History in a nutshell:
 - Slavery (estimated. 1619 – 1863)
 - Juneteenth: June 19, 1865
 - Jim Crow Era
 - Legal Protections
 - Influence of the global community
 - Franklin D. Roosevelt Executive Order 8802 (1941)
 - Harry Truman Executive Order 9981 (1948).
 - W.E.B. Du Bois, Walter White contributions to UN Declaration of Human Rights.. (Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986)).
 - Civil Rights Act of 1964

How does racism still manifest?

- Mass Incarceration and Police Brutality
- Housing
- Education
- Employment

What can I do to further racial equity?

- Personally
 - Know your context
 - Know your bias – [Harvard Implicit Bias Test](#) is one option
- Professionally
 - Use your privilege
 - Beware “cultural fit” and other coded language
- Systemically
 - Vote
 - Donate

Resources

- John Skrentny, *The Minority Rights Revolution*
- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*
- 7 Examples of Allyship <https://www.themuse.com/advice/what-is-an-ally-7-examples>
- Throughline Episode on American Policing <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/869046127>
- NPR Podcast: Code Switch <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510312/codeswitch>

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Thank you for your time.

More questions, comments,
thoughts?



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