


## Distinguished African American Scientists of the 20th Century (Distinguished African Americans Series)


By James H. Kessler, J. S. Kidd, Renee A. Kidd, Katherine A. Morin



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From George Washington Carver to Dr. Mae Jemison, African Americans have been making outstanding contributions in the field of science. This unique resource goes beyond the headlines in chronicling not just the scientific achievements but also the lives of 100 remarkable men and women. Each biography provides an absorbing account of the scientist's struggles, which often included overcoming prejudice, as they pursued their educational and professional goals.

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## Editorial Review

From Library Journal

One hundred famous and not-so-famous African American scientists (both living and dead) are covered in this biographical reference, intended for middle school through community college levels. Men and women accomplished in anthropology, biology, chemistry, engineering, geology, mathematics, medicine, and physics are included. Those profiled include lesser-known scientists such as Christine Darden (an engineer with NASA) as well as the better known, e.g., George Washington Carver. All serve as excellent role models and reveal "some of the real costs and benefits associated with the pursuit of a career in scientific research." The four distinguished authors have extensive backgrounds as teachers, librarians, and writers. Few similar reference tools are currently available: *Blacks in Science and Medicine* (Hemisphere Pub., 1990), for instance, has brief facts rather than longer profiles and thus lacks the inspirational aspects of this title. A welcome addition to most libraries; buy where needed.

*Laura E. Lipton, Ctr. for Urban Horticulture, Seattle*

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From [Booklist](#)

This volume contains biographies of 100 African Americans from all fields of science, medicine, and mathematics, approximately 20 percent of them women. The entries include familiar names, such as George Washington Carver and Charles Drew, some whose names students might remember after reading the entry, such as astronauts Ronald McNair and Mae Jemison, and others totally unfamiliar, such as NASA aerospace engineer Christine Darden and Dow Chemical senior scientist Linneaus Dorman. Most of these scientists are currently involved in either research or academe, and students will have difficulty finding information about them elsewhere. However, biographies for a dozen contemporary scientists not found in this book can be located in the *Encyclopedia of African-American History and Culture* (see above).

This book is written for the middle and high-school user. The vocabulary and writing style are geared more for the younger reader, but the information will satisfy both groups. The entries are arranged alphabetically and average three to five pages. Each profile begins with a black-and-white photograph and the subject's vital statistics, including birth date and place, applicable death information or present position, educational background, and science field. An essay discusses the individual's childhood and family background, higher-education experiences, and career highlights. None of the articles is signed. The authors are educators with specialties covering history, science, reading, and library services.

School libraries will find this volume valuable because many of the people covered, such as Dartmouth physics professor H. Ralph Lewis and Bell Labs chemist James Mitchell, will not be found in other school resources. This book will also be an asset to multicultural collections in public libraries. Reading the stories of these lives may inspire young people, African Americans and others, to look toward the sciences as a career.

Review

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"Intended for middle-school level and up, this book is recommended for most library collections."-Insights

"Few similar reference tools are currently available....A welcome addition to most libraries."-Library Journal

"This book needs to be in all libraries and read by a wide audience - all teachers, all counselors, students, and parents."-African Link

"Black students have countless role models to draw inspiration from, and this book offers insight into the lives of many such heroes."-Science and Technology in General

..."a one-stop source of information useful for preparing a research paper or obtaining selected kinds of guidance material that might, in providing role models, expand potential occupational horizons."-Isis

"Obviously written for school children, this would be most appropriate for school libraries and children's reference section in public libraries. The stories it tells of these scientists' lives and accomplishments are both informative and inspiring."-Reference Book Review

"This valuable addition to the literature exposes the many obstacles in our society that African Americans have had to overcome to reach their present careers and occupations....The book is generally well written and is recommended to undergraduates, professionals, and the general public."-CHOICE

"It makes information about not just the careers, but also the personal lives, available on many people covered, if at all, only in cursory fashion in other biographical tools. It will be very useful for anyone who poses a variant on the question that a decade ago stumped Scammons at the Library of Congress when students asked for the names of seventy-five black scientists."-Rettig on Reference

"This book is a must have for all math and science teachers who continually ask the question, 'How can I incorporate multicultural education into such an 'objective' subject?' It includes some well-known people such as George Washington Carver, and others who accomplished much with little attention. The book is suitable for children over eleven years old. Language is concise and easy to follow."-The Multicultural Pavilion at the University of Virginia

"The authors of this volume sought to capture the texture of scientists' lives through illustrations of their formative experiences, higher education, and scientific careers. Since 87 of the 100 scientists profiled are living, the authors were able to use interviews and their personal papers, as well as periodical and book sources, resulting in well-rounded profiles....Students should find inspiration as well as report material in these biographies."-School Library Journal

"If you've ever felt the need for an inspiring story about an African American scientist for a student, you should have had this book on your shelf....the biographies show each scientist as a real human with interests and experiences similar to those of students, rather than as someone who was born a renowned scientist and is remote from the world....Students will be inspired by the stories of these scientists in this book that you

will certainly want to add to your collection."-VOYA

"The compilers have sought to provide students with expanded and more well-rounded presentations of the individual's life, including some of the formative experiences of the subjects. They have attempted to show some of the drama in the lives of the subjects. They have attempted to show some of the drama in the lives of the subjects and show some of the real costs and benefits associated with the pursuit of a career in scientific research. In addition, these biographical sketches convey several kinds of generally useful information: aspects of the general social history of our country, a bit of the institutional structure of higher education, some sense of the procedural steps involved in claiming professional status as a scientist, and some of the actual scientific content of our subject's own research projects."-BCALA

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Patricia Diaz:**

The book Distinguished African American Scientists of the 20th Century (Distinguished African Americans Series) make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You should use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting tension or having big problem together with your subject. If you can make studying a book Distinguished African American Scientists of the 20th Century (Distinguished African Americans Series) to be your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your own capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You may know everything if you like wide open and read a e-book Distinguished African American Scientists of the 20th Century (Distinguished African Americans Series). Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this publication?

#### **Gale Velez:**

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