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Experiencing the National Museum of African American History

I heard "I wanna go, but it's so hard to get tickets!" all the time whenever someone mentioned the National Museum of African American History.

Fortunately, a coworker of mine was generous and had extra tickets to the Museum that she didn't plan on using. I went alone that day. I didn't find it heavy or intimidating until I entered the depths of the museum. That's where one is supposed to start. The bottom.

There were a lot of people that day, so there was not a lot of room to really loiter around. Despite the dimmed lights, I sensed a reverberating sense of restlessness. Everyone was trying to get a peek, a view, and a listen. I attest that the museum matched and exceeded the hype. Every strain of a stride or push on your tippy-toes will be worth it.



Exterior of the National Museum of African American History and Culture

What really anchored this experience for me was my introduction to [Ida B. Wells](#). She was well-known an suffragist, activist, sociologist as well as a journalist. She was very active in investigative journalism as she documented one of the most horrific forms of domestic terrorism: lynching.

Lynchings often occurred as forms of white intimidation upon black people. Often the attacks were claimed to be in response to criminal misdeeds by black people. Ida B. Wells provided documentation and stories that revealed the true nature of the slaughter.

I never learned about her in my history classes in high school. In my collegiate studies, her name only gave me faint recognition. Since encountering Ida B. Wells at the African American History Museum, I feel I have even more respect and motivation to pursue journalism as a black woman—not to convert a narrative, but to give eyes and light to instances that are consistent to the nature of American history.

-Alexandria B.

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