



Gloria Conyers Hewitt

FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN DEPARTMENT HEAD AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

• Born 1935 - •

Gloria Conyers Hewitt was born in Sumter, South Carolina to parents who valued education greatly, believing that "education was the only avenue through which an African American man or woman would better themselves." She was "proud of the fact that [her] parents could vote in the presidential election. Not everyone could in those days." She first wanted to be a nurse, but with encouragement from her professor at Frisk University, decided to explore mathematics. Despite the challenges she faced as a newly married mother, she was able to earn her degrees through the support of her family and teachers. She taught at the University of Washington, then the University of Montana, where she became Department Head. She contributed significantly to mathematical assessments and education during her tenure.

• DID YOU KNOW? •

Dr. Conyers Hewitt was the 7th black woman to earn a PH.D in Mathematics and the 3rd within the field of Abstract Algebra!

She was the first black woman to become a department head at the University of Montana when she was promoted to chair of the Department of Mathematical Sciences in 1995.

Hewitt was originally placed in a low-level math class. A professor encouraged her to take calculus and she fell in love with the word problems, often working on calculus 'for recreation'.



Mary Golda Ross

FIRST INDIGENOUS WOMAN TO BECOME AN ENGINEER

- Born. 1908 - Died. 2008 •

Mary was born in Park Hill Oklahoma. A member of the Cherokee Nation, Mary was the first Indigenous woman to become an engineer in the U.S. space program. As a child, her parents sent her to live with her grandparents so she could attend school. She excelled in mathematics and in 1928, earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics. Following graduation, she became a teacher, worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in D.C., and developed a passion for astronomy. After earning her Master's degree in Mathematics, Ross moved to California and Lockheed hired her as a mathematician. She became the first Indigenous woman to become an engineer and was the only female member of Lockheed's Advanced Development Projects Unit. Her work is mostly confidential, but she worked primarily on space travel and missile-related projects.

• DID YOU KNOW? •

Ross was known for her commitment to improving educational and engineering opportunities for Indigenous People.

She believed that ancient wisdom and Indigenous Knowledge could be used to solve the problems of today.

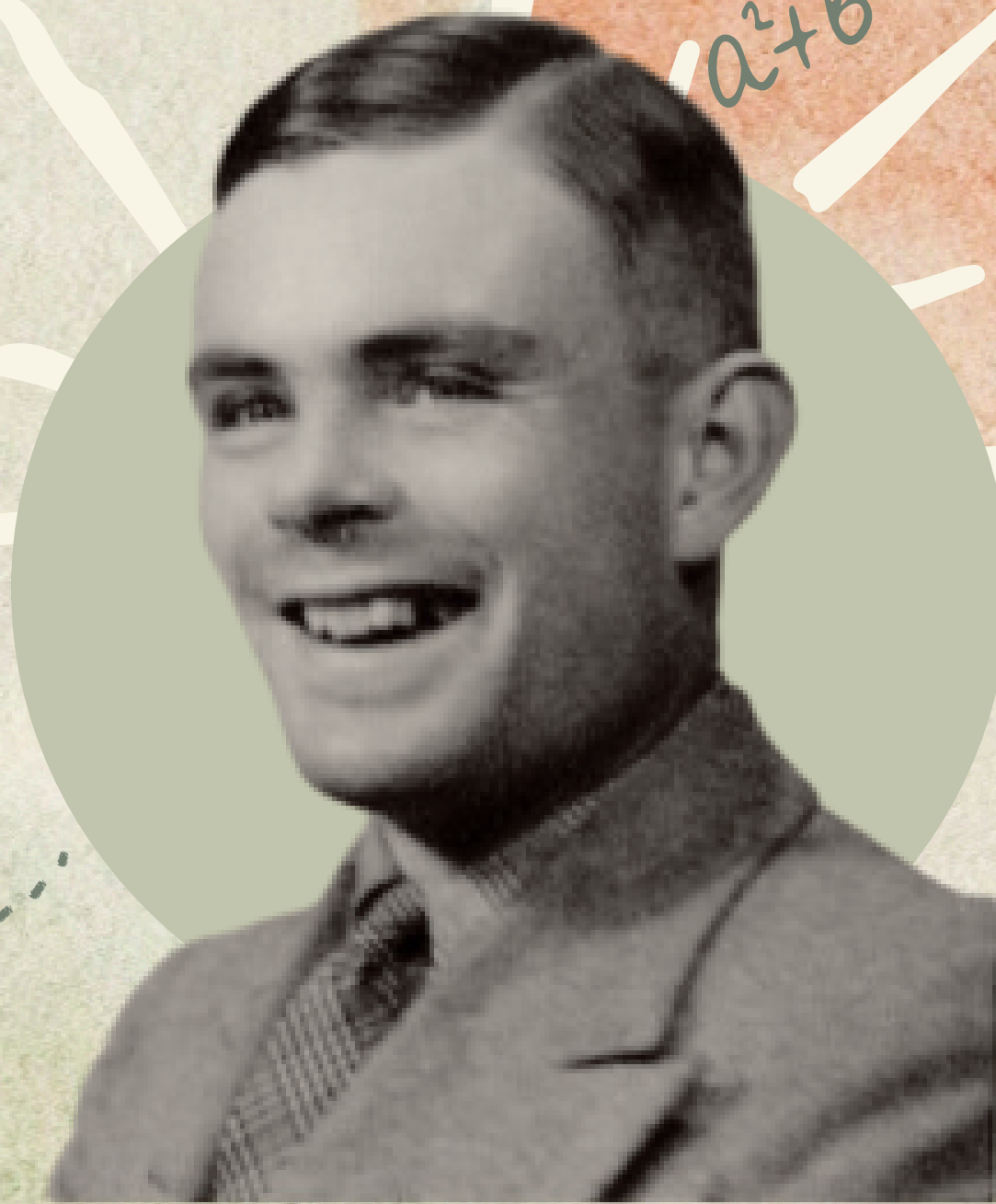
Ross often worked with NASA to develop spacecraft that were used during the Apollo program that landed a man on the moon!

Image: Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University. [Photograph of Mary Golda Ross] Accessed 2024, May 17. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mary-Golda-Ross/images-videos>

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Alan Turing

GRANDFATHER OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Born. 1912 - Died. 1954 •

Alan Turing was born in London, England, and studied at Cambridge University and Princeton University. His major work involves the development of his "Universal Turing Machine" which served as the basis for the modern computer. His work in computing and code-breaking became instrumental during World War II and led to the breaking of the 'unbreakable' German Enigma machine code and ultimately allowed the Allied forces to gain victory in the war. Following the war, Turing began developing an interest in Artificial Intelligence, developing the 'Turing Test' which serves as a basal unit of the debate around AI. Tragically, Turing's life was mired with difficulty as an openly gay man in the 1950s and he faced social challenges. These social stresses took a toll on Turing and his life was ended shortly after his prosecution for "gross indecency".

• DID YOU KNOW? •

The "Turing Test" is an experiment that endeavors to create an intelligence design standard for the tech industry. This test has become a central component in today's AI debate.

In 2013, Queen Elisabeth II posthumously granted Turing a Royal Pardon for the charge of "gross indecency" and in 2016, the British Government announced "Turing's Law" which posthumously pardoned thousands of men convicted for homosexual acts when it was considered a crime.

Turing's life was popularized in the movie "The Imitation Game", released in 2014 and starring Benedict Cumberbatch.