

A black and white photograph capturing a moment of collective protest or celebration. A group of Black women are shown from the chest up, their bodies angled towards the right. They are dressed in dark, simple clothing, some with wide white belts. Their right arms are raised high, with fists clenched, a gesture of solidarity and defiance. Their mouths are open as if shouting or chanting. The background is bright and slightly out of focus, suggesting an outdoor setting. In the top right corner, there is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping blue triangles of varying shades.

“From Africa to the Atlantic World: My  
Black Woman Story!”

Kaydin Nibbs

# INTRODUCTION

The struggles that women have faced in the past and today date back further than most people think. Women's struggles began during the Colonial era in the early 1800s. Although the struggles have diminished as time passes, we still have similar issues in today's society.



# Background Information on Ida B. Wells

Ida B. Wells was a Woman's Suffrage activist, Journalist, and researcher born into slavery on July 16, 1862, in Springs, Mississippi. Around the time of her birth, the Civil War was going on, and after the war, her parents were politically active in reconstruction-era politics. Hence, they also told her that knowledge is critical, especially for people of color.



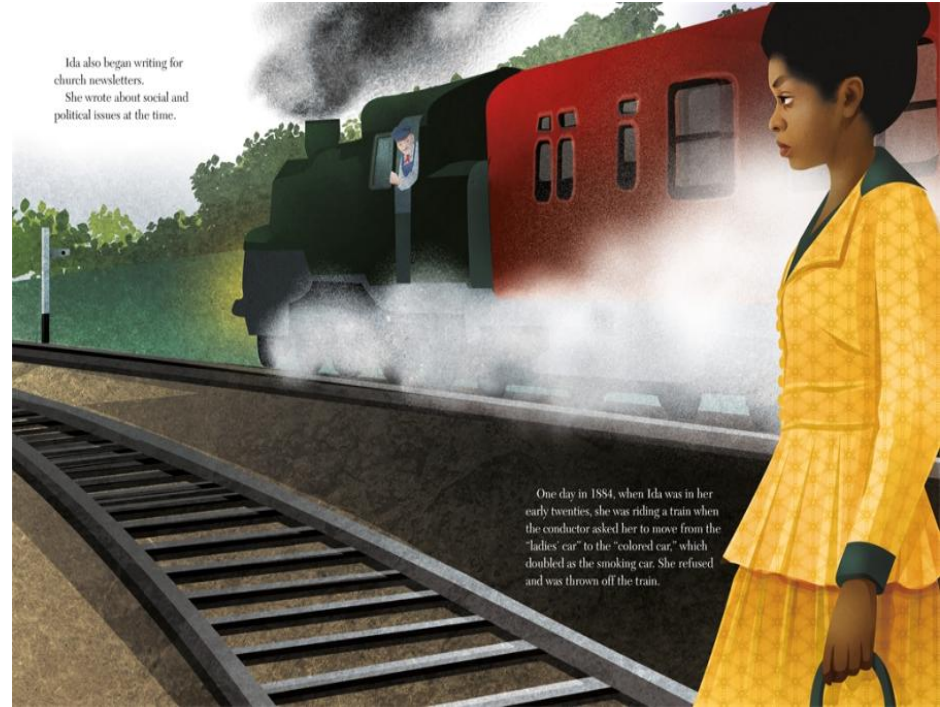
# The Start of Idas Legacy

To pursue her education and make her family proud, Ida decided to attend Rust College. However, not too long after being at Rust College, she got into a dispute with the president of her university, forcing her to be kicked out of the School. After dropping out and visiting her grandma, she was informed that yellow fever was on the rise, and it killed both of her parents and a few siblings. Wells then had to step up and take care of her remaining siblings by becoming an educator after moving to Memphis, Tennessee.



# Struggles

Wells experienced a turning point on May 1884 on a train from Memphis to Nashville. Despite purchasing a first-class ticket, the train staff transferred her to the car reserved for African Americans. Wells was ejected from the train for refusing on moral grounds, and she bit one of the crew as she was being taken out. In a circuit court case, Wells sued the railroad and was awarded a \$500 payment. The Tennessee Supreme Court reversed the judgment not so long after, unfortunately.



Ida also began writing for church newsletters. She wrote about social and political issues at the time.

One day in 1884, when Ida was in her early twenties, she was riding a train when the conductor asked her to move from the "ladies' car" to the "colored car," which doubled as the smoking car. She refused and was thrown off the train.



# Ida B's Fight Against Racism

Sometime after her court case in 1892, Wells wrote articles describing her frustration with the recent lynching of her friend and his two associates, Tom Moss, Calvin McDowell, and Will Stewart. One night they had to guard their store against an attack and shot several white men. They were arrested and taken to jail. Unfortunately, they did not have a chance to defend themselves. A lynch mob took them from their cells and murdered them. After this, she continued to write in many more newspapers to get her point across to the white people.



# The Fight For Rights Part 1

In 1896, She formed several civil rights such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Association of Colored Women. Wells was a very proactive fighter for women's suffrage, primarily black women's struggles. On January 30, 1913, Ida founded the Alpha Suffrage Club in Chicago, which organized the women in the city to elect candidates that best served the black community.



# The Fight For Rights Part 2

As the club president, Ida B. Wells was invited to march alongside dozens of club members in the 1913 suffrage parade. Ida saw this as a great opportunity, so she attended, and when she arrived, all women of color were asked to stay in the back of the parade. However, Wells refused and stood on the parade sidelines until the Chicago contingent of white women passed, at which point she joined the march. The work done by both Ida B. Wells and the Alpha Suffrage club was the reasoning for the victory of women's suffrage in Illinois on June 25, 1913, with the Illinois Equal Suffrage Act.





# How This Relates To Our Course

This can be directly related to our current work in class because we look at how women of color have affected history as prominent leaders and activists. Throughout our weekly discussions on blackboard, we dive deep into the many problems African women faced back then and how their hardships can be seen even today. Ida B. Wells can be directly compared to colonial women because, during those times, they were suppressed, and many decided enough was enough and fought for what was right, much like Ida. Ida can also be compared to the Warrior queens from pre-colonial times because the fight for African American rights is a war that went on for far too long.



# Conclusion

To summarize, Ida B. Wells made a significant impact in history because she never backed down and jumped over all the hurdles in her way to reach the destined goal in mind. Without activists for women such as herself and even male activists, today's society would look much different than it does today for me. It is scary to imagine what would be in store for the world today if these events did not occur. Would women's activism even exist? Would Women of color stand up against injustices such as these today? We will never know today because of Ida B. Wells's efforts in the past.



# Work Cited

- 1- <https://www.nps.gov/people/idabwells.htm>
- 2- <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/ida-b-wells-barnett>
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