

GRENADA



MALCOLM X

MAY 19, 1925 – FEBRUARY 21, 1965.

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, the fourth of seven children of Grenada-born Louise Little (née Norton) and Georgia-born Earl Little.

He was an African-American Muslim minister and human rights activist. To his admirers, he was a courageous advocate for the rights of blacks, a man who indicted white America in the harshest terms for its crimes against black Americans. Detractors accused him of preaching racism, black supremacy and violence. He has been called one of the greatest and most influential African Americans in history.



EARLY YEARS

Malcolm Little excelled in junior high school but dropped out after a white teacher told him that practicing law, his aspiration at the time, was "no realistic goal for a nigger". It made Malcolm feel that the white world offered no place for a career-oriented black man, regardless of his talent.

Malcolm's father, Earl Little was an outspoken Baptist lay speaker, admirer of [Pan-African](#) activist [Marcus Garvey](#), and local leader of the [Universal Negro Improvement Association](#) (UNIA) who inculcated self-reliance and black pride in his children. Malcolm X later said that violence by whites killed three of his father's brothers, including one who was lynched.

LEGACY

Malcolm X has been described as one of the greatest and most influential African Americans in history. He is credited with raising the self-esteem of black Americans and reconnecting them with their African heritage. He is largely responsible for the spread of Islam in the black community in the United States. Many African Americans, especially those who lived in cities in the Northern and Western United States, felt that Malcolm X articulated their complaints concerning inequality better than the mainstream civil rights movement did. One biographer says that by giving expression to their frustration, Malcolm X "made clear the price that white America would have to pay if it did not accede to black America's legitimate demands."



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR, AND MALCOLM X MARCH 26, 1964



In the late 1960s, as black activists became more radical, Malcolm X and his teachings were part of the foundation on which they built their movements. The Black Power movement, the Black Arts Movement, and the widespread adoption of the slogan "Black is beautiful" can all trace their roots to Malcolm X.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a resurgence of interest in Malcolm X among young people, fueled in part by use of him as an icon by hip-hop groups such as Public Enemy. His image was on display in hundreds of thousands of homes, offices, and schools, as well as on T-shirts and jackets.

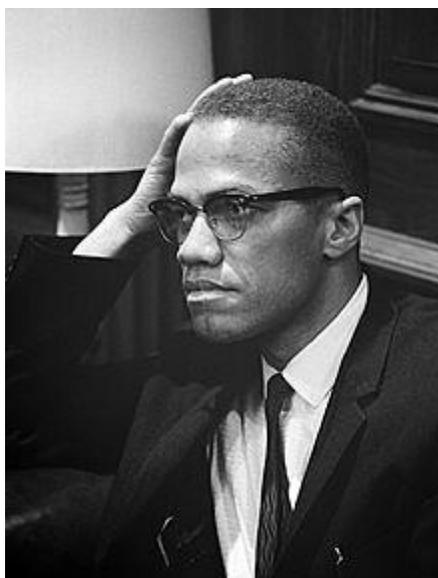
This wave peaked in 1992 with the release of the film *Malcolm X*, an adaptation of the *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* which Malcolm X began in 1963 in collaboration with Alex Haley. (Malcolm X had told Haley, "If I'm alive when this book comes out, it will be a miracle"; indeed Haley completed and published it some months after the assassination.) In 1998 *Time* named *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* one of the ten most influential nonfiction books of the 20th century.



Malcolm X AT A 1964 PRESS CONFERENCE



MEMMORIALS AND TRIBUTES



In cities around the world, Malcolm X's birthday (May 19) is commemorated as Malcolm X Day. The first known celebration of Malcolm X Day took place in Washington, D.C., in 1971.¹ The city of Berkeley, California, has recognized Malcolm X's birthday as a citywide holiday since 1979.

Many cities have renamed streets after Malcolm X; in 1987, New York mayor Ed Koch proclaimed Lenox Avenue in Harlem to be Malcolm X Boulevard. The name of Reid Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, was changed to Malcolm X Boulevard in 1985. In 1997, Oakland Avenue in Dallas, Texas, was renamed Malcolm X Boulevard. Main Street in Lansing, Michigan, was renamed Malcolm X Street in 2010.

There have been dozens of schools named after Malcolm X, including Malcolm X Shabazz High School in Newark, New Jersey, Malcolm Shabazz City High School in Madison, Wisconsin, and Malcolm X College in Chicago, Illinois. Meanwhile, the Malcolm X Library and Performing Arts Center of the San Diego Public Library system opened in 1996. It is the first library named after Malcolm X.

The U.S. Postal Service issued a Malcolm X postage stamp in 1999. In 2005, Columbia University announced the opening of the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center. The memorial is located in the Audubon Ballroom, where Malcolm X was assassinated. Collections of Malcolm X's papers are deposited at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the Robert W. Woodruff Library.

