



# Table of Contents

<b>Using This Guide</b> .....	<b>3</b>
About Indie Lens Pop-Up.....	4
About the Film.....	5
Letter from Director Jacqueline Olive.....	6
Note on Facilitating Conversations.....	7
<b>Informing the Discussion</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Terminology for Historical Context.....	8
Racial Terror Lynching in the United States.....	9
Resistance and Resilience.....	10
Generational Trauma.....	10
Justice, Reconciliation, and Healing.....	11
<b>Screening Event</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Pre-Screening Conversation Starters.....	12
Post-Screening Discussion.....	12
<b>Engagement Ideas</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Panel Discussions: Questions and Considerations.....	13
Transformative Justice Dialogue Circles.....	13
Think Creatively about Healing and Reconciliation.....	14
In Their Own Words.....	15
Historical Memory.....	15
<b>Additional Resources</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Credits</b> .....	<b>19</b>

# Using This Guide



**This discussion guide for *Always in Season* is a tool to inform and prepare you to facilitate and organize Indie Lens Pop-Up screening events within your community. The guide includes tips for hosting screenings, background information to deepen understanding of issues and topics in the film, and engagement strategies to inspire and foster a participatory event.**

Screening *Always in Season* offers all of us an opportunity to engage in conversations and relationship building within our communities, including with educators, professionals in criminal justice, activists and organizers, politicians, faith leaders, families, and youth. Lennon Lacy's family and the reenactors of racial terror lynching in this film believe that the pathway to reconciliation begins with truth-telling. Although the film provides chronicles of specific events that took place in North Carolina and Georgia, those events shine a spotlight on a chapter of American history that is not unique to the South and is too often glossed over or overlooked altogether by the communities that continue to privilege from systemic racism. Racial terror lynching was used as a tool to establish racial dominance and instill fear after slavery. The trauma it caused Black people across the nation has generational influences that persist today, and White people have also not escaped the damage.

This film invites you to explore and learn about this element of American history, and it provides a starting point for dialogue, healing, understanding, connection, and forward-looking action to create a more compassionate and equitable society.

# About Indie Lens Pop-Up

## A NEIGHBORHOOD SERIES THAT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER

### Overview of Indie Lens Pop-Up Series

Indie Lens Pop-Up is a neighborhood series that brings people together for film screenings and community-driven conversations. Featuring documentaries seen on PBS's *Independent Lens*, Indie Lens Pop-Up draws local residents, leaders, and organizations to discuss what matters most, from newsworthy topics, to family and relationships. Make friends, share stories, and join the conversation at an Indie Lens Pop-Up screening near you: [bit.ly/ILPOP-Screenings](http://bit.ly/ILPOP-Screenings)

### Neighbor Theme

This season, we will build on our Indie Lens Pop-Up theme of “neighborhood” by asking audiences: **What’s your vision for your neighborhood?** As we experience increased polarization and division in our everyday lives, we will come together to watch and discuss *Independent Lens* documentaries at hundreds of events hosted by Indie Lens Pop-Up partners in communities across the United States. Together, we will hear diverse stories, learn what it means to listen with acceptance and openness, and build communities where all neighbors belong and feel welcomed.

## About the Film



*Always in Season* explores the lingering impact of more than a century of lynching African Americans and connects this form of historical racial terrorism to racial violence today. The film centers on the case of Lennon Lacy, an African American teen who was found hanging from a swing set in Bladenboro, North Carolina, on August 29, 2014. Despite inconsistencies in the case, local officials quickly ruled Lennon's death a suicide, but his mother, Claudia, believes Lennon was lynched. The film follows Claudia as she moves from paralyzing grief to leading the fight for justice for her son.

As *Always in Season* unfolds, Lennon's case and the suspicions surrounding it intersect with stories of other communities seeking justice and reconciliation. A few hundred miles away in Monroe, Georgia, a diverse group of reenactors, including the adult daughter of a former Ku Klux Klan leader, annually dramatizes a 1946 quadruple lynching to ensure the victims are never forgotten and to encourage the community to come forward with information that might bring the perpetrators to justice. As the terrorism of the past bleeds into the present, the film asks, "What will it take for Americans to begin building a national movement for racial justice and reconciliation?"

# Letter from Director Jacqueline Olive



**“At a time when Americans were still advancing the narrative of a post-racial society, the courage and commitment of the people with whom I filmed... inspired me to keep focused on completing the film.”**

I spent a decade making *Always in Season* with an incredible team of people. The first two years were solely dedicated to research and development because I wanted to fully understand the scope of lynching terror and its impact on this country. I then filmed for eight years in communities across the country where people, including those featured in the film, were confronting this history and undertaking the work of justice and reconciliation. At a time when Americans were still advancing the narrative of a post-racial society, the courage and commitment of the people with whom I filmed, doing the uncomfortable, but necessary work of acknowledging the victims of lynching and strategizing around repair, inspired me to keep focused on completing the film.

*Always in Season* tells a timely story, for sure. With the uptick in White supremacist organizing, political ideology resulting in xenophobic backlash, dehumanizing rhetoric, and racial profiling, it's crucial that we start to look at where these notions come from and thoroughly explore the systems that have ensured that the power dynamics of racism and hatred survive. I have often thought the film would have been timely if it had been released in any of the years I was making it, but I am reassured that the country is much more open to tackling these issues now than when I began filming in 2010 and that it is the ideal time for *Always in Season* to play an important role in building a national movement for justice and reconciliation.

I am thrilled that you have shown up for the first step—truth-telling—and urge you to stay present in the dialogues to process the intense emotions that come up around this history. It's important in these times that we are tapped into our humanity and use the pain, anger, fear, guilt, and shame that can come with confronting racial terrorism to help us better understand our environments, value all of the people in our communities, and activate the work that is needed to undo structural racism.

# Note on Facilitating Conversations



Engaging in honest dialogue about the violence and racial injustices that are woven into American history may be challenging and can evoke powerful emotional responses. Attendees at your screening event will have differing life experiences and personal connections to this history, and finding the space to openly and respectfully invite all of their viewpoints can be difficult even for the most skilled facilitator.

With this in mind, the tips in this section offer helpful practices you can employ prior to and following screenings of *Always in Season*. As each community and event are unique, these suggestions can easily be adapted to your specific needs and style of facilitation.

**Watch the film beforehand.** This will help you both tailor the event to your participants and anticipate questions and responses that might come up during the post-screening discussion.

**Be intentional with your invitation.** To be inclusive of people from different race, class, gender, sex, national, religious, and other backgrounds and who have different physical abilities, consider partnering with multiple community groups to help you reach out to their networks. You may also want to consider holding both cross-racial conversations and intra-racial dialogues to encourage discussion within and between communities.

**Allow for different perspectives.** The film raises very sensitive issues about race, justice, and our nation. Remind participants of parameters for engaging in respectful dialogue, for example,

avoiding generalizations, using “I” language to explain a personal point of view, and allowing others to finish their thoughts before speaking.

**Listen respectfully.** Try to actively listen by being fully present with the speaker, free of distractions in your own mind; allow time to listen before immediately responding; and be mindful of not interrupting others while they are speaking.

**Acknowledge that language matters.** The words people choose to use to describe themselves and others hold enormous importance, power, and meaning. Refer to the suggested terminology in the next section for definitions and language to use so as not to perpetuate stereotypes or misconceptions about the history of racial injustice.

It's also important to remember as a facilitator to be as thoughtful as possible about the language you use to discuss the film and issues. For example, consider that the filmmaker does not refer to Lennon's death by hanging as a suicide or lynching because neither has been adequately proven.

At the same time, be sure to acknowledge that mistakes will inevitably be made when discussing complex subjects. Please make room for compassionate correction in the group.

**Make room for vulnerability.** As a facilitator, acknowledge that discussing topics of race with strangers can be uncomfortable. Invite the group to decide on guidelines for how they want to engage with the documentary.

# Informing the Discussion

This section provides background materials to help facilitators prepare for their Indie Lens Pop-Up screening event. Facilitators are invited to use the content in this section as background information and reference materials and to incorporate the content into engagement strategies.

## Terminology for Historical Context

### Slavery in the United States

- During the Transatlantic Slave Trade, 12.5 million Africans were enslaved. It was the largest forced migration in history.
- About 388,000 were forcibly shipped to the United States. The population growth of African Americans in the United States was largely due to the legal institution of slavery that ensured all those born to enslaved African women and men in the United States would also be enslaved.

European settlers in America brought the first enslaved Africans to British colonies in 1619 in what would become Jamestown, Virginia, where the legal status of “servant” was forced upon them. Unlike indentured servitude, a commonplace practice of forced labor throughout Europe and in the American colonies that offered the prospect of freedom upon completion of service, this new form of enslavement was racially coded, was passed down through maternal lineage, and had no pathway to freedom. As Whites became more comfortable with an economic system dependent on forced labor and with racial prejudice as an ingrained part of the social culture, the institution of slavery in the United States developed as a permanent, hereditary status centrally tied to race. Slavery deprived the enslaved person of any legal rights or autonomy and granted the slave owner complete power over the Black men, women, and children legally recognized as their property. For the next two centuries, this uniquely American institution of slavery created wealth, opportunity, and prosperity for millions of White people while depriving African Americans of education, the ability to amass or recuperate wealth from their labor, or enjoy any of the freedoms enshrined in the Constitution. The system of enslavement that created this massive wealth was characterized by violent terrorism and profound human suffering.

**Civil rights:** The rights of personal liberty guaranteed to U.S. citizens by the 13th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution and by acts of Congress, including the right to receive equal treatment and to be free from unfair discrimination in education, employment, housing, and other settings.

**Enslaved person:** The accurate term to describe one of the millions of African people who, beginning in the 17th century, were kidnapped and enslaved under horrific conditions that

frequently resulted in starvation and death. Using the term enslaved person, rather than the word slave, is a critical corrective of language, as it centers on the experiences of those harmed by slavery, ensures dignity to the human beings who were enslaved or born into slavery, and does not prioritize the experience of the aggressor. This new language is widely accepted within the human rights field as well as in academia, journalism, and museums and other institutions examining historical education.<sup>1</sup>

**White supremacy:** White supremacy is a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and peoples of color by White peoples and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending systems of wealth, power, and privilege. “White supremacy culture is the [ideology] that [W]hite people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of [W]hite people are superior to people of color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. White supremacy culture is an artificial, historically constructed culture which expresses, justifies, and binds together the United States’ [W]hite supremacy system. It is reproduced by all the institutions of our society.”<sup>2</sup>

**Ku Klux Klan (KKK):** A White supremacist organization that uses propaganda and violence to terrorize Black communities and perpetuate the myth of Black inferiority. The KKK first arose in the South after the end of the Civil War (1865) when its members opposed the dismantling of slavery and sought to keep African Americans subjugated to Whites. During Reconstruction (1863–1877), the KKK employed violence and terror in the hopes of destroying the newly established Black political and economic power bases as well as overthrowing Republican state governments in the South and maintaining the antebellum racial hierarchy. Membership declined from 1880 through 1920 as a result of federal legislation prosecuting their efforts, but had a large resurgence after World War I, with ordinary people from across the United States joining. As of June 2017, 42 different KKK groups were active in 22 states, according to a recent report from the Anti-Defamation League.<sup>3</sup>

See: The Southern Poverty Law, [Ku Klux Klan: A History of Racism](#)<sup>4</sup>

### Sources:

1. For example, see the Equal Justice Initiative ([eji.org](#)) and the 1619 Project ([nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html](#))
2. [surjpoliticaledsite.weebly.com/white-supremacy-culture.html](#)
3. [adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/CR\\_5173\\_Klan%20Report\\_vFFF2.pdf](#)
4. [splcenter.org/20110228/ku-klux-klan-history-racism#afterword](#)



# Informing the Discussion

**Racial terror lynchings:** Brutal, often organized public killings targeting African Americans and intending to terrorize the entire community. Lynching terrorism especially occurred when Black people began to build power and thrive and the federal government abandoned its commitment to newly emancipated African Americans following the Civil War. This form of racial terror was often in response to the financial, political, and social progress that African Americans made during Reconstruction and regularly centered on transgressions, or so-called crimes, that Black people committed, such as passing a note to a White person, not stepping off the sidewalk when a White person passed, or not calling a White person “sir.” When actual crimes were committed, Blacks were at times scapegoated, enabling real criminals to move through communities with impunity. With this stigmatization and constant threat of danger, racial terror lynchings fueled the mass migration of millions of Black people, who fled the South for the North and West as refugees from racial terrorism. Racial terror lynchings have occurred in almost every state, but the states in the South have had the most recorded lynchings in the United States—more than 4,000 from 1877 to 1950.

To learn more, explore the Equal Justice Initiative’s [Racial Terror Lynching interactive map](#).<sup>5</sup>

**Reconstruction:** Historian Eric Foner dates the period of Reconstruction as beginning in December 1863 when Abraham Lincoln announced a plan to establish governments in the South loyal to the Union. But generally, Reconstruction is dated from 1865 to 1877, when the nation’s laws and Constitution were rewritten to guarantee the basic rights of the former slaves, and biracial governments came to power throughout the defeated Confederacy. This included the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution and the Reconstruction Acts in the South “when a politically mobilized [B]lack community, with its [W]hite allies, brought the Republican Party to power throughout the South. For the first time, African Americans voted in large numbers and held public office at every level of government. It was a remarkable, unprecedented effort to build an interracial democracy on the ashes of slavery.

“After America’s first reconstruction was attacked by the lynch mobs of [W]hite supremacists in the 1870s, it took nearly a hundred years for a Second Reconstruction to emerge in the civil rights movement... Nothing less than a Third Reconstruction holds the promise of healing our nation’s wounds and birthing a better future for all.”<sup>6</sup>

## Racial Terror Lynching in the United States

Between the Civil War and World War II, Whites in the United States lynched thousands of African Americans. Lynchings very often involved hangings, very often involved shooting, and also involved burning, including burning victims alive. This racial terrorism peaked during the period 1880–1940. The [Equal Justice Initiative](#) in Montgomery, Alabama, has researched and documented more than 4,400 racial terror lynchings between 1877 and 1950 in 12 of the most active lynching states in America, one of which is North Carolina.<sup>7</sup>

Racial terror lynching transformed the geographic, political, social, and economic condition of African Americans. It was used by Whites as a tool to enforce Jim Crow laws and racial segregation, and it served as a tactic for maintaining racial control and destroying Black economic and political progress by spreading fear throughout the entire African American community. Lynching and the terror it created transformed the entire country. It fueled the largest migration within the United States, sending 6 million Blacks to live in urban centers in the North and West.<sup>8</sup>

Sherrilyn Ifill, president, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, says in *Always in Season*:

“It really was the character of the murder that made it a lynching. Those who were involved in the lynching perceived themselves as having the right to do this. And that’s why it’s most often done openly and, notoriously, with the participation of average people. Not just to punish the individual person, but as a symbol, as a sign to the larger community, both the White community and the Black community. Lynching was a message crime. Sometimes they happened in the woods, but most often, they happened in places where the body would be seen, sometimes in a crowd of 10 or 15,000 spectators. And it’s the public nature of lynching that really condemns the White community because the idea that people didn’t know? They did know. They did know.”

The death of Lennon Lacy by hanging in 2014 cannot be separated from the legacy and history of racial terror lynching that impacted his community, nor from the racial violence and injustice that continues in the United States. Heather Ratellade, attorney for the North Carolina NAACP, notes in the film:

“I started researching Black males committing suicide in public, and I realized there had been almost 20 Black males found

### Sources:

1. [lynchinginamerica.eji.org/explore](http://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/explore)
2. [nytimes.com/2015/03/29/opinion/sunday/why-reconstruction-matters.html](http://nytimes.com/2015/03/29/opinion/sunday/why-reconstruction-matters.html)
3. See [eji.org/racial-justice/legacy-lynching](http://eji.org/racial-justice/legacy-lynching) and *Lynching in America, Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror*, Third Edition, Equal Justice Initiative.
4. See Isabel Wilkerson’s *The Warmth of Other Suns*

# Informing the Discussion

hanging in public parks over just the last few years. And when I realized how quickly law enforcement that responded to those scenes deemed those deaths suicide, I became quite concerned that there may be a bigger surreptitious movement at play here.”

To examine this history, see this tremendous online resource from the Equal Justice Initiative, [Lynching in America](#). For example:

- [Listen to stories](#) of generations of families affected by lynching.
- Explore an [interactive map](#) documenting the counties where lynchings occurred.

## Resistance and Resilience

Claudia and Pierre Lacy refused to believe that Lennon had committed suicide. They believe that the investigation was hasty, incomplete, and riddled with contradictions, and they took their complaints to the state chapter of the NAACP. Think for a moment what a mother, a brother, and an extended family and community endure following such a tragedy. Then think again about the strength, resilience, and resolve of Claudia and Pierre Lacy to uncover the truth about Lennon’s death.

Reverend Dr. William J. Barber, II, leader of [Repairers of the Breach](#), aptly shared in a rally in support of Claudia and Pierre:

“Claudia Lacy has a right to refuse to be comforted. She has a right, Pierre has a right, these young babies have a right, this community has a right to demand more investigation and refuse to be comforted by easy answers. This was, this is her son. We want you to hear his name. Somebody say it! Lennon!”

Read how Lennon Lacy’s family continues to fight for justice: [Family Speaks Out Five Years After Lennon’s Death](#)<sup>9</sup>

## Generational Trauma

“One of the most disturbing legacies of lynching is generational trauma within the Black and White communities. And yet [there are] very different reactions to the stories in the two different communities. Both communities were covered in a shroud of silence, Blacks out of fear, Whites out of shame. And that silence was never lifted, and so people are acting out in the context of that passed-on relationship, and they don’t know what’s at the heart of it.”

—Sherrilyn Ifill, President, NAACP Legal Defense Fund

### What is generational trauma?

Generational trauma, or transgenerational trauma, addresses

Source:

9. [theguardian.com/film/2019/sep/21/always-in-season-lennon-lacy-death](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2019/sep/21/always-in-season-lennon-lacy-death)

the psychological, social, familial, cultural, neurobiological, and possibly even genetic effects of unthinkable events in one’s life that are passed on within communities and families. The lingering impact of multigenerational trauma within African American communities remains a deeply embedded and enduring consequence of racial terror lynchings today.

Even when participating in and/or approving of lynching, Whites did not escape the damage of persistent and widespread spectacle violence. Whether witnessing murder with neighbors and authority figures amid the smell of burning flesh or hearing crowds of thousands cheer on the violence from their homes in protest, Whites were impacted by lynching and passed on collective cognitive dissonance and more.

### How do mass cultural and historical traumas affect future generations? Why?

In *Always in Season*, we hear Heather Ratellade, attorney for the North Carolina NAACP, share her reflections on how generational trauma manifests in the death and investigation of Lennon Lacy:

“I started looking at the steps law enforcement took, and I started interviewing people like the local medical examiner, who told me that he was trying to take pictures of the death scene and law enforcement seized his camera from him—which, in 16 years of working on murder cases, I have never heard that before. The “SBI” stands for the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation. What concerned me about this case was that they brought in Agent Paul Sanbeluski, who had never investigated a homicide. He’s brought in whenever there’s a suspected suicide. When you’re approaching any sort of death scene investigation, you want to make sure that these are seasoned detectives that know the importance of preserving the forensic evidence to ensure that it’s not a homicide that is staged to look like a suicide. Based on my investigation, I feel strongly that whoever made that call to bring him in wanted this investigation to be steered a certain direction.

In that part of the state particularly, all the way across along the South Carolina line, it’s a belt that is known for White supremacist history, particularly during the Civil Rights Movement because there was still a very heavy KKK presence and a lot of intimidation by people who were in positions of power at that point.

But that isn’t ancient history. A lot of the people involved in lynchings, and covering up the lynchings, they’re still around today, some of which are still in law enforcement and their children are in law enforcement.

This Black community has felt that law enforcement had not been addressing its needs for a long time in Bladenboro. They had felt there was a lot of police misconduct. Between 2002 and

# Informing the Discussion

2006, there was a large federal investigation in Bladen County and Robeson County that led to the arrest of police officers who were actually heavily involved in narcotics trafficking. They would also pull over drivers of African American descent. They would harass them for money, take the money, and then let them go and it would never be documented. So you'd have concerns from the African American community. Was there more to the story? What happened? This doesn't make sense.

As I started researching Black males committing suicide in public, ... I realized there had been almost 20 Black males found hanging in public parks over just the last few years. And when I realized how quickly law enforcement that responded to those scenes, deemed those deaths suicide, I became quite concerned that there may be a bigger surreptitious movement at play here."

## Justice, Reconciliation, and Healing

"There are all these institutions that need to come clean about this history. This is true of the legal community, it's true of journalism, it's true across the board. Communities for themselves have to come together and talk about what they think would repair the harm. But if together we face that history, it leads to an opening for dialogue, it leads to an opening for reconciliation."

—Sherrilyn Ifill, President, NAACP Legal Defense Fund

The [National Peace and Justice Memorial](#) in Montgomery, Alabama, was opened in April 2018 as "the nation's first memorial dedicated to the legacy of enslaved Black people, people terrorized by lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow, and people of color burdened with contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence."<sup>10</sup>

According to the research of the Equal Justice Initiative and the University of North Carolina, Bladen County, North Carolina, has in its historical record one documented racial terror lynching, [Lynman Purdie](#). Naming, knowing, and telling the story of Mr. Purdie is one step toward reconciliation in the United States. Consider sharing this record with your screening event and research lynchings in your area.

### Sources:

10. [museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial](http://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial)

11. [lynching.web.unc.edu/the-people/lyman-purdie](http://lynching.web.unc.edu/the-people/lyman-purdie)

## The Case of Lynman Purdie

**1892-05-01**

**Mob size:** 100

**Alleged offense:** Murder

**Mob members:** None named

**Race:** Black

**Gender:** Male

**Alleged victim:** Edward Cain

**Age:** Unrecorded

**Household Status:** Unrecorded

**Legal intervention (in alleged offense):** Yes

**Occupation:** Unrecorded

**Legal intervention (following lynching):** Yes

Authorities charged Lyman Purdie with robbing W.C. Durham's barn and murder[ing] Edward Cain, one of Durham's employees. Purdie allegedly killed Cain with an axe to avoid arrest for the robbery. Authorities used blood stains and a uniquely-gouged axe head as evidence for charging Purdie with murder. Authorities held Purdie at a county jail in Elizabethtown. Days later, a mob of 100–150 abducted Purdie. The mob hanged Purdie 300 yards north of the jail, from a pine limb near a ferry crossing for the Cape Fear River. A coroner's inquest decided that a mob of unknown people hanged Purdie. One newspaper account stated that "the Negroes [sic] believed him guilty, but are greatly excited over the lynching, and it is feared there may be trouble."<sup>11</sup>

# Screening Event



## Pre-Screening Conversation Starters

- What brought you to this screening of *Always in Season*?
- How would you describe the ways in which race has shaped America?
- How does your identity inform your understanding or experience of race in America?

## Post-Screening Discussion

**Exercise 1:** Ask participants to use one word to describe their thoughts or feelings about the film. Encourage them to do it “popcorn style” so that they speak out when inspired and don’t need to worry about overlapping someone else’s response. Let the responses pop up and fill the room spontaneously like popcorn. As facilitator, be encouraging, hold space without many words, and check to make sure everyone has expressed themselves. Then, once everyone has shared, acknowledge the emotions the group expressed.

**Exercise 2 (helps people connect with the past, see how history has informed their own identities, and draw on the strength of their ancestors to support them as they confront trauma):** Briefly share about a family member (grandparent or earlier) who influenced you, acknowledging how that person influenced you, and thanking the person by name. Do this 2 or 3 times and then ask participants to raise their hands if they have grandmothers, great uncles, grandfathers, and so on who have impacted their lives. Then ask them to say the names and not to worry about overlapping (popcorn style). Again, just hold space and give participants the breadth to spontaneously respond. Once they finish, remind the crowd that we are all shaped and surrounded by our history.

**Exercise 3:** At the end of the screening, allow participants to take a few moments to collect their thoughts—you might consider providing them with a strip of paper on which they can write 2 or 3 sentences that reflect their thoughts on the film. This will help them process their emotions and clarify their thoughts a bit before the group discussion. You may offer to collect the strips to share with the film team. They can be written anonymously or signed.

Ask participants to stand, take a minute, and breathe and to pay attention to how their bodies feel and take care of areas in need.

Asking a few general discussion questions before diving into a specific topic will help participants process what they’ve watched together.

- Reflect on a moment or statement in *Always in Season* that stood out or challenged your thinking in new ways. Share your reflection with your group.
- Was there information in the film that was new to you? If so, what is your response to it? If not, where did you learn this history?
- Discuss the ways in which you see the history of racial terror lynching informing and shaping the present.
- What do the concepts of “reconciliation” and “repair” mean to you? How might our society and culture change when reconciliation happens as a result of our work around repair?
- Despite the trauma, what are examples of agency in the film that might inspire you? How did people advocate for themselves, their loved ones, and their communities?
- What elements of the story are uniquely American? How have racial terrorism and responses to it fundamentally shaped this country?

# Engagement Ideas

As you plan your engagement event and post-screening conversation, use these questions to help you prioritize the scope and focus of your event.

- How does *Always in Season* connect to issues you face in your community?
- What outcomes do you want for your post-screening discussion or event?
- How will you create a space for compassionate and direct engagement on these challenging issues?
- Who are the important voices to include and invite into the room from your local community?

## Panel Discussions: Questions and Considerations

Contact local organizations working on racial justice and reconciliation.

### Sample Questions for Panelists

- Let's begin by having each of you share your thoughts and reactions to *Always in Season*. What scenes stood out? What issues would you like to take some time to discuss further?
- Tell us a bit about your journey that leads you to the work you do today. How does the history of racial terrorism impact your work? How might understanding it more deeply inform your strategies?
- What advice would you offer to individuals or organizations about racial justice work?
- What do you wish you knew before you began working in your current role?
- What are the most enduring obstacles that you face in your current work?
- Where do you find the strength to persevere in this work?
- How has the film influenced your thinking about doing your work more effectively?

## Transformative Justice Dialogue Circles

"[We're] trying to build a culture where we actually want people to take accountability for harm. And we then also, therefore, are engaged with those people to take accountability."

—Mariame Kaba, *Activist and Educator*<sup>12</sup>

Transformative justice, similar in philosophy to restorative justice, is a community-based approach based in which, rather than relying on government or bureaucratic systems to address harm done, the community builds a network of stakeholders that includes the victims and undertakes a collaborative process to hold the perpetrators accountable in a way that is meaningful for the victim, the perpetrator, and the community at

large. The philosophy is meant to move from a punitive system of justice to one that is collaborative and has the intention of supporting the transformation of people, neighborhoods, and communities.<sup>13</sup>

Activist and educator Mariame Kaba is working toward a transformative criminal justice system, and central to her methodology is community accountability—a process of learning and truth-telling whereby the community that is harmed has the opportunity to hold accountable those who have caused harm.<sup>14</sup> When applied to *Always in Season*, this work means that African Americans with generations of trauma as a result of the history of racial terror lynching and ongoing violence in their lives today have the opportunity to create restorative and healing actions and programs, bringing that history forward in their communities and inviting the surrounding community to work collaboratively with them toward healing and reconciliation.

"Transformative Justice is a way of practicing alternative justice which acknowledges individual experiences and identities and works to actively resist the state's criminal injustice system. Transformative Justice recognizes that oppression is at the root of all forms of harm, abuse, and assault. As a practice, it therefore aims to address and confront those oppressions on all levels and treats this concept as an integral part to accountability and healing."<sup>15</sup>

To learn more about this work, see [transformharm.org](https://transformharm.org).

Hosting a dialogue circle is an important action to take for transformative justice, especially with the intention of accountability, and it is where a community builds awareness of and accountability for the racial injustices of the past and the present. A dialogue circle also offers the space for communities of color that have been targeted around racial terror, whether past or present, to come together in solidarity and community. A common criticism of documentaries is that they move participants to prioritize talk over action. This can be a valid criticism of films on social justice issues that have readily been explored in the mainstream. But because racial terror lynching is a subject that has been steeped in cover-up and denial, deep-dive conversations that effectively confront the violence and encourage us to collectively imagine justice are an essential action step.

Holding effective dialogue circles requires facilitators who are skilled in conflict transformation and restorative justice. Work in partnership with a [restorative justice](#) organization or other

### Sources:

12. [ccrjustice.org/sites/default/files/Episode-12-Transformative-justice-in-an-era-of-mass-criminalization-Mariame-Kaba-and-Victoria-Law.pdf](https://ccrjustice.org/sites/default/files/Episode-12-Transformative-justice-in-an-era-of-mass-criminalization-Mariame-Kaba-and-Victoria-Law.pdf)

13. [usprisonculture.com/blog/transformative-justice](https://usprisonculture.com/blog/transformative-justice)

14. [bcw.barnard.edu/fellows/mariame-kaba](https://bcw.barnard.edu/fellows/mariame-kaba)

15. [transformharm.org/transformative-justice](https://transformharm.org/transformative-justice)

# Engagement Ideas

groups and professionals experienced in this kind of dialogue to convene a group of diverse stakeholders and host effective dialogue circles.

## Think Creatively about Healing and Reconciliation

Read aloud this quote from the film:

“A neighborhood is supposed to be a connection of your extended family. Someone in your family gets hurt, you hurt, and until this wound is fixed and heals, this neighborhood will always hurt and always be an open wound.”

—Claudia Lacy, Lennon Lacy's Mother and Activist

As a group, discuss the meanings of the words healing and reconciliation as they are used in the context of post-conflict societies:<sup>16</sup>

**Healing:** The personal, physical, and emotional process of progress toward wellness after a trauma or conflict.

**Reconciliation:** The attempt after a trauma or conflict to create understanding between those who were the actors and those who were acted upon.

### Discuss:

- What do you see as the distinction between healing and reconciliation?
- In what way might that distinction become important as we approach processes of healing and reconciliation in our communities?
- What examples did you see in the film of activities that might be about healing? About reconciliation? About both?
- Reparations are often thought of in monetary terms. What are methods of reparation that you know of that are not related to payments? What was effective or meaningful about them?

Across the world, in nations where atrocities have taken place, formal, legal processes seeking truth and reconciliation have taken place as part of a system of transitional justice, which seeks recognition for victims and processes for peace.<sup>17</sup> The elements of these kinds of processes include (1) criminal prosecution, (2) fact finding, (3) reparations, and (4) reform.

Within the context of the truth and reconciliation processes, reparations have taken many forms, including financial restitution (money for victims and survivors), legal (holding perpetrators accountable), and institutional and cultural (museums and memorials). Beyond these examples, it is essential to extend the conversation to the “repair” in reparations and consider other avenues of individual and collective healing and reconciliation.

- Research and discuss reparation processes that have been attempted or begun in the United States.
- Brainstorm a list of reparative actions that might be meaningful in your community, your state, or the nation and undertake a planning process that includes the appropriate stakeholders and outlines the steps that may need to be undertaken to inspire this process. Consider a single action or several actions and explore efforts both small and large as you use your imaginations to strategize next steps creatively.
- Using the historical background in this section, discuss the reenactment of the Moore’s Ford Bridge lynching, documented in *Always in Season*.

### Reenactment of the Moore’s Ford Bridge Lynching

“Any injustice affects everybody that’s around it. So why are we so afraid of the truth coming out, why are we so afraid to talk about it? And that’s what the reenactment does. Keeps it in the light. Keeps it in the light. We don’t want anything in the dark. Bring it to the light.”

—Cassandra Greene, Director of Moore’s Ford Bridge Reenactment

### Historical Background

What became known as the Moore’s Ford Bridge lynching is considered by many to be the last mass lynching in the nation’s history. On July 25, 1946, George and Mae Murray Dorsey and Roger and Dorothy Malcom, who worked as sharecroppers, were shot dozens of times at Moore’s Ford Bridge on the Walton-Oconee county line. The two couples were ambushed by a group of unmasked White men after Roger Malcom was offered work by a White landowner and bonded out of jail, where he had been held for stabbing a White farmer.<sup>18</sup> According to the film’s narration of an annual reenactment of the events, Roger Malcom was the intended target as the couples were driven into an ambush. However, when George Dorsey fought to prevent Malcom from being taken by the mob and one of the women recognized someone in the crowd, all four were dragged from the car, brutally beaten, and shot multiple times.<sup>19</sup>

In *Always in Season*, we learn about the Moore’s Ford Bridge Memorial Committee’s work to reenact what occurred:

“Since 2005, Civil Rights activists have returned to the Moore’s Ford Bridge to re-create the night two Black couples, Roger and Dorothy Malcolm and George and Mae Murray Dorsey, were lynched by the Ku Klux Klan in 1946. An outraged president Harry Truman ordered a federal investigation and a grand jury was convened, yet no indictments were brought for the killings. The FBI reopened its case in 2007. The reenactment serves as

### Sources:

16. [du.edu/korbel/hrhw/volumes/2009/dahl-2009.pdf](http://du.edu/korbel/hrhw/volumes/2009/dahl-2009.pdf)

17. [ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Global-Transitional-Justice-2009-English.pdf](http://ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Global-Transitional-Justice-2009-English.pdf)

18. [wabe.org/moore-s-ford-re-enactment-continues-revisit-1946-lynching](http://wabe.org/moore-s-ford-re-enactment-continues-revisit-1946-lynching)

# Engagement Ideas

a dramatic call to action and annual reminder to the Monroe community that an injustice has never been corrected."

The FBI reopened the Moore's Ford Bridge lynching case in 2005, but officially closed it in January 2018.

- Reflect on the work of the community to use the reenactment as an effort to repair and heal. What are your thoughts, feelings, or observations?
- What are your reactions to the failure of the FBI to bring closure to this case after more than 70 years?

## In Their Own Words

Read these quotes aloud or print them and post them around the room. In pairs or small groups, discuss quotes that stand out and what they mean to the members of your group.

"Think about it as if it was your son or your daughter. If you knew in your heart and in your mind that someone took your child's life, and everything that you'd done as humanly possible, they've taken it and twisted it and turned it, how far would you go to get to the truth? How soon would you let it go?"

—Claudia Lacy, Lennon Lacy's Mother and Activist

"If you read the accounts of lynching, the acts themselves were so horrifying that they became a kind of internal story of so many communities. And yet, like children, we still hope and pray that it's far enough in the past, that maybe we never have to talk about it."

—Sherrilyn Ifill, President, NAACP Legan Defense Fund

"I've been doing plays for about 10, 11 years now. It was all because of social issues that I saw, that needed to be addressed, that no one wanted to address, and those are the issues that I go for. ...This year we are trying to bring in more actors to play Klansmen. Believe it or not, it's hard to get Whites that live in the area to participate because a lot of people are actually afraid of coming out and facing what happened. When we go into Monroe, I mean you can feel, like, "What the heck are you all doing here?"

—Cassandra Greene, Director, Moore's Ford Bridge Reenactment

"This state [Georgia] was essentially run on the basis of terrorism. Until we come to grips with the fact that this has happened repeatedly, we're always going to be in danger of relapsing into that kind of horror again, and it seems to me as a son of the South that I have a responsibility to do everything I can to make sure that doesn't happen."

—Walter Reeves, Participant, Moore's Ford Bridge Reenactment

"I think what most people have a hard time appreciating was, if you were Black and alive in many parts of this country in the 20th century, you were always at risk. You were always a target.

You were always an object to be victimized, to be humiliated, to be taunted, to be sexually exploited, to be killed. And there was no respite, there was never a moment when you were allowed to feel like you can be safe for just a little while. You were always in season."

—Bryan Stevenson, Founder, Equal Justice Initiative

## Historical Memory

Racial division has been woven into the history of most of our communities. Acknowledging racial terrorism and memorializing the victims are important steps to finding a way forward to a more equitable future. Many projects to mark and honor these historical memories are taking place around the country. The reenactment of the Moore's Ford Bridge lynching is one example of a way communities have worked together to remember history, as is the roadside marker that the community's Memorial Committee raised to memorialize the spot where the lynching took place. To learn more about the Memorial Committee, explore the reenactment's Facebook page at: [facebook.com/Moores-Ford-Bridge-Lynching-203562960281853](https://facebook.com/Moores-Ford-Bridge-Lynching-203562960281853)

In addition, part of *Always in Season's* impact campaign includes collecting stories of lynching from family members, witnesses, and communities where they have taken place. Learn more about that effort at [alwaysinseasonfilm.com](https://alwaysinseasonfilm.com)

Many other communities have committees or other municipal structures dedicated to memorializing sites of racial and other kinds of injustices. Look for them in your community or consider taking part in the Equal Justice Initiative's [Community Remembrance Project](#), which invites communities across the United States to learn about and memorialize the lynchings that took place there. Their website lists all the U.S. counties where lynchings took place: [eji.org/sites/default/files/lynching-in-america-third-edition-summary.pdf](https://eji.org/sites/default/files/lynching-in-america-third-edition-summary.pdf)

If your community is not on the list, work with local historical societies, the public library or public archive, scholars, or others who can help explore the racial history of your community, including [sundown laws](#), [redlining that codified segregated housing](#), and other practices of racial discrimination. Think creatively about how to bring these parts of history into the light in the hope of using truth-telling to inspire and spark connection across community divides.

Soil collected from lynching sites across the country has been collected as part of the Equal Justice Initiative's [National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#), in Montgomery, Alabama. The memorial and museum opened in 2018 and are dedicated

### Source:

19. [news.monroelocal.org/73rd-anniversary-commemoration-reenactment-of-the-moores-ford-lynching](https://news.monroelocal.org/73rd-anniversary-commemoration-reenactment-of-the-moores-ford-lynching)

# Engagement Ideas

to the legacy of enslaved people, African Americans terrorized by lynching and other forms of racial violence, those isolated and humiliated by segregation, and those currently affected by systems of mass incarceration.



# Additional Resources

## Auburn Seminary

“Auburn Seminary is one of the oldest religious institutions in the United States and today equips leaders with the organizational skills and spiritual resilience required to create lasting, positive impact in local communities, on the national stage, and around the world. Auburn amplifies voices and visions of faith and moral courage. We convene diverse leaders and cross-sector organizations for generative collaboration and multifaith understanding and research what’s working—and not—in theological education and social change-making.”<sup>20</sup>

## Black Lives Matter

“In 2013, three radical Black organizers—Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi—created a Black-centered political will and movement building project called #BlackLivesMatter. It was in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer, George Zimmerman. The project is now a member-led global network of more than 40 chapters. Our members organize and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on.”<sup>21</sup>

## The Movement for Black Lives

“In response to the sustained and increasingly visible violence against Black communities in the U.S. and globally, a collective of more than 50 organizations representing thousands of Black people from across the country have come together with renewed energy and purpose to articulate a common vision and agenda.”<sup>22</sup>

## Center for Constitutional Rights

“The Center for Constitutional Rights works with communities under threat to fight for justice and liberation through litigation, advocacy, and strategic communications. Since 1966, we have taken on oppressive systems of power, including structural racism, gender oppression, economic inequity, and governmental overreach.”<sup>23</sup>

## Equal Justice Initiative

“The Equal Justice Initiative is committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society.”<sup>24</sup>

## Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

“The Ella Baker Center, based in Oakland, California, works locally, statewide, and nationally to shift resources away from prisons and punishment and toward opportunities that make our communities safe, healthy, and strong.”<sup>25</sup>

## SONG (Southerners on New Ground)

“SONG envisions a sustainable South that embodies the best of its freedom traditions and works toward the transformation of our economic, social, spiritual, and political relationships. We envision a multi-issue southern justice movement that unites us across class, age, race, ability, gender, immigration status, and sexuality; a movement in which LGBTQ people—poor and working class, immigrants, people of color, rural—take our rightful place as leaders shaping our region’s legacy and future. We are committed to restoring a way of being that recognizes our collective humanity and dependence on the earth.”<sup>26</sup>

## Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)

“SURJ [Showing Up for Racial Justice] is a national network of groups and individuals working to undermine white supremacy and to work toward racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves White people to act as part of a multiracial majority for justice with passion and accountability.

We work to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills, and political analysis to act for change.”<sup>27</sup>

## The SpiritHouse Project

“SpiritHouse is a frontline and consistent voice for racial justice. We have stood on the front lines, whether working to stop racist crimes against Black people; educating our children; economically, socially, or politically advancing our community; preserving the rights and liberties of all groups in our community; or building multicultural coalitions who work to contest the presence of racism in their communities and in the nation.”<sup>28</sup>

## Vera Institute

“We envision a society that respects the dignity of every person and safeguards justice for everyone. We work with others who share our vision to tackle the most pressing injustices of our day—from the causes and consequences of mass incarceration, racial disparities, and the loss of public trust in law enforcement to the unmet needs of the vulnerable, the marginalized, and those harmed by crime and violence.”<sup>29</sup>

## Sources:

20. [auburnseminary.org/about](http://auburnseminary.org/about)
21. [blacklivesmatter.com/about/herstory](http://blacklivesmatter.com/about/herstory) (2019)
22. [policy.m4bl.org/about](http://policy.m4bl.org/about)
23. [ccrjustice.org/home/who-we-are/mission-and-vision](http://ccrjustice.org/home/who-we-are/mission-and-vision)
24. [eji.org/about-eji](http://eji.org/about-eji)
25. [ellabakercenter.org/our-work](http://ellabakercenter.org/our-work)
26. [southernersonnewground.org/who-we-are/vision-mission-history](http://southernersonnewground.org/who-we-are/vision-mission-history)
27. [showingupforracialjustice.org/about.html](http://showingupforracialjustice.org/about.html)
28. [spirithouseproject.org/spirithouse-in-action.php](http://spirithouseproject.org/spirithouse-in-action.php)
29. [vera.org/about](http://vera.org/about)

# Additional Resources

## William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation

“The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation engages citizens in classrooms and communities across the state of Mississippi and abroad to enable them to communicate candidly and constructively about race. By emphasizing the fundamental value of storytelling, the Winter Institute works to create a safe space for interracial, multicultural dialogue that is truth-centered and, above all, solution-oriented. While the Winter Institute promotes equity and inclusion in all communities, the focus lies primarily on forging meaningful and collaborative relationships among people in the most disparate communities. The Winter Institute envisions a more inclusive and just society that actively eliminates division based on difference, so we diligently pursue this reality, one community and one classroom at a time.”<sup>30</sup>

### Source:

30. [winterinstitute.org](http://winterinstitute.org)

# Credits

## GUIDE WRITER

**Blueshift**

## COPY EDITOR

**Joan D. Saunders**

## GUIDE DESIGNER

**Mary Miguel**

## ITVS ENGAGEMENT & IMPACT TEAM

**Sherry Simpson**

Senior Director, Engagement & Impact

**Kristy Chin**

Engagement Manager

**Zoe Stahl**

Engagement & Impact Coordinator

## GUIDE ADVISORS

**Jacqueline Olive**

Director, Producer, and Writer, *Always in Season*

**Monifa Bandele**

Impact Producer, *Always in Season*

**Carmen Dixon**

Impact Coordinator, *Always in Season*

**Anya Rous**

Co-producer/Impact Advisor, *Always in Season*

For more information about the *Always in Season* production team, additional resources, and updates on the story, visit: [alwaysinseasonfilm.com](http://alwaysinseasonfilm.com)

## ITVS

ITVS is a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization that has, for over 25 years, funded and partnered with a diverse range of documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning films and then airs them for free on PBS via our weekly series, *Independent Lens*, as well as other series through our digital platform, OVEE. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. For more information, visit [itvs.org](http://itvs.org).

## INDEPENDENT LENS

*Independent Lens* is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 PM. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as executive producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit [pbs.org/independentlens](http://pbs.org/independentlens).

Join the conversation:

With #AlwaysInSeasonPBS and #WeAreAllNeighbors at [facebook.com/independentlens](https://www.facebook.com/independentlens) and on Twitter @IndependentLens.

## CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television and related online services. For more information, visit [cpb.org](http://cpb.org), follow us on Twitter @CPBmedia, Facebook and LinkedIn and subscribe for other updates