
Viewing Guide for *The 1619 Project* Docuseries Episode 2: “Race”

The 1619 Project is a Hulu documentary series expanding on The 1619 Project initiative created by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones for The New York Times Magazine. The six-part series seeks to reframe the country’s history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of our national narrative. You can view the documentary series at [hulu.com/series/the-1619-project](https://www.hulu.com/series/the-1619-project).

About this Guide

Each episode of the series calls on historians, journalists, and community leaders to share their insight and expertise on the enduring legacy of slavery and its impact on our current society. Each episode contains information that could be useful for a variety of classroom contexts and weaves together multiple related themes and plotlines. It is possible for students to engage with these key themes without viewing the hour-length episodes in full, particularly if they are utilizing other *1619 Project* materials as supplemental texts.

As such, we’ve created a guide that allows for both thematic and linear viewing of each episode:

- In the [About the Episode](#) section of this guide, you will find a summary of the key themes, the relevant time stamps for those themes, and some supplemental texts from *The 1619 Project* to help deepen student understanding.
- In the following [Linear Viewing Guide](#) section, you will find a table that splits the episode into sections from start to finish with time stamps and discussion questions.
- At the end of the guide, you will find a [Topic Index](#) for the episode listing the key people, events, concepts, terms, and more to assist with lesson planning and standards alignment.

Some parts of this episode include descriptions of the sexual and reproductive violence enslaved people faced. Other parts detail the effects of racism and medical negligence on Black maternal health, including pregnancy loss, infant mortality, and death. We’ve marked these sections and included content warnings for teachers to review and consider. We also suggest having a classroom social-emotional learning protocol for engaging with hard histories and inviting students to think through how they can care for themselves when things are both important to know and difficult to listen to.

This viewing guide is accompanied by a Docuseries Activity Guide that goes beyond discussion questions to provide teachers with extended activities for learning.

About Episode 2: Race

“Race” explores the origins and legacies of racial categorization within the United States. The episode also investigates the racialized, gendered violence born out of enslavement and how it fueled the creation of mythologies about Black women’s sexuality and womanhood and contributes to the current Black maternal health crisis.

Themes in this episode include:

- Origins and Legacies of Racial Categorization
- Reproductive Violence with the Institution of Slavery
- The Black Maternal Health Crisis
- Mythologies and Stereotypes Around Black Womanhood

Theme: Origins and Legacies of Racial Categorization

Summary of Theme	This theme explores the development of racial categories during enslavement. It also delves into how race became codified into law and continued to evolve after enslavement. Lastly, this theme shows how deeply entrenched race was and continues to be in American society and culture.
Relevant Time Stamps	<p>00:00-05:55 (Introduction; Racial Classifications in the U.S.; Personal account: Racial Categorization)</p> <p>05:56-11:53 (Interlude: Why Racial Classifications Exist; Origins of Racial Classification; Justifying the Institution of Slavery)*</p> <p>36:29-40:09 (Institutionalized Racial Classification Post-Enslavement)</p> <p>40:10-41:00 (Personal Account: Racial Categorization)</p> <p>41:01-41:56 (Institutional and Social Barriers to Interracial Marriage)</p> <p>41:56-44:21 (Lawsuits on Racial Categorization and Marriage; Slavery’s Legacy in Racist Laws)</p> <p>48:35-49:14 (Interlude: Race, Power, and Access)</p> <p>49:15-49:45 (Interlude: Nikole’s Reckoning with Racial Stereotypes)</p> <p>52:07-53:33 (Closing: The Way Forward)</p>
Supplemental Reading	<p><u>From <i>The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story</i></u></p> <p>“Loving Me” by Vievee Francis</p> <p>“Fort Mose” by Tyehimba Jess</p> <p>Chapter 2: “Race” by Dorothy Roberts</p> <p>Chapter 5: “Dispossession” by Tiya Miles</p>

Theme: Reproductive Violence within the Institution of Slavery

Summary of Theme	This theme explores the centrality of Black women’s sexuality and reproductive capabilities to the survival of enslavement. It details the sexual violence Black women endured, the process of forced reproduction, the state of Black maternal health, and rates of infant mortality during enslavement.
Relevant Time Stamps	06:35-11:53 (Origins of Racial Classification; Interlude: Justifying the Institution of Slavery)* 16:23-16:56 (Interlude: Sexual and Reproductive Abuse of Enslaved People) 16:56-26:25 (Scope and Nature of Sexual Violence during Slavery; Interlude: Forced Reproduction during Enslavement)* 26:25-27:55 (Interlude: Legacy of Infant Mortality) 35:12-36:05 (Interlude: Reckoning With America's Past)
Supplemental Reading	<i>From The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story</i> “Daughters of Azimuth” by Nikky Finney “Sold South” by Jesmyn Ward Chapter 2: “Race” by Dorothy Roberts Chapter 6: “Capitalism” by Matthew Desmond

Theme: The Black Maternal Health Crisis

Summary of Theme	This theme lays out the current state of Black maternal health in the United States. It reveals how racism, biases, stereotypes, and systemic inequities have led to the current crisis of Black infant and maternal health.
Relevant Time Stamps	10:04-11:53 (Interlude: Justifying the Institution of Slavery)* 11:53-16:23 (Personal Account: Black Maternal Health)* 26:25-27:55 (Interlude: Legacy of Infant Mortality) 27:55-29:56 (Personal Account: Black Maternal Health)* 29:56-34:03 (Understanding the Black Maternal Health Crisis) 34:04-35:11 (Personal Account: Black Maternal Health) 35:12-36:05 (Interlude: Reckoning with America’s Past) 49:46-52:06 (Personal Account: Black Maternal Health)

These materials were created by Pulitzer Center Education staff to support utilizing *The 1619 Project* as an instructional tool. You can find our full *1619 Project* Education Materials Collection at <https://1619education.org/>.

	52:07-53:33 (Closing: The Way Forward)
Supplemental Reading	<u>From The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story</u> “Bad Blood” by Yaa Gyasi Chapter 2: “Race” by Dorothy Roberts Chapter 12: “Medicine” by Linda Villarosa Chapter 15: “Healthcare” by Jeneen Interlandi

Theme: Mythologies and Stereotypes Around Black Womanhood

Summary of Theme	This theme explores three stereotypes, or what the speakers refer to as “mythologies” about Black womanhood: the mammy, the jezebel, and the sapphire. It links the creation of these mythologies to enslavement and shows how they impact social policy.
Relevant Time Stamps	06:35-11:53 (Origins of Racial Classification; Justifying the Institution of Slavery)* 36:06-36:28 (Transition: Snapshots of Black Life) 44:24-48:34 (Myths and Stereotypes About Black Women*) 49:15-49:45 (Interlude: Nikole’s Reckoning With Racial Stereotypes) 52:07-53:33 (Closing: The Way Forward)
Supplemental Reading	<u>From The 1619 Project: New Origin Story</u> “proof [dear Phillis]” by Eve L. Ewing “Crazy When You Smile” by Patricia Smith Chapter 2: “Race” by Dorothy Roberts Chapter 4: “Fear” by Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander Chapter 14: “Music” by Wesley Morris

Linear Viewing Guide: Race

Some questions to consider before viewing:

1. What is race? When did you first become aware of different racial classifications? How important is racial identity to you?
2. What do you know about the history of race and racism in the United States? How do you think race may be related to the history of enslavement?
3. Some of the history and personal stories told in this episode are hard to listen to because they describe painful events. What can we do to take care of ourselves when something is both important to hear and difficult to listen to?

Time Stamp	Main Topic	Questions to Consider
00:00-03:04	Intro: Nikole's Family History	What do we learn about Nikole Hannah-Jones' family? How do you think her family histories have informed her identity and work with this project?
03:04-03:55	Interlude: Racial Classifications in the U.S.	<p>Are you familiar with the checkboxes for identifying racial identity that are mentioned in this section? If so, where have you seen them?</p> <p>What is the experience of selecting a racial category like for you? How might that be similar or different from what others experience when asked to self-identify in this way?</p>
03:56-05:55	Personal Account: Racial Categorization	How can national origin impact understandings of race? How is Samuel Sarfo's experience with racial classification different from a typical American experience of race?
05:56-06:35	Interlude: Why Racial Classifications Exist	Hannah-Jones introduces the idea that race is not biological or physical, but invented as a power structure. How is this similar or different to the ways you've learned to think about race in the past? What questions do you have about this statement?
06:35-10:04	Origins of Racial Classification *mention of the rape of enslaved Black women	<p>Are you surprised to hear that these racial classifications did not originally exist in the colonies?</p> <p>How was the law the colonists put in place in 1662 different from the British law around lineage and status? Why did they make this choice? What was its impact?</p>

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10:04-11:53	Interlude: Justifying the Institution of Slavery *describes medical abuse and experimentation on Black bodies	How can cultural beliefs justify violent actions? Who were some of the people responsible for the cultural myths about Black people during America's founding years? Did you know the history of James Simms and the origins of gynecology? What questions does it raise about ethics in medicine? What other medical fields are you interested in learning more about?
11:53-16:23	Personal Account: Black Maternal Health *discussion of medical neglect	Why is it important to collect data and statistics about issues like medical mistreatment? What other questions do you have after viewing these statistics? What was Chrissy Sample's experience with her doctor? What choices did the doctor make that could be considered neglectful?
16:23-16:56	Interlude: Sexual and Reproductive Abuse of Enslaved People	Why do you think the lived experiences of enslaved Black women were not well documented or recorded? How has the choice not to document these experiences led to erasure?
16:56-25:12	Scope and Nature of Sexual Violence During Slavery *vivid descriptions assaults on enslaved women and forced reproduction	Daina Berry describes feeling heavy while waking the grounds of the Butler plantation. Why might she feel that way? What feelings come up for you watching this section? What do Fanny Kemble's journal entries reveal about the experiences of Black women on the Butler Island Plantation? What were some of her varied responses to these women? Hannah-Jones and Berry discuss the need to use precise language to describe these atrocities even if the words are uncomfortable. How does this practice combat the erasure of these histories?
25:12 - 26:25	Interlude: Forced Reproduction During Enslavement	Why were Black women's reproductive abilities important to the institution of slavery? How did the ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade impact enslaved Black women in the United States? What is forced reproduction? How does it dehumanize the people impacted?

26:25 - 27:55	Interlude: Legacy of Black Infant Mortality	According to Daina Berry, what is the relationship between today's infant mortality rates and those from enslavement?
27:55- 29:56	Personal Account: Black Maternal Health *pregnancy loss	How does the way that medical professionals treated Chrissy Sample parallel the ways that (pregnant) enslaved Black women were treated? In what ways were enslaved Black people also managing life and death at the same time?
29:56- 34:03	Understanding the Black Maternal Health Crisis	How can we explain the discrepancies between Black and white infant and maternal mortality rates? What responsibilities does Dr. Gillespie-Bell believe medical professionals have regarding bias? How do biases impact medical treatment?
34:04- 35:11	Personal Account: Black Maternal Health	What additional mistreatment did Chrissy Sample and her family experience after the death of one of the twins? What do you think the long-term impact on them might be?
35:12- 36:05	Interlude: Reckoning With America's Past	Dr. Gillespie-Bell claims that people can have a 'visceral' response to the term race. Why do you think this is? Why is it important to reckon with America's racist past?
36:06- 36:28	Transition: Snapshots of Black Life	What feelings does this footage evoke? How is it similar or different to snapshots of Black life you've seen in other documentaries?
36:29- 40:09	Institutionalized Racial Classification Post-Enslavement	What was the Racial Integrity Act of 1924? Why was it created? What is the one-drop rule and what was its impact on society and culture?
40:10- 41:00	Personal Account: Racial Categorization	What were some of the racial categories that Ashley Remkishun and Samuel Sarfo discovered? Have you heard of these categorizations before?
41:01- 41:56	Interlude: institutional and Social Barriers to Interracial Marriage	How did Nikole Hannah-Jones' grandparents initially respond to her mother being in an interracial relationship? What do you imagine it took for the family to reconcile and come together in the end?

		Besides the law, what other barriers were there to interracial relationships?
41:56-44:03	Lawsuits on Racial Categorization and Marriage	What did the <i>Loving v. Virginia</i> ruling undo? What did the case fail to undo?
44:03-44:21	Interlude: Slavery's Legacy in Racist Laws	What is one the legacies of racist laws? How do they continue to impact society?
44:24-48:34	Myths and Stereotypes About Black Women *sexual assault mentioned *sexually suggestive movie clip	How did enslavement impact/influence the development of myths about Black women's sexuality? How have stereotypes about Black women's sexuality impacted social policy? What are the major caricatures of Black womanhood? Where can we see these caricatures?
48:35-49:14	Interlude: Race, Power, and Access	What is the relationship between race and power?
49:15-49:45	Interlude: Nikole's Reckoning With Racial Stereotypes	Nikole Hannah-Jones mentions her struggles to resolve all the stereotypes about Black women because of all the Black women she knows. Have you ever been stereotyped or witnessed someone being stereotyped? How did it make you feel? Have you ever heard a stereotype about a group of people that did not align with what you knew to be true about those people?
49:46-52:06	Personal Account: Black Maternal Health	What are Chrissy Sample's hopes for other Black mothers? How do you think her experiences shaped those hopes?
52:07-53:33	Closing: The Way Forward	What steps can be taken to reconcile with America's racist past? Dorothy Roberts suggests that a way forward is to listen to the voices of Black women and to take seriously their visions for a transformed society. What are your visions for society? What does a transformed world look like to you?

Some questions to consider after viewing:

1. How has viewing this episode changed your understanding of race and racial categorization? How has it changed your understanding of the history of enslavement?
2. How are imagery and audio used to help with storytelling in this episode? How is the experience of viewing the docuseries similar or different to reading the text?
3. What additional research do you want to do about U.S. history after learning about the ways in which research can expand your understanding of a topic?

Topic Index

Amendments, Legislation, Supreme Court Cases

- [The Act Prohibiting the Importation of Slaves, 1808](#)
- [The Racial Integrity Act of 1924](#)

Concepts and Terms

- Black Infant Mortality
- Black Maternal Mortality
- Domestic Slave Trade
- Enslavement
- Enslaved Breeding
- Eugenics
- Fetal mortality
- Gynecology
- Jezebel
- Mammy
- Maternal Care
- Maternal Health
- Miscegenation
- One-Drop Rule
- Pseudoscience
- Race
- Sapphire
- Scientific Racism
- Stereotype
- Unconscious Bias
- Welfare Queen
- White Supremacy

Subject Matter Experts

- [Daina Ramey Berry](#)
- [Dorothy E. Roberts](#)
- Veronica Gillispie-Bell, University of South Carolina

Historical & Political Figures Mentioned

- Alice Jones
- Bill Clinton
- Fanny Kemble
- J. Marion Sims
- Kip Rhinelander
- Linda Taylor
- Major Pierce Butler
- Ronald Reagan
- Roswell King, Sr.
- Rowell King, Jr.
- Walter Plecker
- Walter White

Locations Visited

- Butler Island Plantation, Darien, Georgia
- Brooklyn, New York
- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania