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Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Guest Groupings and Episode Descriptions

Episode 201: *In Search of Our Fathers*, Tuesday, September 23, 8-9 pm

Guests: Stephen King, Gloria Reuben and Courtney B. Vance

Three guests who know almost nothing about their fathers' histories: Stephen King's father walked out on the family when he was only two years old, and never returned; Courtney B. Vance wants to learn more about his true roots after the tragic suicide of his father, a foster child who never knew the identity of his biological parents; and Gloria Reuben's father was 78 years old when she was born, and he died when she was young, taking the secret of his ancestry with him. We solve the mysteries of their paternal ancestry and introduce them to relatives they never knew they had.

Episode 202: *Born Champions*, Tuesday, September 30, 8-9 pm

Guests: Derek Jeter, Billie Jean King and Rebecca Lobo

Three of America's greatest athletes whose determination and love of sports were deeply shaped by their families, but who were all cut off from their true origins. Billie Jean King learns the true story of her grandmother, who had always kept the secret of her orphan birth. Derek Jeter confronts his own ancestors' lives as slaves and discovers that they were owned by a white man named James Jeter - the source of the Jeter name and Derek's 3rd great-grandfather. Rebecca Lobo finds out that her Spanish ancestor fought side by side with a famous revolutionary and was forced to flee Spain because of his democratic ideals. All are also reunited with the foundation of their American roots through the stories of immigrant ancestors who courageously set out across the Atlantic to build a new life.

Episode 203: *Our American Storytellers*, Tuesday, October 7, 8-9 pm

Guests: Ken Burns, Anderson Cooper and Anna Deavere Smith

Three iconic American storytellers who have spent their lives chronicling the lives of others all the while knowing almost nothing about their own family history: Ken Burns confronts the reality of his southern ancestors' role in the Civil War, including Confederate soldiers who were held captive and a slave-owning Virginian; Anderson Cooper, the scion of one of America's most storied families, the Vanderbilts, longs to know more about his father's Southern roots, including the story of an ancestor murdered by one his slaves; and Anna Deavere Smith learns the epic story of her great-grandfather, Basil Biggs, a free black man and former conductor on the Underground Railroad. All three guests' ancestors intersect at the most pivotal moments of American history.

Episode 204: *Roots of Freedom*, Tuesday, October 14, 8-9 pm

Guests: Ben Affleck, Khandi Alexander and Benjamin Jealous

Three guests whose families have long been engaged in the battle for freedom and civil rights but who had no idea that those principles were passed down through generations of ancestors; Ben Affleck's mother was a Freedom Rider in 1964 and her roots include the 19th century spiritualist Almon French, who attempted to heal the bereaved masses in the aftermath of the Civil War; Benjamin Jealous, former president of the NAACP, learns the heroic story of his great-grandfather, Peter G. Morgan, a free black man who was forced to purchase his own wife and family in order to keep them safe; and actress Khandi Alexander, who never knew who her grandfather was and learned that he may have been murdered in the Jim Crow South. All three guests discover they have patriot ancestors who fought valiantly for freedom in the American Revolution.

Episode 205: *The Melting Pot*, Tuesday, October 21, 8-9 pm

Guests: Tom Colicchio, Aarón Sánchez and Ming Tsai

Three celebrity chefs who cook the food of their ancestors discover family members who have shaped their lives--and America's cuisine. Top Chef's Tom Colicchio learns the hardships his family endured living in a tiny town in Northern Italy and celebrates the courage of his original immigrant ancestor, a man who crossed the Atlantic multiple times to bring the Colicchios to the United States; Ming Tsai, the child of immigrants who fled Mao's Cultural Revolution, was raised to believe that his family's Chinese past was obliterated by the Communists but finds instead that his roots can be traced back over 2000 years, yielding the largest family tree we've ever seen; and Aarón Sánchez discovers that his family's treasured Mexican roots include people who were Spaniards, Africans, and Native Americans. Taken together, the stories of these guests show how the U.S.'s great diversity has given rise to three of our greatest cuisines and indeed infuses every aspect of American life.

Episode 206: *We Come From People*, Tuesday, October 28, 8-9 pm

Guests: Angela Bassett, Valerie Jarrett and Nas

Three guests whose roots run back into the heart of slavery, revealing there is no single narrative and challenging our preconceptions of an era that has profoundly shaped our nation's sense of itself. Hip-hop artist Nas discovers a web of his slave ancestors and their intimate relationship with their slave master; award-winning actress Angela Bassett meets her ancestors whose slave family tragedy is rivaled only by a triumphant emancipation story; and presidential advisor Valerie Jarrett goes back in time over 200 years to meet a formidable line-up of free people of color - all of them are trailblazers.

Episode 207: *Our People, Our Traditions*, Tuesday, November 4, 8-9 pm

Guests: Alan Dershowitz, Carole King and Tony Kushner

Three celebrated Americans who share not only a Jewish heritage but also a history of perseverance in the face of withering opposition. Tony Kushner delves into the history of the Holocaust to discover his ancestors' fate; Carole King discovers the origins of her family name and confronts the reality of the discrimination her ancestors faced once they arrived in America; and Alan Dershowitz discovers that the first Hassidic synagogue in Brooklyn, started by his great grandfather, played a secret role in World War II. Now woven into the fabric of the American experience the immigrant stories of our guests' ancestors provide an extraordinary testimony to this country's triumph over adversity.

Episode 208: *The British Empire*, Tuesday, November 11, 8-9 pm
Guests: Deepak Chopra, Sally Field and Sting

Three guests whose ancestry demonstrates the extraordinary influence of the British Empire during the 18th and early 19th century: Sally Field discovers that she descends from William Bradford, who arrived on the Mayflower and helped his fellow English Puritans establish their new lives in colonial America and later discovers that her ancestors sided with the British crown during our nation's War of Independence and paid the ultimate price; Deepak Chopra's family made a similar gamble while living under harsh British colonial rule in India, where his grandparents pledged their loyalty to the British in hopes of achieving a higher place in society, and later his father chose to fight alongside British soldiers during World War II; Sting's story goes back centuries in England where we find that being close to the seat of Empire doesn't mean that life is any better for those who fueled Great Britain's world dominance during the Pax Britannica by building its merchant ships and working in its coal mines, and who toiled under unbearable working conditions and Dickensian poverty—conditions that would lead to the “Age of Revolution,” in which the young United States was a key player.

Episode 209: *Ancient Roots*, Tuesday, November 18, 8- 9 pm
Guests: Tina Fey, George Stephanopoulos and David Sedaris

Ancient Roots traces the family history of three quintessential voices in American life. All three descend from ancestors that were part of the wave of Greek immigrants that flooded America's shores in the early decades of the 20th century. But along the way, the stories of their Greek ancestors were lost. In recovering these stories, we'll find that their ancestors overcame terrible hardship, and showed remarkable courage in times of war. For Tina Fey, we discover her 5th great-grandfather survived a terrible massacre, and became a hero in the Greek War of Independence. We reveal that David Sedaris' ancestors were also touched by the Greek War of Independence. Their home village was raided by the Ottoman military, and David's great grand-aunt was taken captive -- never to see her family again. And we learn that George Stephanopoulos' family was willing to sacrifice their own lives in the struggle against the Nazi occupation of Greece during World War I

Episode 210: *Decoding our Past Through DNA*, Tuesday, November 25, 8- 9 pm
Guests: Jessica Alba, Governor Deval Patrick, and more

Deval Patrick is the first African American Governor of Massachusetts, and Jessica Alba is an actress who proudly embraces her Mexican American heritage. But cutting edge DNA analysis reveals that their family trees in fact contain a far more diverse range of cultures and races. Jessica Alba descends from, Jewish ancestors, Mayans and the official cartographer of France's King Louis the 14th. Deval Patrick's roots lead to a black homesteader in Colorado and a

white master who gave his former slave land after the Civil War. We also use DNA to delve deeper into the families of other guests from the series including Valerie Jarrett, Anderson Cooper and to overcome dead ends on host Henry Louis Gates, Jr.'s own tree. The secrets encoded in their genomes challenge these guests' ideas about their families' histories and their identities today.

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Final 10.30.14