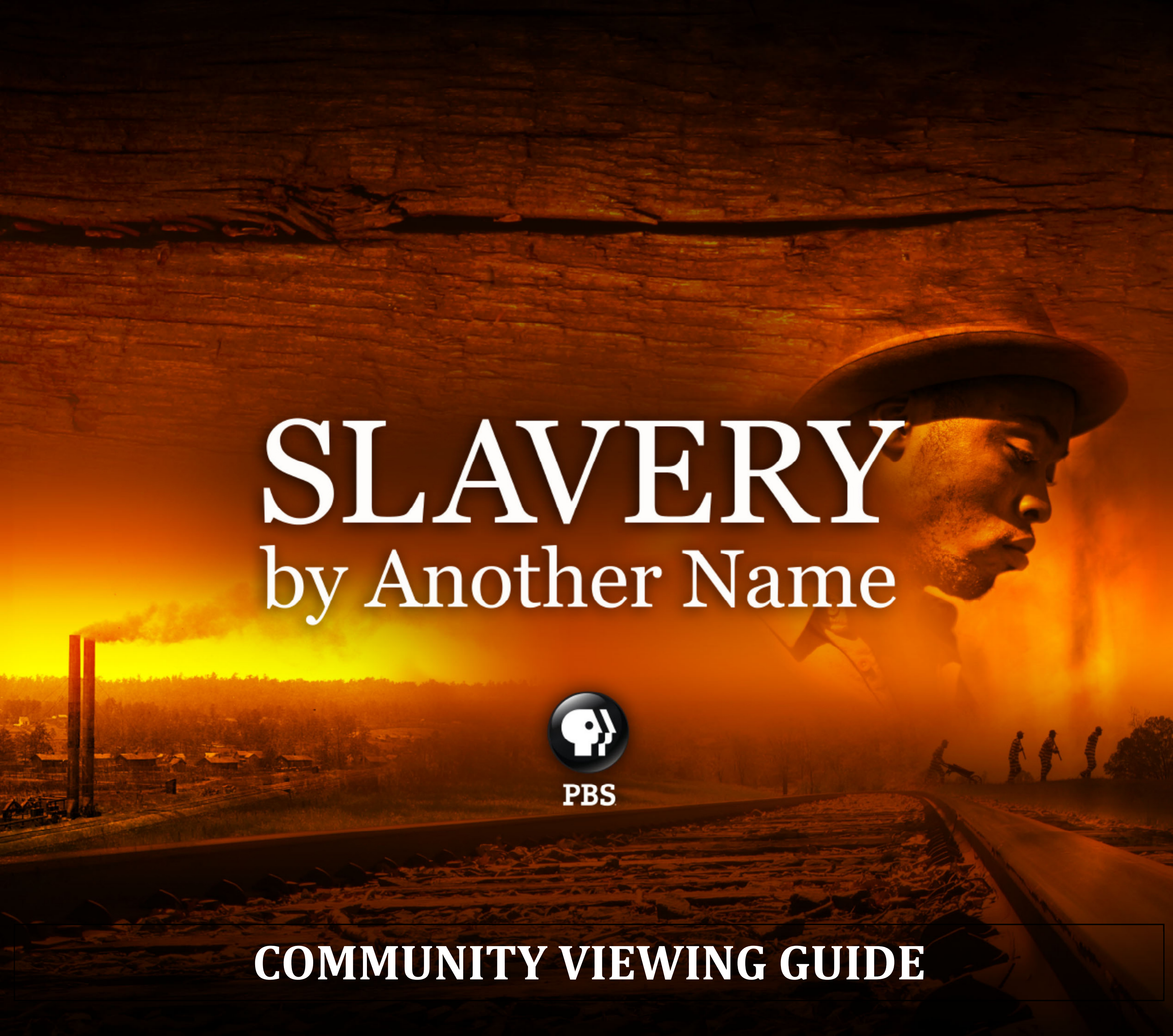

SLAVERY by Another Name

PBS

COMMUNITY VIEWING GUIDE

Major funding provided by

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tpt NATIONAL PRODUCTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Slavery by Another Name is a ninety-minute documentary that challenges one of America's most cherished assumptions: the belief that slavery in this country ended with the Emancipation Proclamation. Based on the 2008 Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Douglas A. Blackmon, the film, produced by ***tpt*** National Productions and Two Dollars and A Dream, tells how even as chattel slavery came to an end in the South in 1865, thousands of African Americans were pulled back into forced labor with shocking force and brutality. It was a system in which men, often guilty of no crime at all, were arrested, compelled to work without pay, repeatedly bought and sold, and coerced to do the bidding of masters. Tolerated by both the North and South, forced labor lasted well into the twentieth century, until 1945.

For most Americans this is entirely unknown history. Narrated by acclaimed actor Laurence Fishburne, *Slavery by Another Name* gives voice to the largely forgotten victims and perpetrators of forced labor and features their descendants living today. The program also includes interviews with Douglas A. Blackmon, leading scholars of this period, including Mary Ellen Curtin, Pete Daniel, Risa Goluboff, Adam Green, and Khalil Muhammad.

For more information about the film, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/about/.

BEYOND THE BROADCAST

In addition to the national PBS broadcast, *Slavery by Another Name* includes an interactive website at www.pbs.com/sban that features a rich variety of access points for online users to interact with and learn about this history, as well as share their own.

Since the *Slavery by Another Name* book was published, author Douglas A. Blackmon has received letters and e-mails from people relaying experiences of forced labor from their own family histories. The sharing of these stories is a central part of this project.

Through a partnership with StoryCorps, ***tpt*** has captured oral histories from descendants, people whose ancestor's lives were impacted by forced labor. These oral histories are featured on the website, which also invites online readers to submit their own stories via audio, video, and written formats. The website also contains an interactive map and timeline featuring a history of forced labor over an eighty-year period, from the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 through the early 1940s. Users can research regions in the South where convict leasing, debt peonage and sharecropping took place, as well as regions and institutions in the North that benefited from forced labor or allowed it to continue.

To increase the opportunities for young people to learn, interact, and engage around this history, educational materials, including classroom activity guides aimed at high school and college students, along with accompanying teacher resources, have been developed by Felicia Pride and Allissa Richardson of 2MPower Media. These materials incorporate the history of forced labor into units on Civics and Social Justice, English and Media Literacy, and History. The college unit focuses on the past and present economics of slavery.

Finally, to encourage communities to come together to explore this history, uncover and share their own, and move positively into the future, we have developed this viewing guide.

For more information and resources, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/classrooms/.

USING THIS GUIDE

A major goal of *Slavery by Another Name* is to introduce the history of forced labor that occurred in the South for eighty years after Emancipation to the widest possible audience, first through a powerful documentary, and then through a rich variety of "beyond broadcast" elements and activities, including self- and community-organized screenings.

This community viewing guide is designed to encourage individuals of all backgrounds to come together to talk and embrace how personal histories are part of a larger shared history and how, when presented with difficult pasts, we can strive towards reconciliation and move positively into the future. After viewing *Slavery by Another Name*, communities may be prompted to respond, "What next?" This guide is a tool to help move individuals and communities to act to address past and continued inequities..

To provide additional context prior to viewing, this guide includes explanations to key terms and a film synopsis, in addition to links to accompanying video clips.

The discussion prompts suggested within this guide are just that – suggestions. Use them as they work for you. What's most important is fostering productive dialogue. We offer tips for organizing a screening and facilitating healthy discussion. At the end of this guide, there are ideas for taking action to effect change in your community.

Lastly, you are encouraged to share your story – whether it's about your family's past, or your personal present – at the *Slavery by Another Name* website.

For more information and resources related to the film, visit http://www.pbs.org/sban.

FILM SYNOPSIS

Slavery by Another Name challenges one of Americans' most cherished assumptions: the belief that slavery in this country ended with the Emancipation Proclamation. The film tells how even as chattel slavery came to an end in the South in 1865, thousands of African Americans were pulled back into forced labor with shocking force and brutality. It was a system in which men, often guilty of no crime at all, were arrested, compelled to work without pay, repeatedly bought and sold, and coerced to do the bidding of masters. Tolerated by both the North and South, forced labor lasted well into the twentieth century.

Even before Reconstruction ended in 1877, many Southern states began enacting an array of laws intended to re-subjugate newly freed blacks and provide cheap sources of labor. Vagrancy, loitering, riding the rails, changing jobs, even talking too loudly in public – these behaviors and more – all became crimes carrying stiff fines or sentences. Although these statutes made no mention of race, Southerners knew that they were created as instruments of white control. The result was a huge increase in the numbers of blacks arrested and convicted. Arrest records uncovered in Alabama show that many convicted African Americans actually had committed no crime at all.

Initially, to save money on prison construction and later to actually generate revenue, states and counties began leasing "convicts" to commercial enterprises. These included small-time entrepreneurs, provincial farmers, large plantations and corporations. Soon leasing became a highly profitable business. Prisoners were leased to nearly every industry in the South including coal mines, sawmills, railroads, brickworks and plantations. These prisoners lived and worked under unspeakable conditions, often worse than during slavery before the Civil War. Many were tortured or died in captivity.

Forced laborers included untold numbers beyond just "convicts." Many were victims of peonage or debt slavery, an illegal but widespread practice of coerced labor to pay off debts. Others were victims of laws that made it a crime to leave employment for another job, keeping many blacks working under intolerable conditions as sharecroppers or elsewhere, rather than face the terrifying possibility of being arrested and sent to a slave mine or forced labor camp.

Anchoring the film are the stories of three black men who were entangled in the treacherous systems of forced labor: John Davis, Ezekial Archey, and Green Cottenham. Davis was a twenty-two-year-old sharecropper leased to John Pace, a plantation owner and head of a notorious network that was heavily involved in the sale and trade of black laborers. Davis' testimony helped convict Pace of debt slavery. Archey, a prisoner forced to labor in the mines, wrote to the Alabama inspector of prisons about horrid conditions, which ultimately led to reforms. Cotthenham was the free grandson of a former slave who, more than twenty years after the abolition of slavery, was arrested at the age of twenty-two on a fictitious charge of vagrancy and leased for $12 a month to a prison coal mine that had recently been acquired by U.S. Steel Corporation. At the mines, he worked fourteen to sixteen hours a day under nightmarish conditions and died there only months later.

Despite repeated appeals to the Department of Justice that forced labor constituted slavery, the system was condoned for decades at the highest levels of government. Key to this was a loophole in the Constitution: the Thirteenth Amendment that abolished slavery in 1865 specifically permitted involuntary servitude as punishment for "duly convicted criminals." American presidents ignored or turned a blind eye on this issue. Theodore Roosevelt at first tried to effect change, but eventually capitulated. Woodrow Wilson, who harbored vehement anti-Negro attitudes, strongly backed the politics of Southern leaders to ensure there'd be no change to the status quo.

Incredibly, it was not until December 12, 1941, five days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, that the federal government began to take the first steps that would eventually unravel the practice of forced labor. Concerned that enemy propaganda would focus on America's treatment of African Americans as second-class citizens, the Justice Department under Franklin Roosevelt devised a legal strategy for prosecuting whites who continued to hold slaves. Finally, in 1951, almost ninety years after the passage of the Emancipation Proclamation, Congress passed the first explicit statutes making any form of slavery in the United States indisputably a crime.

The film includes interviews with several key historians. In the last few decades, several scholars – including Mary Ellen Curtin, Pete Daniel, Talitha LeFlouria, Risa Goluboff, Adam Green, and Khalil Muhammad – have written about labor, civil rights, and involuntary servitude expanding our knowledge of the limits of emancipation, and the use of law as a tool of racial coercion and economic exploitation.

Author Douglas A. Blackmon is also a part of the story: a white son of the South who grew up in Mississippi during the uneasy integration of blacks and whites, he first stumbled upon the story of forced labor in writing an article for *The Wall Street Journal* about the U.S. Steel Corporation's use of forced black prison labor in the Pratt mines outside Birmingham in the early twentieth century. The article, and the overwhelming response it generated, fueled a seven-year quest to bring this largely unknown history into the mainstream.

To encourage reconciliation and redemption, *Slavery by Another Name* highlights the stories of descendants of forced labor as well as those whose relatives benefitted from it – many of them, having no previous knowledge of the scope or breadth of forced labor. It is through these shared histories that we see the impact of uncovering the past in efforts to reconcile our present and move positively into the future.

For more information and resources about this history, visit www.pbs.org/sban.

Watch the Film Trailer http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/
Watch the Film http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/

ORGANIZING A SCREENING

Slavery by Another Name explores a little-known history of forced labor that continues to resonate and impact today. Steps towards reconciling difficult parts of American history include exposure, dialogue, and understanding.

Hosting a screening can be an effective way to gather people and initiate conversation about this shared history in efforts to better understand our present and to effect change now and in the future. The film is available for streaming and purchase as a DVD at http://www.pbs.org/sban.

We offer the following suggestions for the types of groups that might host a screening:

- Civil and human rights organizations
- Colleges and universities
- Community groups
- Criminal justice organizations
- Cultural organizations and museums
- Education associations
- Faith-based institutions
- Families
- Genealogy organizations and groups
- High schools
- Historical societies and archival departments
- Libraries
- Local public media stations

Suggestions for Planning a Screening

Here are some recommendations for hosting a successful screening.

Define the purpose. Prior to planning a screening, define the main objective for the screening. Is it to encourage conversation, to expose this history to those who might be unaware, to incite action? You may have a few goals in mind, so identifying them can be helpful in providing a focus for the event, selecting any partners and determining the appropriate audience.

Identify partners. Working with others has several advantages including identifying space, gathering diverse audiences, and promoting the event. First look at your personal network and already established relationships. Then consider reaching out to local community organizations and institutions and individuals (use the list above of suggested groups) who may be interested in participating.

Secure a location. Consider locations that are centrally located and easy to get to. Partnering can also help to find locations that would be free of charge. Libraries often offer free space to individuals and community groups. Since the documentary is ninety minutes long, you'll want to choose a space where the audience can be comfortable for the entire event. You'll also need to make sure you have the right equipment, including items like a microphone, television or screen and projector, if necessary.

Determine a format. Develop an agenda for the event, even if only used for your purposes. Consider length, as well as time allotted for opening and closing remarks and to discuss, "what next?"

Promote the screening. If the screening is open to the public, promote the screening via email, social networks, word-of-mouth, and flyers. Coordinating an RSVP system can allow you to track the number of estimated attendees and send reminders.

Follow-up. Consider how you will follow-up with audience members. Will it be via email? Will you give active participants an opportunity to gather in the future? Consider providing participants with an evaluation form to rate their experience.

For more information about screening *Slavery by Another Name*, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/classrooms/.

FOSTERING PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE

When hosting a screening, it is important to create a safe, comfortable space to discuss the varied reactions that the film might elicit. Here are some tips to facilitate an engaging, healthy, and meaningful conversation.

Set the stage. In order for people to participate in discussions about sensitive subjects, they need to feel safe and not fear retaliation for comments they make during the discussion. It is best to establish a supportive atmosphere with ground rules for discussions early in the session.

Encourage audience members to:

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Respect one another's views.
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Avoid blame and speculation.
- Avoid inflammatory language.[1]

Know yourself. Before facilitating a discussion about possibly sensitive topics, it is important that you address your own biases, prejudices, opinions and confusion surrounding the issue. [2] [3]

Recognize the diversity of your audience. It is important to remember that each audience member comes from a diverse background (regardless of race) and has had different experiences. See this diversity as an asset. Authentic opportunities for learning happen when people are exposed to many different perspectives.

Set an objective for the discussion. To get the most out of your discussion, when possible, state a

[1] Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan. (2011). *Guidelines for discussion of racial conflict and the language of hate, bias, and discrimination*. http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/racialguidelines.php (accessed October 19, 2011).

[2] National Council for the Social Studies, 2008. A Vision of Powerful Teaching and Learning in the Social Studies: Building Social Understanding and Civic Efficacy. http://www.socialstudies.org/positions/powerful (accessed October 17, 2011).

[3] The Center for Teaching and Faculty Development, San Francisco State University (n.d.). *Top ten tips for addressing sensitive topics and maintaining civility in the classroom*. http://ctfd.sfsu.edu/feature/top-ten-tips-for-addressing-sensitive-topics-and-maintaining-civility-in-the-classroom.htm (accessed October 17, 2011).

theme or central question for the conversation. This will help to keep the dialogue focused.[4] [5]

Provide a common base for understanding. Highlight a video clip within the film, about a particular conflict or topic, to prompt discussion. Additionally, you can localize an issue that is discussed in the film, to make it more relevant to current affairs in your community.[6]

Be an active facilitator. You should neither dominate the discussion nor merely passively observe. Your role as the facilitator should include intervening in the discussion to:

- Provide reminders about respecting the right of others to have differing opinions.
- Re-word questions posed by participants.
- Correct misinformation.
- Ask for clarification.
- Review the main points.

Foster civility. There is a good chance that discussions about sensitive topics may become heated. The main goal of fostering civility is to protect your audience members from feeling personally attacked. Make sure participants understand that it is okay to disagree, but keep comments focused on the *ideas* and not the *people* who share their ideas.[7]

Be prepared to deal with tense or emotional moments. When discussing sensitive issues or difficult topics, it is very possible that some people will get angry or upset. If this happens, remain calm and try to turn it into a learning experience. Do not avoid the issue, but do defer it until you make a plan for dealing with it if necessary.[8]

Summarize. At the end of the discussion, revisit the main points. You can also ask audience members for quick written feedback about the discussion.[9]

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[4] Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan. (2011). *Guidelines for discussion of racial conflict and the language of hate, bias, and discrimination*. http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/racialguidelines.php (accessed October 19, 2011).

[5] National Council for the Social Studies, 2008. A Vision of Powerful Teaching and Learning.

[6] Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan, *Guidelines for discussion.*

[7] The Center for Teaching and Faculty Development, San Francisco State University, Top *ten tips.*

[8] Warren, L., & Bok Center, D. (2000). *Managing hot moments in the classroom*. http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/hotmoments.html (accessed October 17, 2011).

[9] Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan. (2011). *Guidelines for discussion of racial conflict and the language of hate, bias, and discrimination*. http://www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/racialguidelines.php (accessed October 19, 2011).

Reflect. Encourage the audience to reflect on the comments made by others, especially those with whom they may disagree. This time will give everyone a chance to unwind and think about his or her views. Ask the audience if they believe the film offers opportunities for further discussions, awareness and reflection. Use responses to identify specific ways to take action and effect change.[10]

"Fostering Productive Dialogue" was adapted from an article written by Alicia Moore, Associate Professor, Southwestern University and Molly Deshaies, Elementary Ed. Major, Southwestern University.

[10] The Center for Teaching and Faculty Development, San Francisco State University (n.d.). *Top ten tips for addressing sensitive topics and maintaining civility in the classroom*. http://ctfd.sfsu.edu/feature/top-ten-tips-for-addressing-sensitive-topics-and-maintaining-civility-in-the-classroom.htm. (accessed October 17, 2011).

THE DIALOGUE: Discussion Prompts

Before screening the documentary, consider holding a pre-viewing discussion that provides initial context and allows participants to consider their connection to the subject matter.

After screening the film, prior to delving into a post-viewing discussion, consider providing participants with a few moments to reflect on the documentary and their thoughts surrounding it. Then, establish the ground rules for a healthy discussion using the tips provided in the "Fostering Productive Dialogue" section of this guide.

Pre-Viewing Discussion Prompts

These prompts can be used to foster dialogue prior to screening the film to establish context and connect participants to the subject matter.

- What comes to mind when you consider the film's title, *Slavery by Another Name*?
- What do you know about the use of forced labor in America and beyond?
- The film tackles a difficult part of American history. What are ways that we can reconcile difficult parts of our history?
- This project is centered on the fact that our individual histories are part of a bigger shared history. What does shared history mean to you? How can we better engage with this larger, shared history in addition to our own personal histories?

Getting Started Discussion Prompts

The following prompts can help to initiate dialogue after screening the film.

- What's your initial reaction to the film?
- Did anything in the film surprise you?
- Why isn't the history of forced labor more prominently known and discussed? Why are some parts of our history better known than others?
- Has anyone researched his or her own family history? What did you find and how did you feel about what you found? How important is it to know your family's history?

THE DIALOGUE: Suggested Topics

FREEDOM

"In the five major cotton states of the deep South, nearly half of all capital, nearly half of all investment, was in human beings. So when those human beings were confiscated, when the investment was transferred, in essence, from slaveholders to the people themselves, that meant a huge loss of capital to Southern slaveholders, to the people who controlled the economy of the South." – James Grossman, scholar

Emancipation turned the former slaveholding world upside down. What do you think life was like for the newly freed slaves? **What do you think life was like for the former slaveholders?**

What were you taught about the Thirteenth Amendment**? Has your understanding of the Thirteenth Amendment changed after viewing the film?** If so, how?

At the end of the Civil War there was a rise in white vigilante groups in the South. What role did violence play in limiting the freedoms of blacks? **How is violence used today to control groups of people?**

Scholar Adam Green notes that, "Reconstruction was an attempt to create a country in which it would be possible to have a biracial and equal citizenship." **In what ways do you think that Reconstruction accomplished this goal** and in what ways did it fall short?

After 1874, there wasn't any sustained federal presence in the South, which meant that African Americans who were trying to embark on their new freedom journey could count on less assistance from the federal government and more animosity from Southern whites. **Should the federal government have done more to protect the new freedoms of blacks?** Do you believe that the federal government is effective in protecting the rights of all citizens today? Why or why not?

RECONSTRUCTION ENDS

"It was a crime in the South for a farm worker to walk beside a railroad. It was a crime in the South to speak loudly in the company of white women. It was a crime to sell the products of your farm after dark." – Douglas A. Blackmon, author of Slavery by Another Name

The end of Reconstruction ushered in oppressive legislation – such as the pig laws and vagrancy codes – that unjustly targeted African Americans. **How did these laws criminalize black life and aid in the rise of the convict leasing system?** Are there any laws now that you think unfairly target certain groups?

As a result of the vagrancy statutes in Southern states, you could be convicted if you couldn't prove at any given moment that you were employed. **How might this law impact people if it were in effect today?**

Once states realized that they could profit legally from leasing convicts, states throughout the South were engaged in some form of leasing convicts to private industry**. Do you think Southern states should have profited from leasing convicts?** Why or why not? Do you think that states today should profit from the labor of those incarcerated? Why or why not?

CONVICT LEASING

"We as convicts, is something like a man drowning. We have bin convicted of felonies, and because of that, we have lost every friend on Earth." – Ezekial Archey, convict

"Negro labor can be made exceedingly profitable in manufacturing iron, and in rolling mills provided [there is] an overseer – a Southern man, who knows how to manage negroes." – John T. Milner, Southern industrialist

John T. Milner was an engineer and businessman who, in many ways, could be considered the father of Southern industrialization, particularly in the Deep South. But he also held racist and repressive views. **Is it ever appropriate to appreciate one's contribution to society while also holding him or her accountable for wrongdoings?** Can you think of any other examples of this dynamic?

Do you think **there were other ways that industrialists like John Milner could have helped to build cities** like Birmingham, Alabama, without the use of forced labor? If so, how?

Ezekiel Archey sent letters that detailed the horrid conditions of the Pratt Coal Mines to the inspector of prisons for Alabama. Have you ever done something that exposed a wrongdoing? If so,

what were the results of your actions? What are ways that people can speak up about wrongdoings today?

Cristina Comer, a descendant of J.W. Comer, a former slaveholder who practiced convict leasing, says that the family stories she heard were that the Comer men were self-made. When she found out that the Comer men were involved in convict leasing, that image was shattered for her. **Have you ever found out something troubling about your family's history?** If so, how did you reconcile that truth? If not, how do you think you might feel? How can families discuss difficult personal histories?

Exposés of the convict labor system described it as "worse than slavery." **In what ways was it worse than slavery and in what ways was it similar?** Do you think there are any practices today that could be deemed worse than slavery?

In Florida, prisoners extracted gum and resin from pine trees. In Georgia, they hauled wet clay from riverbanks and molded it into bricks. From Texas to Louisiana, convicts forced their way through acres of virgin forest harvesting timber and building railroads. **What do you think about the contributions of forced labors who played a role in helping to industrialize America?**

Consider the following statement from historian Adam Green and then respond: "And this [convict leasing] system is one that I think in many ways needs to be understood as brutal in a social sense, but fiendishly rational in an economic sense. Because where else could one take a black worker and work them literally to death, after slavery? And when that worker died, one simply had to go and get another convict."

<u>CRIMINALIZING AFRICAN AMERICANS</u>

"So there are many important implications and long-term consequences for this convict leasing system. Not only is it so oppressive, but when you have an overwhelmingly black prison population, it cements that relationship between criminality and race in people's minds, to the degree that it's seen as something inherent." – Mary Ellen Curtin, scholar

By 1890, the South's state prison population had soared to nearly 19,000 and nearly ninety percent of those incarcerated were African American. What lingering effects could this hold for America

now? Do you think there **are any contemporary connections between the criminalization of black life and prison population rates?**

DEBT SLAVERY AND PEONAGE ON TRIAL

"Now I have lived in this state my entire life of thirty-seven years and I have never comprehended until now the extent of this present method of slavery through this peonage system." – Warren S. Reese, U.S. Attorney

Peonage, or involuntary servitude, is a system where an employer compels a worker to pay off a debt with work. Sadly, this type of debt slavery continues to occur in various forms today, such as in Pakistan where some landlords have forced farm workers into labor. **Have you heard of present-day cases of involuntary servitude around the world?** What can people do to raise awareness about this practice?

What was your impression of President Teddy Roosevelt's commitment to end forced labor in the South? Do you think he did enough? Why or why not? **What role do you think presidents should play in fighting these types of injustices?**

In prosecuting the peonage trial in Alabama, U.S. Attorney Warren S. Reese found a corrupt legal system that helped to maintain the practice and financially benefit those involved**. How can corruption within the legal system be combated?**

U.S. Attorney Warren S. Reese also faced many challenges, including severe backlash from powerful businessmen and officials linked to peonage, during his quest to prosecute those involved**. Have you ever been the only one in a large group to speak out** against something that you thought was wrong? If so, what happened and what did you do?

John Davis, a young sharecropper, was falsely accused of a crime, quickly convicted, then sentenced and charged fines and court fees. Because he couldn't pay, he was forced into labor – sold for a profit by a local businessman to a plantation owner. He was forced to sign a contract to work for ten months – which gave his employer the right to whip, confine and trade him as long as his debt was unpaid. Often, it is the most vulnerable citizens who are exploited. **What can be done to protect the most susceptible?**

At the National Archives today, there are more than 30,000 pages of letters from Southerners, many of them addressed to the president, about family members and loved ones trapped in forced labor. But, ultimately many of these letters went unaddressed. **Why do you think the federal government didn't pursue these cases more aggressively?** Do you believe letter-writing is an effective form of protest now? Why or why not?

Nearly all of the indictments in the Alabama peonage trial ended in acquittals, dismissals, suspended sentences, or presidential pardons. **Do you feel that justice was served?** Why or why not? If not, what do you think would have been a more just ruling? What can citizens do in cases when they feel that justice hasn't been served?

THE ARREST OF GREEN COTTENHAM

Green Cottenham was a young man who was arrested, convicted of vagrancy, and sentenced to six months' hard labor as the result of $38 in fines; he died shortly thereafter. Through this project, his descendants hope that his story will illuminate the lost voices of the thousands of people forced into labor. **What are ways that we can give voice to the forgotten like Green Cottenham?**

At the start of the twentieth century, a new generation of civil rights organizations emerged, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, founded by a group of activists that included W.E.B. Du Bois. **Have you been involved with any civil rights organizations?** If so, what was your experience like? What role do can civil rights organizations play today? What issues do you think they should advocate for?

Chain gangs were another form of forced labor that emerged in the South. Convicts were chained together and used to build roads, railroads and other state-run enterprises, often in horrid conditions. **Do you think that prisoners should be used for public works projects?** Why or why not?

Sharecropping was a practice in which a sharecropper agreed to farm the land for a percentage of the proceeds of the sale of crop. Workers became indebted to planters through loans with exorbitant interest rates and, unable to repay the debt, found themselves continuously forced to

work without pay. **What do you think are the lingering effects of sharecropping on families** who were trapped for years in the practice?

END OF SLAVERY

"When you see how people's lives were truly stolen from them. Their freedom was taken away. Their fathers or husbands were taken away. You can understand how the difficulties and the disparities would persist for much longer than it seems they should have." – Susan Burnore, descendant

An award-winning exposé published in 1923 of convict leasing in Florida inflamed readers because the victim, twenty-two-year-old Martin Tabert, was white. The outcry over Talbert's death helped to end state leasing in Florida. What role can media play in bringing attention to wrongdoings? **Do you think contemporary media is successful in doing so?** Why or why not? Do you think there is more outcry over crimes when the victim is white? If so, how can this inequity change?

By the 1930s African Americans are finding ways to use their influence to push for change through publishing newspapers, magazines, and leveraging their political support. What impact can organized action have today? **Have you been involved in organized action?** If so, what was your experience like? What contemporary issues do you think deserve this type of action?

In addition, there were numbers of individuals who acted as "voices of protest" against convict leasing and peonage. **Have you ever been a voice of protest?** If so, what was the experience like? What are ways to get more people to be voices of protest for important issues?

Nearly eighty years since the United States ratified the Thirteenth Amendment, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt took steps to enforce it by issuing Circular 3591, which mandated that federal attorneys should aggressively prosecute any case of involuntary servitude or slavery. **Why do you think it took so long for the federal government to take aggressive action?** What can citizens do to put pressure on the federal government to act more quickly to change or enforce policy?

During those eighty years that followed the Civil War, as many as 800,000 people were caught up in one of the forced labor systems. What overall impact does this figure hold?

Scholar Adam Green notes that, “Without the appreciation of this history, you descend into fantasies that black people didn’t deserve equal rights because black people – constitutionally, intellectually, morally – are not the equals of whites, period**.” How can not knowing the full story of history aid in fostering attitudes that are shortsighted?**

Scholar Kahlil Muhammad says, “We have to recognize that in these awful, ghastly tales of the brutalization of black people in this country, the motivation for that was profit, from small landowners to major corporations. And so at the end of the day, that part of this country’s legacy is still with us.” **Do you think that this desire for profit is still with America today?** If so, in what ways? What would it require for lives to be deemed more valuable than profit?

At the end of the film, descendant Tonya Groomes paraphrases a quote from Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.: “… the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." **What does this quote mean to you and how can it be used to encourage** continued action towards defending justice?

MOVE TO ACTION

Slavery by Another Name is a starting point to learn more about the forced labor that took place after the Civil War through World War II. Our hope is that the film prompts understanding, sharing, connectedness, and reconciliation, while encouraging all of us to join together to fight injustice in our communities and beyond.

Visit the Website

The *Slavery by Another Name* website, at http://www.pbs.org/sban, features a rich variety of informal ways to interact with and learn about this history. It also allows visitors to share their own oral family histories.

Hear More Stories

The *Slavery by Another Name* website features audio narratives, recorded in partnership with StoryCorps from "descendants," people whose ancestors' lives were impacted by forced labor. In addition to audio interviews, additional descendant stories are posted in video and written format.

Organize Additional Screenings

A great way to gather people to spark dialogue and understanding is through screenings of *Slavery by Another Name*, which can also be a precursor for organized action within various communities.

Bring it to Your Local Classrooms

You can request that *Slavery by Another Name* be taught in your local high schools or colleges. The film has a robust educational component, developed by Felicia Pride and Allissa Richardson of 2MPower Media that is designed to further increase learning and engagement around this history. These materials are standards-based and incorporate the history of forced labor into units on Civics and Social Justice, English and Media Literacy, and History for high school students. The college unit focuses on the past and present economics of slavery.

Organize a Leadership Summit

Use the documentary and its educational resources to encourage emerging leaders to work together to improve your community. You can organize a one-day event that connects emerging leaders with local groups. Encourage participants to take action locally. Also, think of ways to foster intergenerational and multicultural dialogue.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OWN THE FILM AND BOOK

You can purchase a copy of the book and film *Slavery by Another Name* by visiting www.pbs.org/sban.

SLAVERY BY ANOTHER NAME RESOURCES

To learn more about the film, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/about/.

To watch *Slavery by Another Name* online, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/.

To explore an interactive timeline and map of slavery in America from 1860-1950, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/slavery-timeline/.

To learn more about the history presented in *Slavery by Another Name*, visit the theme gallery at http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/.

To download *Slavery by Another Name* classroom activity guides and other educational materials, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/classrooms/.

For additional resources about this history, visit http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/additional-resources/.

To share your story with *Slavery by Another Name*, email sban@tpt.org.

KEY TERMS

Chain Gangs: Chain gangs were groups of convicts forced to labor at tasks such as road construction, ditch digging, or farming while chained together. Some chain gangs worked at locations near a prison, while others were housed in transportable jails such as railroad cars or trucks. Chain gangs minimized the cost of guarding prisoners, but exposed prisoners to an array of health problems and dangerous working conditions.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/chain-gangs/.

Convict Leasing: Initially, some states paid private contractors to house and feed prisoners. Within a few years states realized they could lease out their convicts to local planters or industrialists who would pay minimal rates for the workers – thereby eliminating costs and increasing revenue. Soon, markets for convict laborers developed, with entrepreneurs buying and selling convict labor leases. Unlike slave owners, temporary employers had only a small capital investment in convict laborers and thus convict laborers were often dismally treated. Even so, the convict lease system was highly profitable for the states and the employers.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/convict-leasing/.

Jim Crow & *Plessy v. Ferguson*: As whites gained control of Southern states' governments when Reconstruction ended, they began to enact laws known collectively as Jim Crow, which oppressed blacks through segregation. Though the 1875 Civil Rights Act had stated that all races were entitled to equal treatment in public accommodations, an 1883 Supreme Court decision clarified that the law did not apply to private persons or corporations. Once the Supreme Court decided that "separate but equal" was legal in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, segregation became even more ensconced in Southern law and strengthened Jim Crow. Poll taxes, literacy requirements, and grandfather clauses obstructed blacks from voting.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/jim-crow/.

Judgments and Contracts: In Southern courtrooms, two main legal methods developed that ensnared men into forced labor. In many cases, defendants were often found guilty of real or fabricated crimes, and were fined for the crime and additional court fees. When the men were unable to pay, a local businessman would step forward to pay the fines. The defendant would then sign a contract agreeing to work without pay until the debt was paid off. A second method involved a defendant who, when faced with the likelihood of a conviction and the threat of being sent to a far-off work camp, would "confess judgment," essentially claiming responsibility before any trial occurred. At that point, a local businessman would step forward to act as "surety," vouching for the future good behavior of the defendant, and forfeiting a bond that would pay for the crime. At that point, the judge would accept the bond, without ever rendering a verdict on the crime. The defendant would then sign a contract agreeing to work without pay until the surety bond was paid off.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/false-contracts/.

Life in the Coal Mine: Coal mines were dangerous for all workers. Collapsing mines, suffocation, gas poisoning, explosions, and heavy machinery accidents were daily dangers. Men often worked standing in water, swinging their sharp pick axes and shoveling coal in the flickering light of their gas head lamps. For those who survived those hazards, long-term exposure to poor air caused chronic lung diseases such as black lung. For convict laborers, conditions were even worse. Poor food rations, cramped sleeping quarters, and inadequate health care led to waves of diseases. Physical punishment for not meeting the required amounts for coal collected or insubordination included whippings, being tied up and tossed into solitary confinement, and water torture. Shackles, chains, and other methods were used to prevent escape.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/coal-mining/.

Peonage (Debt Slavery): Peonage, also called debt slavery or debt servitude, is a system where an employer compels a worker to pay off a debt with work. Legally, peonage was outlawed following the Civil War. However the federal government didn't truly commit to enforcing it until the 1940s.

After Reconstruction, many Southern black men were swept into peonage though different methods.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/peonage/.

Black Codes, Pig Laws and Vagrancy Statutes: In state after state, and county after county, after Reconstruction ended, new laws targeted African Americans – and effectively criminalized black life in efforts to restore power to Southern whites. The pig laws enhanced penalties for what had been previously misdemeanor offenses, to felony offenses. In Mississippi for example, theft of a pig worth as little as a dollar could mean five years in prison. With the vagrancy statutes you could be convicted if at any point you could not prove that you were employed.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/black-codes/.

Reconstruction: In the years immediately following the Civil War, from 1865-1877, the South entered a period called Reconstruction. During this time, the Freedmen's Bureau was created to offer former slaves food, clothing, and advice on labor contracts and the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments were passed in order to attempt to bring equality to blacks. Initially, with federal laws and federal troops offering protection, blacks began to vote and gain political power. Soon after, Southern whites responded with violence and intimidation. In 1877, because of the cost, administrative corruption, Northern exhaustion, and Southern protests, the federal government withdrew from the South, and black disenfranchisement and oppression quickly followed.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/reconstruction/.

Sharecropping: Sharecropping is a system where the landlord allows a tenant to farm his land in exchange for a share of the crop. This encouraged tenants to work to produce the biggest harvest that they could, and ensured they would remain tied to the land and unlikely to leave for other opportunities. High interest rates, unpredictable harvests, and unscrupulous landlords and merchants often kept tenant farm families severely indebted, requiring the debt to be carried over

until the next year or the next. Additional laws made it difficult or even illegal for sharecroppers to sell their crops to others besides their landlord, or prevented sharecroppers from moving if they were indebted to their landlord.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/sharecropping/.

Teddy Roosevelt and Progressivism: By the end of the nineteenth century, a new political movement called Progressivism, of which Teddy Roosevelt was an ardent supporter, developed in response to significant economic, social, and political inequalities. Progressives advocated for many different reforms including labor and prison reform, women's suffrage, public health initiatives, and universal education; the central, shared idea was that the government should lead efforts to effect change.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/progressivism/.

White Supremacists and Terrorism: White supremacy is the belief that white people are superior to other races of people. After Reconstruction, white supremacists formed political and social groups to promote whites and oppress blacks, and to enact laws that codified inequality. The Ku Klux Klan (founded in 1865) and the Knights of the White Camelia were secret groups, while members of the White League and the Red Shirts were publicly known. All four groups used violence to intimidate blacks and Republican voters. Their efforts succeeded, and with the end of Reconstruction in 1877, white supremacy became the reality of the South.

To learn more about this theme and watch related video clips, visit: http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/themes/white-supremacy/.

BEHIND THE FILM:

Interviews with Sam Pollard and Douglas A. Blackmon

Sam Pollard, Director and Producer

Sam Pollard, who produced and directed *Slavery by Another Name,* has, over a thirty-year career, worked on a diverse array of feature films, documentaries and television projects, including PBS' *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads* and *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow*. He has worked extensively with filmmaker Spike Lee on both feature films and documentary productions, including his Academy Award–nominated *Four Little Girls*; *Spike Lee Presents Mike Tyson*; and *Jim Brown All-American.*

Your thirty-year career as a producer, editor and director has largely yielded films about the African American experience. What attracted you to* Slavery by Another Name*?

Even though I was born and raised in New York City, *Slavery by Another Name* felt important to me because my family roots are Southern. My father's family is from Mississippi, my mother's family is from Georgia, I spend a great deal of time in Mississippi visiting relatives and cousins, and I've always found that Southern connection very strong. And every time I'm engaged in a project that looks at the struggles that African American people have to confront on a daily basis during the years of neo-slavery and Jim Crow, after *Plessy v. Ferguson*, I always feel it's an important thing to make this story known to people.

Why do you think the brutality of forced labor and the other difficult topics addressed in* Slavery by Another Name *are so little known in this country?

I would say that in America, the issue of race is either consciously or unconsciously at the forefront of who we are as a people and how we progress as a country. And I think that a lot of people like to deny, or like to not confront the idea, that racism is part of the fabric of this country. And that to deny that, or to try to hide from it, is to not realize it's an important thing to constantly discuss, because it's a part of what made Americans who we are today.

I think younger people sometimes don't want to know about the history because *oh, those were terrible, awful times.* And they *were* awful times for black people in the South. They were also awful times for Native Americans in this country, and awful times for Japanese-Americans during World

War II. But I think it's important to always constantly engage people in understanding all these different parts of history; even when it is negative you can learn something from it.

In addition to filmmaking, you're also a professor who works with a lot of young and up-and-coming artists. What is one message that you like to share with younger people?

I think the consistent message is that you always should be mindful of your history. The importance of history, the importance of listening to the family members, listening to cousins and aunts and uncles, getting a sense of the oral history of a family – that dynamic informs who you are as a person, who you are as a professional. Most people don't think about that when they're young. But looking back at the last forty or fifty years of my life, I think a lot of the things that I do as a filmmaker were unconsciously inspired by all the stories I heard from my aunts and my uncles about growing up in the South, especially listening to them talk about my grandfather, who was a very strong presence in all of our lives.

I think history is such a vital tool in helping one understand how to progress. History is the thing that cements who you are and where you come from, and where you're going to go.

Douglas A. Blackmon, Author and Co-Executive Producer

To uncover this little-known history, Blackmon, scoured thousands of documents found in the South's libraries, prison records, historical archives, and court proceedings to paint a picture of what life was really like for blacks who were trapped in insidious forms of forced labor, such as sharecropping, debt peonage and convict leasing. He has written extensively over the past twenty-five years about the American quandary of race – exploring the integration of schools during his childhood in a Mississippi Delta farm town, lost episodes of the Civil Rights movement, and, repeatedly, the dilemma of how a contemporary society should grapple with a troubled past.

For those who aren't familiar with* Slavery by Another Name*, can you elaborate on the premise behind this story?

Slavery by Another Name examines how involuntary servitude and forced labor were resurrected in the South in the decades after the end of the Civil War, often by the same industrialists who had begun experimenting with more harsh forms of slavery in the years prior to the war. At the heart of the new forms of forced labor was a perversion of the criminal justice system to make one of its primary goals the intimidation of African Americans back into a position of subservience as

laborers to whites. It's fundamentally the story of how slavery returned in America after it was supposed to have been abolished, and persisted for decades, with terrible consequences for African Americans and U.S. society.

What inspired you to write* Slavery by Another Name*?

It feels like I have been writing about race and America's tortured struggles with it for all of my life. I grew up in a little town in the Mississippi Delta in the 1960s and 1970s, a place where the country's racial turmoil was playing out very vividly and locally and at times violently. I was in the first class of children in Mississippi to begin the first grade together, black and white.

The book in some respects began with an essay I wrote in the sixth grade about a farm labor strike on the outskirts of my town in the mid 1960s. That was an extraordinary and tumultuous time in that little place, in which people made both heroic and cynical decisions, all of which shaped the lives of thousands of children, and the destinies of so many communities and the country as a whole. For reasons I can't really decipher at this point, I was intensely aware of what was happening, and the stakes involved, and began trying to understand how such a scrambled set of circumstances had come to pass. I have been trying to understand how all of that came to pass, and writing about it, ever since then.

What was involved in the process of creating a film version of your book for PBS? What were the challenges and highlights?

Making the *Slavery by Another Name* film was a thrill. Partly that was in seeing the book that I had poured so many years of effort into suddenly flare up into three dimensions. I got to see the story projected for an audience in new ways and by people with different talents and skills than my own. What was most satisfying, though, was that in the book I tried so hard to treat the victims of enslavement as three-dimensional, real people, with complex, valuable lives that had been wrecked by these terrible injustices. But there is only so much you can do with the printed word. Seeing those characters portrayed by actors and giving voice to their words from a century ago was really powerful.

The challenge of the book – and an even greater challenge in the film – was that for many of the key characters no record survives as to what became of them. Did they escape to the North? Were they murdered for resisting their enslavement? Did their white neighbors finally coexist with them

peaceably? There is so much missing information about economically poor African Americans in the rural Deep South at that time. Often, the biggest challenge was just finding ways to overcome that paucity of information while remaining true to the rigorous scholarship on which the book and the film were constructed.

Some viewers may ask about this topic's contemporary relevance. How would you respond to those who want to keep this story buried in the past?

Sadly, there are indeed a lot of people who would still rather not hear this story. But this is history that all well-meaning Americans ought to understand. This is a bedrock American story – not black history, or white history. Or prison history. It is American history, a narrative of things done by Americans to other Americans. And it's about the consequences of those actions. It's a key part of the explanation for why some Americans today are so much more likely to be far more wealthy and better educated throughout their lives than other Americans of a different color.

If we ever want to completely understand the America in which we live, if we are at all sincere when we claim to want a society that is equitable and open for everyone, if we truly want to forge a shared vision for the America we want to see in the future, that past has to be understood.

At the same time, one of the reasons many people have responded so enthusiastically to the book is that its intent isn't to make all white people feel unbearably guilty. It's not to blame every difficulty of every living black person on these events. Instead, I believe that this story can liberate us all from a conversation about race that is often paralyzed.

Related video clips:

Watch Bricks We Stand On http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/about/

CREDITS

Film Credits

Produced and directed by Sam Pollard
Executive Producer: Catherine Allan
Co-Executive Producer: Douglas A. Blackmon
Written by Sheila Curran Bernard
Edited by Jason Pollard
Original Score by Composer Michael Bacon
Narrated by Laurence Fishburne

Community Viewing Guide Credits

Guide Producers: Felicia Pride and Allissa Richardson of 2MPower Media
Contributors: Alicia L. Moore; Molly Deshaies
Special Thanks: Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

tpt National Productions, a division of Twin Cities Public Television (***tpt***), the PBS affiliate for Minneapolis–St. Paul, is among the primary content producers for the public television system. In addition to crafting award-winning series, documentaries and specials, ***tpt*** National Productions amplifies its reach and impact through innovative websites, educational outreach programs and community engagement initiatives. ***tpt*** productions include national primetime Emmy Award winners *Benjamin Franklin* and *The Forgetting: A Portrait of Alzheimer's*; Peabody winners *Depression: Out of the Shadows* and *Hoop Dreams*; and Writer's Guild Award Nominees *Alexander Hamilton* and *Dolley Madison*.

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