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We are working with leading academics and organisations across India to support the introduction of the new nursing curriculum.

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We are working with leading academics and organisations across India to support the introduction of the new nursing curriculum.

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100 GREAT BLACK BRITONS

A celebration of 600 years of the extraordinary contribution of key figures of African Caribbean descent to British life

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ABOUT THE BOOK

100 Great Black Britons

Patrick Vernon's landmark 100 Great Black Britons campaign of 2004 was one of the most successful movements to focus on the role of people of African and Caribbean descent in British history.

Frustrated by the widespread and continuing exclusion of the black British community from the mainstream popular conception of 'Britishness', despite black people having lived in Britain for over a thousand years, Vernon set up a public poll in which anyone could vote for the black Briton they most admired.

Media inquiries

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AUTHORS

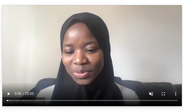
DR ANGELINA OSBORNE

Is an independent researcher and heritage consultant. She received her PhD in History from the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, University of Hull in 2014. Her interests focus on Caribbean enslavement and proslavery discourses, and the history of community and education activism. She is an expert in Black British history, politics of slavery and abolition, post emancipation, and teaching difficult histories and has featured in many places, including BBC Woman's Hour. Angelina is the co-author of 100 Great Black Britons.

PATRICK VERNON OBE

Is a Clore and Winston Churchill Fellow, a fellow at the Imperial War Museum, a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a former associate fellow for the Department of the History of Medicine at Warwick University. Patrick was awarded an OBE in 2012 for his work in tackling health inequalities for ethnic minority communities in Britain. Since 2010 he has been leading the campaign for Windrush Day and in 2018 kick-started the campaign for an amnesty for the Windrush Generation as part of the Windrush Scandal which led to a government U-turn in immigration policy.

AUTHORS ASK SPECIALISTS WHY DO THEY THINK A BOOK LIKE THIS IS IMPORTANT



FEATURED PEOPLE

Naomi Campbell, fashion model and activist

As one of the most prominent and recognisable faces in the fashion industry, Naomi's Campbell's career spans over 35 years. Since appearing on the cover of Elle just before her sixteenth birthday, Campbell has attained a fame equal to the designers she has worked with. Her accomplishments boast a litany of firsts: the first Black model to appear on the cover of French Vogue, the first Black model on American Vogue's coveted September issue, widely regarded as the most significant fashion publication of the year.

Although Campbell is one of the most famous models in the world, she has had to battle racial discrimination within her industry for most of her career. As a dark skinned woman, she disrupts traditional (European) perceptions of beauty. Her influence has been crucial in the fashion industry and she paved, alongside fellow models Iman and Bethann Hardison, the Diversity Coalition to increase the use of Black models on runway shows.

Idris Elba

Idris Elba gained international fame as the charismatic and cerebral Stringer Bell in the critically acclaimed series *The Wire*, his American screen co-star/crooning has-been that he is British. Since then, Elba has appeared in a long list of successful movies, his film credits including *Thor* and *Star Trek*, and most recently in the DC blockbuster *Suicide Squad*, as well as shining in smaller budget and independent films. He has also made memorable appearances in television series on both sides of the Atlantic. Born in East London of Sierra Leonean and Ghanaian heritage, Elba is also a successful DJ who performed at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in 2018.

Elba received Golden Globe nominations for his portrayal of Nelson Mandela in the biopic *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (2013) and the Netflix war drama *Beasts of No Nation* (2015). Elba has also been a campaigner in the UK for greater diversity in the film and television industry.

David Oyelowo

David Oyelowo's portrayal of Martin Luther King in the Ava DuVernay directed *Selma* (2014) earned him a Golden Globe nomination for Best Actor. In this role Oyelowo achieved the difficult task of showing the humanity of the great civil rights leader who has often, since his assassination over fifty years ago been regarded more as a saintly figure than as a man.

His decision to move to the United States to have greater influence over what stories are being told, despite having a successful career in Britain has seen him acting in films like *The Butler* (2013) and *The Queen of Kahwa* (2016). Last year he appeared alongside George Clooney in the Netflix environmental *The Midnight Sky*. Most recently he acted in and directed the Disney family movie *The Water Man* and it has been announced that Oyelowo will produce the Disney film *The Return of the Rivoteiser*.

HISTORY

LEARN MORE ABOUT AFRICAN AMERICANS WHO HAVE LIVED/WORKED IN THE UK

- Frederick Douglass (1817-1895) – abolitionist, writer, social reformer and statesman
- Sarah Parker Remond (1815) – abolitionist and campaigner
- Elisabeth Welch (1904-2003) – singer and actress
- Lewis Latimer (1848-1928) – inventor and draughtsman
- Paul Robeson (1898-1976) – acclaimed actor, concert artist and political activist
- Alain Locke (1885-1954) – writer, philosopher, educator, known as the Father of the Harlem Renaissance
- The Fisk Jubilee Singers

BLACK BRITISH 5 HISTORY FACTS

01 Britain was governed by several African rulers during the Roman period, including emperor Septimius Severus, who died in York in 211 AD, and Quintus Lollius Urbicus, who was governor of Britain from 139 to 142 AD.

02 Many prominent Africans lived in London during the 18th century, including Ignatius Sancho (1729-1780), a composer, diarist and businessman who is the first known Black man known to have voted in 1774 and 1780.

03 Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784) was the first African American woman to have her book Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral, published in London in 1773.

04 Tom Molyneux, an African American boxer competed for the world championship in London in the 1820s. He lost the match, but according to the 19th century sportswriter Pierce Egan Molyneux's 'colour alone prevented him from becoming the hero of that fight.'

05 John Archer (1863-1932) became London's first Black mayor in November 1913 when he was elected Mayor of Battersea (a South London borough).

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100GBB in United Kingdom

In 2019, 16 years after the initial launch of the 100 Great Black Britons, Patrick Vernon OBE and Angelina Osborne launched a new campaign to celebrate Black British History and Black Britons who contributed to shape Great Britain by their work and actions. The public was invited to vote for the Black Briton they most admire.

Visit our website

The Windrush Game

The Every Generation Game: Windrush Edition has been created to celebrate and commemorate the Windrush Generation in Britain, which is marked by national Windrush Day on 22nd June each year. The Windrush Game allows generations young and old to share the stories of their culture and heritage.

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