

Blackboard



Ernest Everett Just: Black Achiever

Ernest Everett Just was born in Charleston South Carolina on August 14, 1883. As a young boy, he attended the Industrial School in Orangeburg.

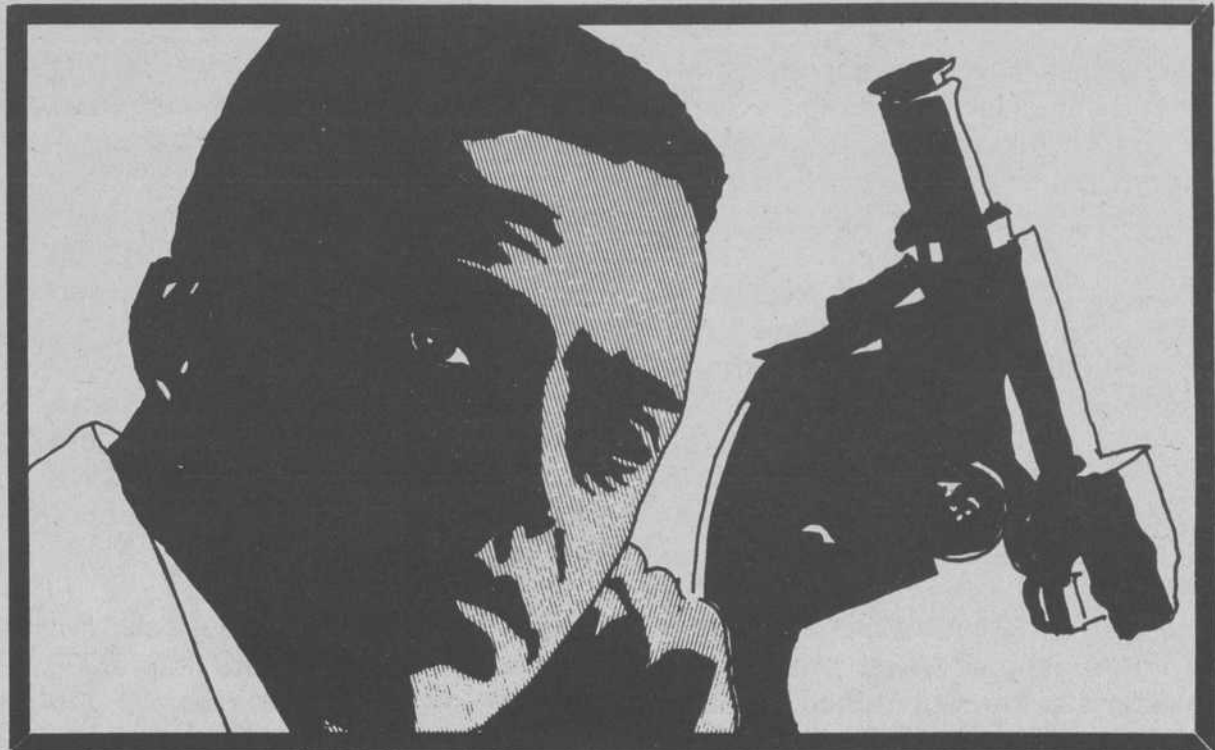
His father, Charles Just, and his grandfather had built some of the largest docks in Charleston. Charles Just died when Ernest was four years old. His mother, Mary Just, taught school and worked in the phosphate fields to support the family. When Ernest was old enough, he also worked in the fields to help out.

The Just family was poor and times were hard. Ernest was determined to get a good education. He did well in his studies. His mother **constantly** encouraged him.

In 1900, at the age of 17, Ernest Just worked his way to New York City from Charleston with \$5.00 in his pocket and an extra pair of shoes in his hand. He worked very hard. In a short time, he had earned enough money to go to Kimball Union Academy in New Hampshire.

Just was an excellent student at Kimball. He was editor of the school newspaper and president of the **debating** society. He finished his courses at Kimball in three years and graduated with the highest grades in the graduating class of 1903.

In the fall of 1903, Just entered Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. He was inspired by a famous *zoologist* (a person who studies animals and animal life) to study in the field of *biology* (the study of living things and the way they live and grow). He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa Fraternity in his junior (third) year because of his high grades. He earned the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)



degree in 1907 with high honors in biology and history.

Just did not have to look for a job after graduation. Interested persons looked for him. Howard University in Washington, D.C. offered him a teaching position three months after he graduated.

While he was teaching at Howard, Just did research during the summer at the Marine Biological Laboratories in Massachusetts. He also studied at the University of Chicago. In 1916, he earned the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in zoology from the University of Chicago.

Just became a well known national and international scientist in the study of the human cell. This study is called *cell physiology*. He spent seven months in research at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, Germany. This institute was considered the world's greatest research laboratory. Just was the first American to be invited to work at this

laboratory.

When Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, Just left Germany. He worked for a while in Italy and France. When war was declared in Europe, Just returned to the United States.

On February 12, 1915, Just was presented the first Spingarn Medal by the NAACP. This medal is presented each year to a Black man or woman who has made the highest achievement in their field.

Dr. Ernest Just died of cancer on October 27, 1941. He was 58 years old.

Just was a pioneer in the field of zoology. He was an outstanding scientist and teacher. He was also an **authority** in the field of marine biology.

Most of all Dr. Ernest Just was a student of the meaning of life. His contributions were not only to Blacks or Americans, but also to better understanding and **enhancement** of life for all people.