



Through the Banks of the Red Cedar

Thursday, February 6, at 7 p.m.
Wallis Annenberg Hall Auditorium
University of Southern California

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Through the Banks of the Red Cedar is a documentary about the first fully integrated college football team in the United States—at Michigan State University in the 1960s.
- The film was made by USC alumna Maya Washington, whose father, Gene Washington, was on that team.
- A post-screening panel discussion will feature Maya Washington, Gene Washington, Clinton Jones (another former member of the MSU team), and USC professors Daniel Durbin and Ben Carrington.

“Hopefully, [the film] will inspire other people—especially in my generation and younger—to take the time to talk to their parents, their grandparents, their aunts and uncles to find out what they were doing when they were young. And you might be surprised at the history you discover in the way that previous generations have shaped the world we live in today and give us insight into how [the way] we live our lives now will impact people 50 years into the future.”
—Maya Washington in the *Detroit Free Press*

SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court sanctioned legal separation of people based on race in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, known as the “separate but equal” doctrine. This decision landed in an America where already for decades Black and white people had been segregated in schools, employment, public transportation, housing, the armed forces, prisons, recreational facilities, and many other aspects of life. Now given legal backing from the highest court in the nation, Southern states passed so-called Jim Crow laws aimed at maintaining white supremacy through segregation. But segregation was not limited to the South. For instance, schools were segregated by race even in places like California, where a legal challenge against separate schools for Mexican students happened as late as 1947.

Black activists and organizers waged generations-long struggles to integrate U.S. society. By the 1950s, their focus was on public schools, and their work led to the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which upended *Plessy v. Ferguson* by ruling that segregation in public schools is unconstitutional, even if the schools are deemed otherwise equal.

Even after *de jure* segregation (or segregation mandated by law) was outlawed by the federal civil rights acts of the 1960s, *de facto* segregation (or segregation that exists without legal sanction) persisted—and still does today in areas like housing and schools, as a result of ongoing bias as well as historic segregation and practices like redlining.



Duffy Daugherty and the Michigan State Team

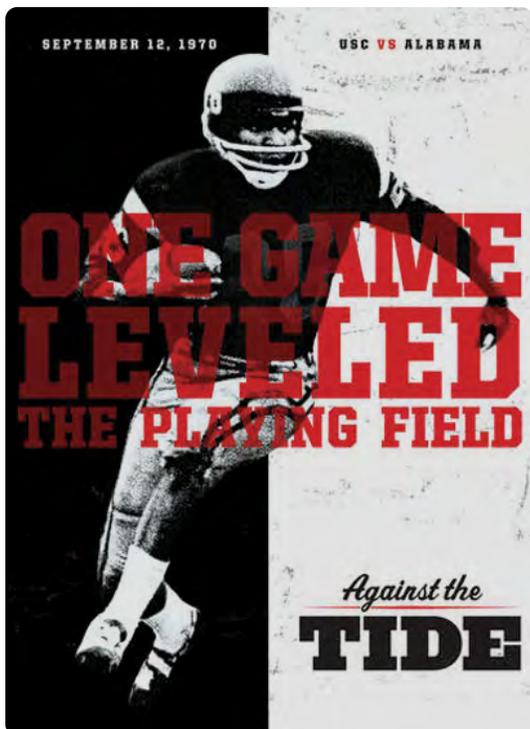
Michigan State University football coach Duffy Daugherty actively recruited Black players from the segregated South to play on the MSU team in the 1960s. This resulted in historically diverse teams that won national championships at the height of the civil rights movement.



The title *Through the Banks of the Red Cedar* alludes to the Michigan State fight song, which includes the lyrics “On the banks of the red cedar is a school that’s known to all. Its specialty is winning, and those Spartans play good ball.”



Gene Washington, Clinton Jones, and Dwight Lee at MSU in the 60s.



1970 USC-ALABAMA GAME

In 1970, the Trojans played the Alabama Crimson Tide (University of Alabama) in a legendary game. The Alabama team was all-white, and USC featured a Black starting quarterback, fullback, and tailback, as well as several other Black players. It was the first time a fully integrated team played in the state of Alabama. USC won. The following year, the Crimson Tide had its first Black varsity player.

MAYA WASHINGTON

Maya Washington is the writer, director, and producer of *Through the Banks of the Red Cedar*. Washington began her creative career as a child dancer-turned-musical-theatre-actor in the Twin Cities. At USC, she studied acting, directing, film, and dramatic writing, before pursuing an MFA in creative writing at Hamline University.

GENE WASHINGTON

Gene Washington grew up under racial segregation in La Porte, Texas, and was recruited to play football and run track at Michigan State University at the peak of the civil rights movement. He is an inducted member of the College Football Hall of Fame and the Michigan State University Athletics Hall of Fame, and was voted one of the 50 Greatest Minnesota Vikings of All Time.

CLINTON JONES

Clinton Jones is a native of Cleveland, Ohio, who attended Michigan State University as a student athlete, running indoor and outdoor track and playing on the two-time National Champion football team. Jones was the second overall pick in the 1967 NFL draft. As a running back for the Minnesota Vikings from 1967 to 1972, Jones saw three Central Division championships and one NFL championship title, including an appearance in the 1970 Super Bowl. Jones is currently in practice as a chiropractic doctor alongside his wife, Rosielee Jones, in Los Angeles.

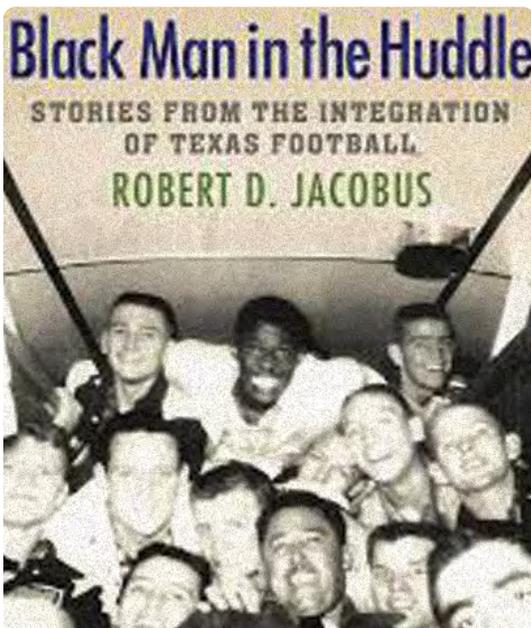
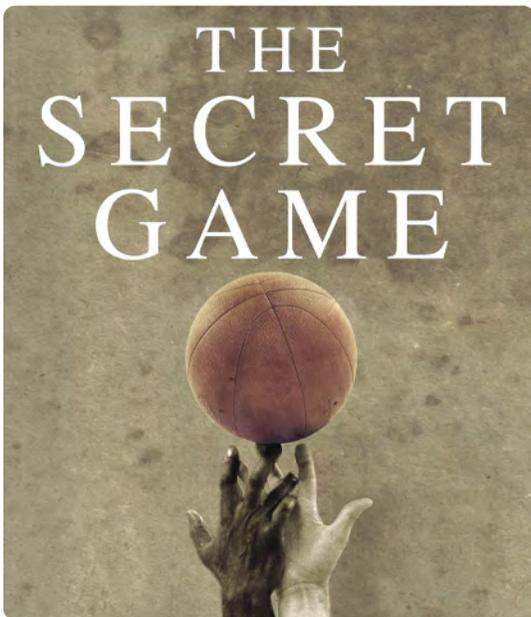
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- Beyond the football field, what do you think it was like for the Black players who moved from the segregated South to Michigan to play college football in the 1960s?
- What unique challenges and opportunities do you imagine Maya Washington faced in making a film with and about her father?
- Why was segregation such a central facet of structural attempts to uphold white supremacy?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- *Power to the People!* Herbie Hancock, Gustavo Dudamel, and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.
An Experience L.A. Event
Thursday, March 5
Walt Disney Concert Hall
bit.ly/VVPowerPeople
- The Showtime Sports documentary *Against the Tide*
www.sho.com/titles/3398568/against-the-tide
- USC Athletics
usctrojans.com

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BOOKS

Demas, Lane. *Integrating the Gridiron: Black Civil Rights and American College Football*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: GV959.5 .D46 2010 (EBOOK ALSO AVAILABLE)

Ellsworth, Scott. *The Secret Game: A Wartime Story of Courage, Change, and Basketball's Lost Triumph*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: GV885.72.N8 E45 2015

Jacobus, Robert, and Annette Gordon-Reed. *Black Man in the Huddle: Stories from the Integration of Texas Football*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2019.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: GV959.52.T4 J33 2019

Martin, Charles H. *Benching Jim Crow: the Rise and Fall of the Color Line in Southern College Sports, 1890-1980*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010.

LEAVEY LIBRARY: GV706.32 .M37 2010

DATABASES

Academic OneFile

America: History & Life with Full Text

American History in Video

American Memory

JOURNALS

Diversity in Higher Education

International Review for the Sociology of Sport

Race and Society

STREAMING VIDEO

Brown, Tony, et al. *Can Blacks Win In Sports?* New York: Tony Brown Productions, 1987.

Holzknicht, James. *The Sociology of Sports in the United States*. Austin, TX: Castalia Media, 2005.