**Black History Month Highlights of Black American Scientists**

Caroline Bond Day was possibly the first Black female biological anthropologist, and one of the first African Americans to graduate from Harvard with a master’s degree in anthropology. Caroline Day Bond, living from 1889-1948, was a student of the physical anthropologist, Earnest Albert Hooton. Day’s main area of study was on admixed Black and White individuals (termed race crossing at that time) in the United States, including her own family. She received a bachelor's degree in English from Atlanta University in 1912, and another from Radcliffe College (then the all-female arm of Harvard) in 1919. She finally earned a master's degree in Anthropology from Harvard in 1932 with the research thesis, “A study of some Negro-white families in the United States”, in which she chronicled the biological characteristics and genealogy of hundreds of individuals and dozens of families. Bond Day went on to teach at Howard University and other institutions over the years, though shifting her focus to English and then later drama. Though she had to retire early and eventually died of a reoccurring heart condition that limited her career as an educator, her varied skill set brought her a wide range of academic and non-academic placements, including time as a social worker, writer, and as a dean.

Though Caroline studied human difference, her research had an important focus on similarities. As chronicled in her article for “The Crisis”, a journal founded by W.E.B. Du Bois as the official publication of the NAACP, Bond Day was primarily concerned with disproving that there are appreciable differences between mixed and non-mixed individuals except when socio-economic status was the explanatory factor. The fact that there existed middle class upwardly mobile black families, whether mixed or not, showed that laws prohibiting intermarriage (miscegenation) predicated on intermixed individuals being biological inferior were baseless. “Day hoped her study would refute the myths and stereotypes concerning mulattos that had been generated by previous academic studies and perpetuated by popular opinion” (Harrison and Harrison 1999:42).

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