

Vermont



PBS

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For Immediate Release

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RACE IN AMERICA: VERMONT PBS HOSTS A NATIONAL CONVERSATION

*BBC WORLD NEWS SPECIAL: GEORGE FLOYD MEMORIAL: Thursday, June 4 at 5:30 p.m. ET

*THE TALK: RACE IN AMERICA: Thursday, June 4 at 9:00 p.m. ET

*RACE MATTERS: AMERICA IN CRISIS: A PBS NEWSHOUR SPECIAL: Premieres Friday, June 5 at 9:00 p.m. ET

* AMERICA IN BLACK AND BLUE 2020 Premieres Monday, June 15 at 9:00 p.m. ET

* Films by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.: RECONSTRUCTION: AMERICA AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: AND STILL I RISE and THE AFRICAN AMERICANS: MANY RIVERS TO CROSS;

* From Stanley Nelson and Independent Lens: THE BLACK PANTHERS: VANGUARD OF THE REVOLUTION,

*PBS KIDS and PBS LearningMedia: Resources to Support Families and Educators

*PBS AMERICAN PORTRAIT: Americans Share Their Stories About Racism and Its Impact, Past and Present

* distributed on VermontPBS/WETK broadcast, Passport, VermontPBS.org and the VermontPBS app

Winooski, VT – June 4, 2020 – Vermont PBS announced today that it will present a series of films and new specials focused on race in America following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 and the ensuing protests that have erupted across the country. In addition to re-broadcasting films focused on African American history by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Stanley Nelson, Vermont PBS will curate a playlist of programs from **FRONTLINE**, **POV**, **INDEPENDENT LENS** and other iconic series, and present a slate of locally produced programming that explores the dimensions and impacts of racism on Black Americans, Vermonters, and the United States.

“As Vermonters we struggle with the clash between our lack of diversity as a population and our history as the state that banned slavery and supported African-American voting rights before America was even a nation,” said Vermont PBS President and CEO, Holly Groschner. “Vermont PBS looks to our neighbors of color and indigenous people to help educate us on issues of race in America and in Vermont. Please join us as we experience the power of these thought-provoking stories of racism and its damage to our communities here and across the country, as a foundation for a new dialog. Our goal is to work together

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with you to forge a path to a place where racism, injustice and exclusion are excised from our interactions, both public and private. That's the dialogue Vermonters want to have. And this is where we start."

"As a media system that serves every person in America, we stand with the Black community, and we stand against racism and hate," echoed Paula Kerger, President & CEO of PBS. "In the coming days and weeks, we will use our national reach and community presence to deepen understanding, foster conversation and enable meaningful change. And we will continue to stand behind our courageous journalists, whose unwavering commitment to speak truth to power is essential to the strength of our democracy."

This focused programming from Vermont PBS begins Thursday, June 4 at 5:30 p.m. with a BBC News Special: **George Floyd Memorial**. Christian Fraser, with Katty Kay in Washington and Jane O'Brien in Minneapolis, will present special coverage of the memorial for George Floyd, whose death at the hands of US police has sparked the biggest protests and violence against racial discrimination in decades. Vermont PBS will rebroadcast **THE TALK – RACE IN AMERICA** on Thursday, June 4 at 9:00 p.m. This 2017 documentary tells six stories of struggle between people of color and law enforcement in America while chronicling how families of color attempt to protect their children with "the talk" about what to do if they are stopped by police.

On Friday, June 5 at 7:30 p.m. a special edition of **VERMONT THIS WEEK** is scheduled. Join host Stewart Ledbetter and a panel of leading Vermont journalists as they examine the state's response to recent events, the ongoing protests, and the ways in which race and racism have shaped our region with Xusana Davis, the State's Executive Director of Racial Equity.

Following at 8:30 p.m., Vermont PBS presents **CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS AND ANDREW AYDIN: THE STORY OF MARCH**, a look back at legendary civil rights activist John Lewis' 2019 appearance at the Flynn Center in Burlington with author Andrew Aydin to mark the debut of their graphic novel, *March: Book One*, a Vermont Humanities Council Vermont Reads choice.

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To accompany these presentations, a series of films from Vermont PBS' **MADE HERE** documentary series, which highlights the work of local filmmakers, will encore online. Featured works will include selections from the **MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL SHOWCASE 2020**; **HERE AM I, SEND ME: THE STORY OF JONATHAN DANIELS**, a white civil rights activist killed in 1965; **CHANGE THE SUBJECT**, the chronicle of Dartmouth College students who battled anti-immigrant sentiment from campus to Capitol Hill; **IT'S CRIMINAL**, which explores the economic and social inequities dividing the US and how separated communities can learn to speak to each other; and **RAISING ALI**, a study of 1965's epic Ali vs. Liston II boxing match in Lewiston, Maine and the racial and cultural stresses it reflected.

On Friday, June 5 at 9:00 p.m., Vermont PBS will air a new special, **RACE MATTERS: AMERICA IN CRISIS: A PBS NEWSHOUR SPECIAL**. Anchored by managing editor Judy Woodruff with contributions from senior national correspondent Amna Nawaz, correspondent Yamiche Alcindor and special correspondent Charlayne Hunter-Gault, the one-hour program will focus on the frustration pouring out onto American streets, outrage about police brutality, and America's deep systemic racial disparities in the economy, education, criminal justice system and health care, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will also include grassroots voices from around the country and roundtable conversations with thought leaders and other newsmakers.

At 10:00 p.m. on Friday, June 5, PBS will rebroadcast **FRONTLINE: Policing the Police**, in which writer and historian Jelani Cobb examines allegations of abuses within the Newark Police Department and the challenge of fixing its broken relationship with the community.

GREAT PERFORMANCES: Twilight: Los Angeles encores Monday, June 8 at 10:00 p.m. Anna Deavere Smith's powerful one-woman performance offers a riveting account of the aftermath of the 1992 Rodney King verdict and the lasting impact of the Los Angeles riots on America's conscience. Award-winning director Marc Levin weaves Smith's stage performance with news footage and interviews to create a portrait of rage, sorrow, and hope.

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AMERICA IN BLACK AND BLUE 2020 broadcasts on Monday, June 15 at 9:00 p.m. with reports from across the country, including interviews with key leaders and participants in the struggle for racial justice, accountability and equity, as well as voices from law enforcement. As the crisis of police violence on black citizens engulfs the nation, this PBS special will bring context and insight with updated reporting from the original **AMERICA IN BLACK AND BLUE**, which first aired in 2016, as well as **THE TALK - RACE IN AMERICA**.

Starting this week, Vermont PBS will also present a film series about historical injustices in the African American community. Films from Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. include **THE AFRICAN AMERICANS: MANY RIVERS TO CROSS**, a chronicle of African American history from the origins of slavery on the African continent through more than four centuries of remarkable events; **RECONSTRUCTION: AMERICA AFTER THE CIVIL WAR**, a four-part series that explores the transformative years when African Americans forged a new, more equal place in American social and political life, only to face the backlash of segregation and institutionalized disempowerment whose legacy persists; and **BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: AND STILL I RISE**, an exploration of the civil rights movement's impacts.

Vermont PBS will also screen Stanley Nelson's award-winning Independent Lens film **THE BLACK PANTHERS: VANGUARD OF THE REVOLUTION**, a riveting look at an earlier era of conflict in which the Black Panthers provided community services while advocating for more radical national change. In addition, the station will present **JOHN LEWIS – GET IN THE WAY, which follows the civil rights legend** from his youth in the segregated South to his current role as a powerful voice in Congress, and **POV: Whose Streets?**, an unflinching look at the Ferguson uprising.

Rounding out June's study of America's racial issues are four films from **INDEPENDENT LENS: ALWAYS IN SEASON** explores a grieving mother's quest for racial justice after her teenage son's suspicious death. **CHARM CITY** introduces the people on the front lines of three years of unparalleled violence in Baltimore. **THE FIRST RAINBOW COALITION follows** community groups in 1960s Chicago as they bridge race and ethnicity to form a surprising alliance. And the Oscar-nominated **I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO examines** James Baldwin's unfinished book about race in America.

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The above films will also be included in a special curated collection streaming free at PBS.org. As part of this presentation, the filmmakers will offer their insights into the events currently gripping the country and explore their historical origins for greater context. Vermont PBS members will be able to stream all episodes via PBS Passport and the PBS Video App, available on iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV and Chromecast.

To complement this programming, **PBS AMERICAN PORTRAIT**, the signature programming and engagement initiative of the network's 50th anniversary, is inviting Americans to share their stories about race and current events with a new prompt, "**Now is the time...**" at pbs.org/americanportrait.

PBS KIDS will offer families resources to discuss race, racism, civil rights, current events and more with young children, including a virtual event on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) on Tuesday, June 9 at 3:30 p.m. ET with parents, teachers and child development experts. **PBS LEARNINGMEDIA** will offer materials to help educators talk with students about race in America and current events, including classroom-ready resources for a variety of grade levels aligned to state and national standards, and professional learning materials for educators. And in the spirit of providing resources and information on topics exploring race in America, **PBS DIGITAL STUDIOS** will curate a themed playlist featuring wide-ranging content from some of its most popular series, including [SAY IT LOUD](#), [ABOVE THE NOISE](#), [ORIGIN OF EVERYTHING](#) and [CRASH COURSE](#).

For more information and complete broadcast and streaming schedules, visit <https://www.vermontpbs.org/race-in-america/>.

About Vermont PBS

Vermont PBS connects neighbors through stories that change lives. As Vermont's only statewide independent TV station, Vermont PBS is a powerful catalyst that informs, educates and inspires. When you support Vermont PBS, you help all Vermonters learn, grow, and contribute to our great state and the world. Learn more at [vermontpbs.org](https://www.vermontpbs.org). Join us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and the [Web](#).

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