To Hell and Back

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Individual Documentary
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I have known of National History Day since the very beginning of my post-elementary school career. Unlike the vast majority of my 6th grade class, I was actually excited to participate. My enthusiasm came less from the fun of doing the project and more from the prospect of being afforded the opportunity to babble on about a historical topic of my choosing. But, as most good things are, my project was snipped early in the bud when my family relocated to Saudi Arabia for my father’s work. Aside from the obvious culture shock, the limitations placed on literature in the nation crippled a book worm like myself. Luckily, my teacher’s emphasis on the importance of self education—and complete lack of regard for her own personal welfare—would save me. In the sole interest of her students, my middle school teacher smuggled restricted books into the country. Among these books were a number of autobiographies, journals on early American history, and a singular novel by the name of *The Harlem Hellfighters*, by Max Brooks. Being the unique child I was, I devoured the book. It covered a number of heroic feats by a lone military detail, exploits that would recede to the back of my mind until years later, when I would be given the opportunity to make an entire film about them.

For the most part, my research consisted of copious amounts of reading. Scouring databases and comparing and contrasting different accounts also took up a large portion of the time. I emailed a number of professors and scholars for interviews or guidance, receiving four responses. The largest challenge by far, though, was attempting to fit the amount of information I was gathering into a coherent, enjoyable, and artistically sound script, all while under a strict time limit.
My reasoning for choosing the category I did was because of my prior experience with filmmaking. Aside from having a deep appreciation for cinematography, the aforementioned less-than-conventional schooling I received overseas also required a number of documentary projects, particularly with experimental methods of filmmaking. My experience with NHD in the documentary category just last year was also a major factor.

The Harlem Hellfighters could possibly be the most underrated and overlooked contributors to American history in its entirety. Through the lens of our theme this year, we see that the selfless sacrifice, suffering, and struggle that these men subjected themselves to significantly contributed to the progression of American values and the healing of our national wounds. While the recognition they received did not solve all racial issues plaguing the nation, their newfound respect from White society empowered the whole of Black America to take a more active stance in demanding civil equality. Their precedent allowed the public to temporarily dismantle the racial and psychological barriers dividing them in order to savor a moment of a very human unity—right there on 5th Avenue. If we hope to solve any of the issues dividing us today, we need to be willing to do the same.
Annotated Bibliography

**Primary Sources**

**Interviews**


Robert Sweeney’s notice of the discrepancy in treatment between the French and American troops was used in the documentary to establish the French’s progressive attitudes as well as try to appeal to a sense of humanity in the audience.


This interview with a member of the 92nd Division was honestly enlightening. His descriptions of the military complex and life on the front lines, as well as his reference of other significant figures in the War, and his status as a primary source were all wonderful contributions to this documentary.


Major General James was a fantastic resource in my research because of his clarity of explanation. He laid out the importance of the Hellfighters to American history, some important anecdotes accounting for their bravery, and what we can learn from the War moving forward as a society.


This interview with actual Hellfighter James Jones was definitely an interesting one. From the conditions of the trenches to the story of Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts, Jones was one of the most significant resources in the whole of my research. To hear from an actual fighter was not only exciting, but incredibly insightful.

Mr. Ryan’s experience at basic training—particularly his experience with harassment and discrimination—were by no means unique and were difficult to listen to. Even still, they were an excellent resource for being able to further humanize these men.

**Books**


Getting in touch with the history of African-American interactions with society as a whole was a critical part of my earlier research. The author forwards that the systemic discrimination that had suppressed minority citizens for so long was only bound to succumb to social advance, provided the Black community was willing to unite to demand it.


Personal narratives such as this one were a tremendous help in making sure my research was as balanced as possible. This specific account details the toils of war from the perspective of the only African-American soldier to ever leave a published record of their experience.


This historical account of the advancements of the 92nd and 93rd Divisions was an interesting source. Primary sources and personal narratives straight from the soldiers themselves filled the book, which was not only helpful in building my bibliography, but being able to more easily inject the human element into the film.


This source provided an incisive analysis of Black soldier’s effect on the concept of democracy in America after World War I, and was helpful in making sure my entry was historically accurate and pushing a reasonable thesis.
African-American press served as an unprecedented means to convey the interests of the community onto the national stage, and was especially useful in doing so after the War. The advent of the “New Negro” ushered in with it a renewed confidence in the race, and the press served as a means to broadcast that pride. Publications like these, as is forecasted in the book, would sprout activist movements in the decades to come.

I used this timely commentary from renowned Black sociologist W.E.B. DuBois to note the duality of mind Black Americans experienced around the turn of the 20th Century, specifically a “sense of two-ness”, or dual allegiance to American national identity as well as the stolen African heritage from which their ancestors had come.

The French were incredibly accommodating to Black troops; that is, they did not treat them any worse than their own. The nation’s landscape was ravaged, and the difficulty marching nearly matched getting across the Atlantic itself. This source alone was immensely important in creating a setting for the audience to immerse themselves in.

Once again adding to the variety of human perspective, these *Memoirs of an American Patriot* were integral in ensuring accuracy and balance in my research, as well as building a narrative. The author mentions sacrifice and ideals at home a number of times, both of which were a huge help in developing a theme.

This book, which was only available to me through the Library of Congress’ archives, was an incredible help in establishing the historical context for my documentary. The author forwards that even before World War I (though especially after it), institutions were on an upward trajectory in ensuring civil rights for Black Americans.

The final chapters of this work on another Black regiment were integral in creating some of the narrative. At one point, the author forwards that “hereafter n-i-g-g-e-r will merely be another way of spelling American,” and that the sacrifices made in the War drove the transition of African-Americans from underclass status to an equal citizenry.


This is an incredibly well researched account of Black troops’ experience in the War, one that offered a few significant points regarding the organization of the military overseas, the most important being that African-American soldiers were not allowed commanding officers of their own race.


Sentiments about the War, from both Black and White citizens, were often projected onto the fiction of the time. This work crafted just after the Armistice was helpful in researching the Black perspective’s glorification of the 369th.


This source was useful in helping to establish a bit of narrative as far as the tail end of the War went. The Armistice was a relief to a number of soldiers on the front lines, but for the 369th it would also mark the homebound journey that would cement them into American memory.


This narrative account of the intergenerational struggle from bondage—literally or otherwise—that countless Black Americans had to weather in their pursuit of civil equality was both heart wrenching and a pleasure to be informed by. The information and anecdotes were absolutely indispensable in creating my script.


A refreshingly balanced analysis of political sentiments in the Black community, Nave’s work here addresses the discrimination of the past, the anxieties of the increasingly unstable White majority, and the methods of protest on behalf of Black America that were likely to come.

This was one of the few sources that actually cited poverty and minimal education as key struggles to overcome for the Black community at this time. My reference to the failure of Black institutions to carry out meaningful change was a callback to the insight provided in this source.


Written in period accurate dialect, this work of fiction’s protagonist is a naive young Black man thrust into service abroad. While most likely not written with this intention, it captured perfectly just how innocent some of these troops were. Not all Black men served with the conscious goal of pushing social advance, though all suffered for it.


General John Pershing, leader of the American Expeditionary Force, was a figure that provided great insight not just into the War in itself, but the structure and mindset of the military complex in which the Harlem Hellfighters operated. The goal of this organization was inherently strategic, and troops served only to satisfy those ends.


An alternative incentive for Black participation in the War, as this book forwards, was genuine patriotism. Despite centuries of exploitation, African-Americans still understood themselves to be just that: American. According to Powell, many were willing to fight on that basis alone.


Used as an authority on the 92nd and 93rd Divisions’ exploits in the War, I used this account of Black soldiers in combat as verification for a large portion of my other research.

The struggle between the African-American community and American society at large mirrors that internal psychological conflict the community struggled with on its own. Reconciling their African roots with their American present was one of the most pressing barriers to a politically and socially active Black community. The momentary shattering of these barriers acted as a catalyst for waves of activism for decades to come.


This source was mainly used for figuring out how exactly I wanted to portray the soldiers and the battlefields in a visual sense. The picture descriptions also inspired some of the language I used in my script.


In the interest of keeping my research balanced, I inspected a few sources expressing White anxieties at the prospect of civil equality for all. In this case, the author cites newfound amiability towards African-Americans as proof that a great usurpation is on the horizon, and the White race that had been so dominant and fruitful in its past pursuits saw before it an imminent existential threat.

Williams, Charles H. Sidelights on Negro Soldiers. B.J. Brimmer, 1923.

This provided a plethora of recorded instances of discrimination toward and valorous conduct on behalf of Black troops in the War. While time constraints limited my ability to report on every heroic deed, I could not help but investigate just how far these men went for what they believed in.

Essays


This essay, drawing from Du Bois’ own research expeditions to France, was illuminating in its clarity and concision regarding Black soldiers’ experiences with prejudice on the battlefield, as well as the comparatively progressive outlook of the French with the 369th.


This essay on the importance of the 369th to broader Black America was especially interesting, not to mention useful in the construction of the latter half of my script.
Editorials


Du Bois’ narration of his people’s struggle before, during, and after the War was undoubtedly one of the driving forces of my research. In this work specifically, he details the exploits of all the black regiments that served, and speculates as to their effect on the community at large.


I used quotes from this article to highlight the change of attitude in the Black community, and the major break in the psychological barrier they faced. The renewed hope for the ideals of democracy, as well as the bolstered confidence in the community to fight for them that DuBois highlights here were integral to the advancement of civil rights in America later down the line.

Journal Article


This journal is filled with handwritten letters and reflections on wartime memories from one Bruce Wright, a Black serviceman and prolific writer. The majority of his notes are on the condition and attitudes of his fellow soldiers, notably their malnourishment and tendency to sickness. This only reinforced other sources’ claims about the conditions on the ground.

Manuscripts


This source, the first of a series of manuscripts from the same Black infantryman, was incredibly helpful in understanding the loneliness Black troops must’ve felt. It was also useful in delineating the differing attitudes of French and American troops.
Alston, James W. *A Letter from First Lieutenant James W. Alston to H. H. Brimley on October 6, 1918 about Being Shot by a Machine Gun in the War*. Digital Public Library of America, 6 Oct. 1918, dp.la/primary-source-sets/african-american-soldiers-in-world-war-i/sources/845. Among other correspondence from Lieutenant Alston, I found this one particularly interesting because it describes the pain of injury in war. I figured I could shape some of my script’s language around his description of the experience. This definitely inspired me to be a bit more liberal with my dramatic flair.

Alston, James W. *A Letter from First Lieutenant James W. Alston to H. H. Brimley Praising Black Soldiers, September 3, 1918*. Digital Public Library of America, 3 Sept. 1918. *Digital Public Library of America*, dp.la/primary-source-sets/african-american-soldiers-in-world-war-i/sources/844. I used this primary source in my research in order to accurately capture the brand of praise the 369th was receiving. Their effectiveness in battle is effectively what earned them their nicknames, and for good reason. Lieutenant Austin writes about the major strategic gains that were acquired directly as a result of the 369th’s efforts.

Dyer, William Holmes. *William Holmes Dyer Memoirs*. New York Public Library, archives.nypl.org/uploads/collection/generated_finding_aids/scm20865.pdf. It was an unspoken fact that Black troops were not a priority in whatever military organization they were in, but I was never aware of the fact that they often received shipments of provisions and equipment at a later date than other units. William Dyer’s memoirs made this, among other wartime realities, known to me. Memoirs and personal narratives like this were a significant aspect of my research.

*A French Directive*. The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, Yale University, glc.yale.edu/french-directive. The French military stood to gain a lot from the 369th’s presence. This military document shows the Hellfighters’ strategic placement on the battlefield, and what the French had to gain from their presence. Often they would be placed as shock troops to overwhelm the German defense troops. Though a dangerous position, the men fought ferociously.

Frost, R.C.S. *Trenches: ‘Awfully Desolate Spot.’* 22 May 1915. *National Archives of the United Kingdom*, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/education/letters-from-the-first-world-war-1915-3-trenches.pdf. This source, a letter from the trenches, allows us to peer into the mental state of those on the front lines; it provides a naked snapshot of the emotional toils that constant conflict entails, the hatred that often sprouted as a result, and just the sort of torture that soldiers were subjecting themselves to.
The trenches were an intensely dangerous place as well; constant bombardment left many with permanent mental scars. Artillery fire was a significant motif in the documentary for this very reason. It was the soundtrack to the hellish reality that was this war.

Pippin, Horace. *An excerpt from a 1921 memoir by Horace Pippin that provides a 1918 journal entry from his time fighting in France.* Digital Public Library of America, 1921. *Digital Public Library of America*,
https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/african-american-soldiers-in-world-war-i/sources/842. This journal excerpt from an actual Hellfighter was probably one of the most impactful sources in the entirety of my scope. The descriptions of life at war that these pages provide contributed substantially to the framing of my script.

www.aaa.si.edu/collections/horace-pippin-notebooks-and-letters-8586/series-1/box-1-folder-2. Horace Pippin, a Hellfighter himself, became an artist after the War was over. This is reflected in the various crayon drawings of warfare in his journals. I tried to mirror the scenes he drew in the opening minute of the documentary.

Pippin, Horace. *Horace Pippin Memoir of His Experiences in World War I.* Smithsonian Institute, 1921. *Archives of American Art*,
www.aaa.si.edu/collections/items/detail/horace-pippin-memoir-his-experiences-world-war-i-7434. Amongst the letters and sketches of the battlefield, here Horace Pippin provides a cohesive, unpublished retelling of his experiences. This memoir alone is filled with enough vibrancy and humanity to merit a film following itself.

www.aaa.si.edu/collections/horace-pippin-notebooks-and-letters-8586/series-1/box-1-folder-5. These reflections on wartime memories, particularly the gorier moments, were incredibly useful in understanding how these men were affected by what they saw in combat. Pippin recalls (and illustrates) his experiences in vivid detail, something I tried to carry on in my own script.

The front lines were under an unforgiving climate for the majority of the War. Aside from making living conditions dirty and difficult, the unsanitary setting dramatically increased the risk of infection in even minor wounds. This source recollects that lifestyle and allowed me to gain great insight into it as I wrote my script.

**Newspapers**


This is just one of the dozens of accounts of the 369th’s welcome parade. The use of the word “feted” in the headline alone shows just how lavish the celebrations were. This source, among others, establishes the significance of the parade (and what it represented) in the broader context of history.

“Advanced With Handful of Men.” *The Stars and Stripes*, 14 Mar. 1919, p. 5. *Library of Congress*, www.loc.gov/resource/20001931/1919-03-14/ed-1/?sp=5&st=text&r=0.363,0.74,0.322,0.315,0.

Among the countless other brave souls within the 369th and the American Expeditionary Force as a whole, First Lieutenant George Robb stands out as a particularly courageous soldier. After being severely wounded on the battlefield, Robb continued fighting with his men until commanded to the dressing stations. Drive and dedication like this is what earned the Hellfighters their praise, and it definitely contributed significantly to my research.

“After the War: A Symposium.” *Southern Workman, Vol. 48*, 1919, p. 134, books.google.com/books?id=ofBNAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA134&lpg=PA134&dq=after+the+war:+a+symposium+southern+workman&source=bl&ots=t4sAwWYOyN&sig=ACfU3U2JgYjAibE72m3XscbHN2B3xP4ZxQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjh9JyjoM_oAhUIQ60KHZw6AZcQ6AEwAXoECAsQLg#v=onepage&q=after%20the%20war%3A%20a%20symposium%20southern%20workman&f=false.

Though a relatively minor source, this news article discussing the direction American society was heading to did yield some insight into the general outlook for Americans after the Armistice.

“American Negroes' Glorious Fighting Record Gives Them Rights To Benefits of Full Citizenship.” *Perth Amboy Evening News*, 12 Aug. 1918, p. 7. Library of Congress, chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85035720/1918-08-12/ed-2/seq-7/?loclr=blogser. This article was especially important in establishing the main thesis of this documentary: the psychological and sociological barriers broken and the reconciling of Black society with American society as a whole. The 369th’s exploits acted as a threshold moment in securing respect for Black Americans, and this article clarifies that.

Baker, Ray Stannard. “Gathering Clouds Along The Color Line.” *The World's Work, Vol. 32*, 1916, pp. 232–239, books.google.com/books?id=KZIK9J9cttEC&pg=PA125&lpg=PA125&dq=Gathering+Clouds+Along+the+Color+Line&source=bl&ots=3kiM42k4qu&sig=ACfU3U18JAS5ppR_YfjoGqEtT0jiHRuJoNg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjp_Menqc_oAhVIKa0KHUmqcYQ6AewAHoECAsQKQ#v=onepage&q=Gathering%20Clouds&f=false. Even before the advent of America in the War, racial tension was a very large issue facing the nation. This article on that very issue cites race riots dotting the nation and a general fear on behalf of the White majority that African-Americans would usurp them and their power.

“Baneful Effect of Race Prejudice.” *The Twin City Star*, 24 Mar. 1917. Library of Congress, chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn90060427/1917-03-24/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1789&sort=relevance&date2=1963&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&index=11&words=Negro+New+regiment+York&proxidistance=5&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phresetext=new+york+negro+regiment&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=2. Despite widespread bigotry, racial prejudice was scorned by a number of mainstream newspapers, like *The New York Tribune* and *The Twin City Star*. The Hellfighters’ effectiveness in battle emboldened these newspapers even further. This source in particular helped me to understand the fact that there was not solely hatred for the Black community during the War.

This promotional advertisement for *The Denver Star* tried to utilize the aforementioned patriotic sentiments of the black community and promises of economic gains to boost recruitment. Black newspapers like this one along with community leaders like W.E.B. Du Bois played a major role in driving up volunteer service in their communities.


This source provided an alternative perspective to the celebrations that were to take place in New York. The very fact that reports of these parades reached as far as Utah is representative of their significance.


The Hellfighters were awarded the Croix de Guerre (War Cross), France’s highest military honor, for their displays of valor in the trenches. This was not just unprecedented in the eyes of the American public, but crucial in securing the respect that the Black community as a whole was to receive from that public eye.


The Hellfighters’ exploits were recognized almost immediately by their own Harlem community leaders. In this case, the leader of the Tuskegee Institute, a well-respected African-American academy, personally congratulated and thanked the troops for their function in the cause of furthering social justice. In my research, recognition from figures like these solidified the importance of the barrier these men broke in their sacrifice.

Lawrence, W.B. “Why the Negro Fights.” *Southern Workman*, Vol. 47, Dec. 1918, books.google.com/books?id=7_BNAAAMAAJ&pg=PR9&lpg=PR9&dq=why+the+negro+fights+southern+workman+%27&source=bl&ots=8a-0C8s5Bt&sig=ACfU3U30h0Y5bAX8k7dqwf-fE8JudCQaAhkl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi8KuPq8_oAhVBNq0KH eNCBI0Q6AEwAXoECAsQKQ#v=onepage&q=negro%20fights&f=false.

A fantastic essay on the drive of soldiers, Lawrence makes clear that the interest of the African-American citizen in the pursuit of democracy abroad was solely out of desire for the espousal of similar ideals in their home.

This source gave me critical insight into just how the regiments themselves were structured. Field officers excluded, all soldiers in the units were Black. This concept was near unprecedented in American military history.

“Other Hampton Men Meet the Front.” *Southern Workman, Vol. 48*, 1919, books.google.com/books?id=ofBNAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA45&lpg=PA45&dq=369th+Infantry+trench+letters&source=bl&ots=t4sAwYYIEL&sig=ACfU3U1NoLYXXA1AviEWMzw1kNkBslBhuQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwijzb3h6M_oAhUDRKwKHXt0C5g4PBDoATACegQIDBAo#v=onepage&q=369th%20Infantry%20trench%20letters&f=false

New York was not the only state sending Black troops overseas. Virginia, Missouri, and a number of other states also commissioned all-Black units to the 92nd or 93rd Divisions. This was important for my own understanding regarding the extent of military service in the community.


This Iowa newspaper’s coverage of the return of the Hellfighters was especially helpful in developing my own understanding of the social ripples this had throughout the country, as well as how deep admiration from the public was.


Reports of fantastic performance from African-American troops would become the norm a few months after deployment. This would drive the popularity of the Hellfighters among the general populous immensely.
Integrating basic training was a difficulty on its own. As mentioned in the segment regarding mistreatment at Camp Spartanburg, assaults and brawls were the norm on trips to training. J.E. Spingarn claims that the military wanted these camps to fail, which is exactly why further integration was to be forwarded. If any social advance was to be achieved, temporary suffering was necessary; this theme extends to every aspect of this film.


Petition and protest were the main agents of activism in the decades after the World War. In this case, a mass of 10,000 African-American veterans petitioned for the appointment of their brother in arms for a head position in the New York State Guard. This is but one of the examples of the sort of civil action the 369th’s service inspired.


This article delves into the backtracking and contradiction on behalf of the Federal Government and other organizations’ promises of civil equality in exchange for economic and physical sacrifices made by African-Americans.


This article from the *New York Tribune* was incredibly important in the development of the thesis of this documentary. The quote regarding the displacement of racial lines, which I cite in the later portions of the film, was particularly significant.


*The Stars and Stripes* was a periodical made by and for soldiers overseas in France, and it seems from this publication that even they were willing to recognize the achievements of the 369th and the whole of the 93rd Division. To me, this stood as testament to the power of their achievements in the contemporary eye.
Speeches

Pickens, William. “(1919) William Pickens, ‘The Kind of Democracy the Negro Expects’.”
(1919) William Pickens, "The Kind of Democracy the Negro Expects" •, BlackPast, 21 Sept. 2019,
This transcript of a speech given by the leader of the 1919 NAACP was especially important in determining the institutional response to African-American performance in the War, as well as to the discrimination received from the American military complex.
Secondary Sources

Interviews

An esteemed director and producer in his own right, Mr. Wolf is currently working on a film concerning W.E.B. Du Bois’ writings and contributions to the whole of the fight for civil equality. Our conversation yielded immensely helpful insight, and Mr. Wolf suggested a number of contacts and databases for research that were tremendous for the progress, accuracy, and varied perspective of my final product.

When approaching a topic as pivotal to the progression of American history as the success of Black troops in the First World War, philosopher and civil rights icon W.E.B. Du Bois is perhaps the most important and authoritative voice of the era. Beyond founding the NAACP and being the first Black man to receive a doctoral degree from Harvard University, Du Bois contributed immensely to characterizing and healing collective African-American psychology and encouraging the community’s participation in the War. Arthur MacFarlane II, Du Bois’ great-grandson and personal historian, was able to provide tremendous insight into the significant effects of his many philosophical concepts, most notably “two-ness,” a core aspect of my documentary.

Corporal Richard, a personal friend of mine and an African-American veteran of the Iraq War, was (perhaps unsurprisingly) a fantastic resource for a contemporary perspective on the influence of the Hellfighters in the American military. The very fact that Richard could recall the exploits of the Hellfighter in detail is a testament to the lasting impact they had on American history.

Kinder, Adam. “Interview with Dr. Philip Sintiere, Professor at the College of Biblical Studies.” Email Interview. 19 May 2020.
Professor of History at the College of Biblical Studies and prominent student of Black thought and history, Dr. Philip Sintiere was a terrific resource in gaining a spiritual and academic perspective on the effect of the Hellfighters, specifically the uniform confidence of the African-American community directly after the War.
Books

While not exclusively about the 369th unit, this account of the experience of Black soldiers in the War was an important one in my research, as it outlined the instances of prejudice within the American military complex as well as anecdotes from which I could draw some lines in my script.

The September offensive mentioned in the later half of my script stemmed from this book. The 369th were vicious fighters, and the Meuse-Argonne is the campaign that most look to for evidence of that fact.

This book brought my attention to the fact that the very division that the Hellfighters were to be included in casted them aside solely on the basis of their skin color. I found it so significant that I stated it in the script.

This source brought to my knowledge the efforts on behalf of our government to downplay the advancements made by the Hellfighters and those who came before them.

Fean, Andrew M. *RACE CAPITAL?: Harlem as Setting and Symbol*. COLUMBIA UNIV PRESS, 2021.
Harlem, beyond being the home of the Hellfighters, would emerge from the War a cultural capital for Black America. Poets, jazz musicians, and civil activists gravitated to the city for its concentration of racial pride and acceptance of the arts.

Once again, to fully understand the conditions on the front lines, I decided to get to know the weapons used and how the damage inflicted was treated. Both were integral in drafting a historically accurate script.
Fox, Stephen R. *The Guardian of Boston: William Monroe Trotter*. Atheneum, 1971, Google Books, books.google.com/books/about/The_Guardian_of_Boston.html?id=pWVCAAAAIAAJ. This book made clear just how historically important African-American participation in the War was. In one section, the author states that “at no time since the days following the Civil War had the Negro been in a postition where he stood to make greater gain or sustain greater loss in status. The Great War in Europe, its recoil on America, the ferment in the United States, all conspired to break up the stereotypes conception of the Negro’s place… and to allow new formations.”

Greene, Robert Ewell. *Black Defenders of America, 1775-1973*. Johnson, 1974. While this was not a major source of information on the Hellfighters in particular, this contributed by providing a linear history of Black sacrifice to substantiate some of the claims made in the documentary.

Harris, Bill. *The Hellfighters of Harlem: African-American Soldiers Who Fought for the Right to Fight for Their Country*. Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2004. This source was vivid in its description of the War and its toils, and in sharing the stories of the men who fought in it, helped me make my decision as to what the focus of this documentary was to be: not just the barriers that were broken, but the people who did it.

Harris, Stephen L., and Rod Paschall. *Harlem's Hellfighters: the African-American 369th Infantry in World War I*. Brassey's, 2003. While this source did have some issues as far as staying away from narrative pushes goes, it was still rich in sources and a fairly accurate and objective timeline and account.

Janken, Kenneth Robert. *Rayford W. Logan and the Dilemma of the African-American Intellectual*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1993, p. 61. Not all Americans were convinced of Black America’s worthiness of respect after the War. The author recounts an instance in which a soldier witnessed the persistence of racism himself: “As I stepped on deck, my first time on American ‘soil’ in six years, over the strains of the band playing the Star Spangled banner, I heard a steward say: ‘Look at that damned nigger.’ For a moment I felt like getting off the ship and returning to France, but my decision had been firmly made.”

Jordan, William G. *Black Newspapers and America's War for Democracy, 1914-1920*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2003, pp. 1–68. African-American newspapers were vastly important in forwarding progressive values and reinforcing the potent racial pride that sprouted from World War I. This was news to me, and it inspired me to make a large portion of my primary sources from periodicals like the ones cited here.
Admittedly, the African-American community initially had mixed feelings regarding the tangible effects of the War on their own lives. The lack of immediate action to secure that change made many pessimistic, though ultimately the optimism forwarded by the “New Negro Movement” would be a more popular outlook.

I used this book by Martin Luther King, Jr. to provide a bit of perspective in my research in regards to the barriers yet to be broken by Black America after the First World War. I also drew from it a quote that acted as a functional thesis: that if social barriers are to be broken, they require the sacrifice, suffering, and struggle of dedicated individuals (e.g. the Harlem Hellfighters).

This source acted as even further corroboration for (and a new perspective on) the advent of the New Negro Movement in popular Harlem culture as a result of the Hellfighters’ efforts.

This source, a work co-authored by one of the authoritative researchers of 20th Century Black America, was fantastic in providing me primary sources and detailing the instances of institutional persecution that have punctuated American history into the modern day.

This book places the struggles of the Hellfighters in the broader context of African-American history, and in doing so makes clear their significant contributions to the development of African-Americans into a community that is afforded equal civil rights.
This mainly acted as a source by which I could corroborate other perspectives. It also provided some interesting anecdotes from some battles in the Meuse-Argonne.

Moore, William. *Gas Attack!: Chemical Warfare 1915-18 and Afterwards*. Cooper, 1987. While not a major source in my documentary, this source definitely made clear the uniqueness of chemical warfare to World War I, at least in its own time. The use of gas for combat was almost unprecedented up to that point. The distinction inspired me to make footage of gas attacks a heavy visual motif in the film.

Nelson, Peter. *A More Unbending Battle: the Harlem Hellfighters' Struggle for Freedom in WWI and Equality at Home*. Basic Civitas, 2009, Print. I used this poetic, yet down to earth, account of the Hellfighters’ story quite often, notably for quotes from contemporary news sources in describing the attitude of both Black and White Americans towards the 369th and their exploits.


Sammons, Jeffrey T., and John Howard Morrow. *Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: the Undaunted 369th Regiment & the African American Quest for Equality*. University Press of Kansas, 2014. Like *A More Unbending Battle*, this book mainly served as a baseline for my research and a means by which I could find more primary sources. The narrative of the book is a scholarly and balanced one, and contrasts the immediate effects of the 369th and the underlying institutionalized discrimination that would take decades of activism and protest to get rid of.

Schneider, Mark R. *"We Return Fighting": the Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age*. Northeastern Univ. Press, 2002. The renewed confidence instilled within the Black community fostered the growth of the “New Negro,” a Black citizen that engaged with the humanities, the fine arts, and civil activism. The Hellfighters, in a sense, inspired their community to fight like Hell for civil equality.

Slotkin, Richard. *Lost Battalions: the Great War and the Crisis of American Nationality*. Henry Holt and Company, 2005. At the very least in hindsight, the effect of Black soldiers in the War was resounding. The effort to reconcile Black identity with American nationality is a heavy theme in this book, and it undoubtedly had an effect on not only the course of American history, but the production of my script and thesis.
This book, while a general overview of World War I, provided interesting anecdotes and factoids throughout which helped to contextualize my topic.

This official description of the organization of deployed troops to Western Europe was mainly used for an accurate account of division numbers and totals used in my script.

In this book, William stresses the importance of the Hellfighters and their comrades in the context of broader history, but is also transparent in the fact that their effect was never recognized decades after their service.

**Essays**

This essay provided a number of illuminating anecdotes and points that I referenced several times in the creation of my script.

Williams, Chad L. *African Americans and World War I*. Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture, exhibitions.nypl.org/africanaage/essay-world-war-i.html#intro.
This essay was used to corroborate what I already knew, and had several primary and secondary sources that were a huge help in my research.

**Journal Articles**

I used this article in my research in finding the effect and intention of Du Bois' “Close Ranks” on the African-American public. It seems, at least going into the War, Du Bois’ held the view that temporary sacrifice in the name of patriotism would pave the way for equal civil status. Other sources show that afterwards he questioned its actual effect.

Fantastically analytic, this article covers the community wide deliberation that mirrored Du Bois’ own struggles. This was definitely a helpful resource in framing how African-Americans attempted to gauge what exactly they gained as a result of the War.


This journal for *Peace & Change* was important in establishing the mixed feelings about the effects of the War. Keene cites the prejudices experienced by Black troops as reason for Du Bois’ internal conflict about the War’s benefits. The Red Summer of 1919, a season of violence and animosity between the races, instilled within Du Bois a guilt and confusion as to the true impact of the war, as well as his responsibility in putting Black Americans on the forefront of the conflict.


This journal article for *American Quarterly* tackles African-American hopes going into the war, despair afterwards, and (most importantly) the downplaying of the effects that the War had on Black psychology. Mathieu makes the case that the War, in addition to having tremendous ramifications for Black America (positive and negative), ultimately had a greater role in altering the entirety of American thought than typically portrayed.


W.E.B. Du Bois, as established, was a crucial aspect of my research. His role in boosting service recruitment and his explorations of the philosophical implications of the War as well as what the Black community had to gain in a social sense were invaluable points in not only production of this film but my own understanding of the history of it all.


Once again, the streak of racial pride that resulted from African-American participation in the war ushered in an age of racial militancy and a willingness on the community’s part to demand civil equality. Williams forwards this idea using contemporary sources and fine analysis in this article. This was critical in developing an impact for the event in question.
Keene, Jennifer. “A Comparative Study of White and Black American Soldiers during the First World War.” Cairn.info, 2002, www.cairn.info/revue-annales-de-demographie-historique-2002-1-page-71.htm#no5. In addition to receiving supplies later than most troops, Black troops were also neglected in the infirmary. Despite the unprecedented burden the troops shouldered, they were prone to infection at a rate almost four times that of White soldiers.

Gergel, Nathan W. “THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN WORLD WAR I: MAKING AMERICA UNSAFE FOR HYPOCRISY.” University of North Carolina Wilmington, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2011, dl.uncw.edu/Etd/2011-1/gergeln/nathangergel.pdf. This doctoral thesis was not only a plethora of primary and secondary sources but a fantastic perspective on everything my project is about. It presents a balanced take on the discrimination against and glorification of the Hellfighters, their impact on the rest of American history, and the importance of that impact in modern life.

“Africans in World War I.” YouTube, YouTube, 28 May 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pRabavi2rU. This source was quite helpful in making clear the discrepancy of discrimination between African soldiers and African-American soldiers in the War.


Trench life was unsanitary, brutal, and left many scarred for the rest of their lives. This article from the Library of Congress introduced me to that reality, and gave me a plethora of sources to continue my research with.


This article proved to be a good place for some basic information on the Hellfighters, as well as some new sources to kick off my research.
Jackson, Peter, director. *They Shall Not Grow Old*. Amazon Prime Video, Amazon, 2019, www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B07PRZXV9C/ref=atv_yv_hom_c_unkc_1_2. I used a number of clips from this 2019 documentary on the experiences of British soldiers in the War, notably in my introductory sequence, in which I try to get the audience to visualize the sort of Hell that the 369th were willing to dive into in order to gain the respect of White America.

Martin, Frank, director. *For Love of Liberty: The Story of America's Black Patriots*. YouTube, Mill Creek Ent., 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=05EkgJY5JtA. This insightful documentary on the history of Black American soldiers crucial footage of the Hellfighters’ welcome home parade, as well as an impactfully sentimental rendition of Very Lynn’s “We’ll Meet Again”, which I used to subtly highlight the fact that not only will we see the same issues of discrimination, but that we will once again have to employ bravery and undaunted action to handle it, as the Hellfighters themselves did.

“The Reception of President Woodrow Wilson on His Arrival in Paris, December 16, 1918.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 16 June 2016, www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWRnV1y_JTQ. I repurposed this footage of crowds gathering to see President Woodrow Wilson in France in my introductory parade sequence, as there was limited camera coverage of the event itself.


“World War I- Harlem Hellfighters in France (Part 2).” *YouTube*, YouTube, 31 Dec. 2009, www.youtube.com/watch?v=2A6T7yx-c4s. I used several clips of marching and trench movements from this video in my documentary, which was very helpful in keeping the subjects animated enough for the audience to be able to relate to them.

“The 54th Massachusetts.” *The Boston Globe*, The Boston Globe, Washington, D.C., 20 J. This colorful illustration of past African-American troops was helpful in creating an entertaining visual spectacle to keep the audience engaged with the content.
I used an intercut of this image along with others in my introductory sequence to establish light context as to where the rest of the film will take place. This happened to be an image of the assassination that sparked the war in Europe.

**Images**

*Germany Declares War; All Europe Is in Arms*. New York City, 1 Aug. 1914, p. 1, vimyridgehistory.com/wp-content/gallery/declaration-headlines/Evening-World-August-1
I used this still image of a newspaper headline detailing the initial declarations of war to establish context in my beginning scenes.

This photograph was used in my closing sequences regarding the welcome home parade the Hellfighters would receive in Manhattan.

*Memembers of the 369th in combat on the Western Front, 1918*. (Corbis). Western Europe, 1918.
This photo was especially helpful in providing visual aid in understanding the setting (and struggles) of trench warfare on the Western Front.

I used this image in my first narrative sequence, among others, to highlight the beaming crowd the Hellfighters came home to.

I used this image to give a face to the civil rights icon I cited throughout the documentary, along with an accompanying quote.

**Score**

I used this cheery 1914 tune from Kid Ory to emphasize the joyous nature of the February Parade, ultimately making the impact of the scene (and the significance of the event it portrays) that much more powerful.

I used this gloomy turn-of-the-century blues track to provide a grim undertone to my establishment of context for Black America in the former half of the documentary.
I used this tune composed by 369th Jazz bandmaster James Reese Europe to juxtapose the brutalities of World War I with eerie cheer in the interest of magnifying the effect of the footage. The goal was to convey just how hellish the War really was, and more importantly what lengths these men were willing to go to in the interest of breaking their nation’s barriers.

I tried to use the domineering tone of this period piece to characterize the laborious life of a soldier in the trenches.