



**WORLD CHANNEL AND PBS's *INDEPENDENT LENS* PRESENT  
"THE HISTORY OF WHITE PEOPLE IN AMERICA" THIS JULY**

**Digital animated series explores the history of race in America  
and its role in shaping modern society**

**Premieres July 6 on WORLD's YouTube Channel**

**BOSTON (June 30, 2020)** — As Americans prepare to celebrate the nation's birth this Independence Day in the midst of historic uproar about racial disparities and injustices, WORLD Channel — the public media channel that helps us understand conflicts, movements and cultures that may be distinct from our own — presents a new animated musical series, *The History of White People in America*.

In *partnership with* WORLD Channel and PBS's *Independent Lens*, *The History of White People in America* looks at the history of race in the United States, in particular how the crafting of the idea of the White race — of whiteness — helped shape the nation's history, designating other groups for subjugation and having wide-ranging ramifications on social class and life experience that exist to this day. The series of digital short films will premiere on Monday, July 6, at 3 p.m. ET on [WORLD's YouTube channel](#).

Comprised of three short episodes with musical/spoken word narration and animated dramatizations, *The History of White People in America* takes the audience on a journey through American history, starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The story begins in Jamestown, Virginia, where an uprising of poor indentured Europeans and enslaved Africans against rich landowners leads to new laws designed to undermine unity between the poor of all backgrounds, and how "skin became color, color became race and race became power."

Each episode explores a critical juncture in race in the United States, from the Virginia Slave Codes which made marriage between Whites and non-Whites illegal to the complicated truths of Sally Hemmings, who was both enslaved by, and mothered the children of, American forefather Thomas Jefferson.

"At this crucial period in American culture, when many longstanding racial inequities are being discussed and hopefully addressed, WORLD Channel is proud to present this series which traces the origins of our race-based society," said Chris Hastings, executive producer and editorial manager for WORLD Channel at WGBH Boston. "This series offers a starting point for open and honest conversations on race and privilege so that we can all work toward creating a more equal and just nation and global community."

*The History of White People in America* is created by a collaborative of filmmakers, musicians and animators including: animation producer Leslie Arvio, animator Ed Bell, producer Clementine Briand,

writer-singer-composer Pierce Freelon, producer-writer Jon Halperin, composer Aaron Keane and animator-editor Drew Takahshi.

"When Independent Lens began developing *History of White People in America* in 2016, we saw an incredible opportunity to work with this very talented, on-point filmmaking team and knew they'd make something truly special," said *Independent Lens* Executive Producer Lois Vossen. "Their voices are vital to helping us understand how we got here, and how we move our country forward."

*The History of White People in America* will be available for streaming on the WORLD's [YouTube Channel](#) beginning July 6, at 3 p.m. ET with the premiere of episode one. Episodes two and three will launch at 3 p.m. on July 7 and 8, respectively. The series joins other original content presented on the platform including Stanley Nelson's *Two Dollars and a Dream*, on the life of Madam CJ Walker; and *Pulling the Thread: Unraveling Conspiracy Thinking*, a series examining the proliferation of conspiracy theories in America. Viewers can stay up to date on new releases to WORLD's YouTube by subscribing at [youtube.com/worldchannel](https://youtube.com/worldchannel).

*The History of White People in America* is a co-production of Room 608, Inc. and Independent Television Service (ITVS), with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)

**About WORLD Channel:**

WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and fact-based informational programming that helps us understand conflicts, movements and cultures that may be distinct from our own. Its original content examines issues too often ignored by mainstream media by sharing stories from a diversity of voices. WORLD has won a Peabody Award, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award and other national honors — including 1st and 2nd place Native Media Awards, an RTNDA Kaleidoscope Award, a Media for a Just Society Award, two Lesbian & Gay Journalist Awards, two Gracies and an Asian American Journalists Award. A growing platform carried by 174 partner stations in markets representing more than 72% of US TV households, it is also available on [WORLDchannel.org](http://WORLDchannel.org) and social media networks. Funding for WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts and Artworks. WORLD Channel is curated by WGBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT).

###

Press Contact:

Erin Callanan  
WORLD Channel  
[erin\\_callanan@wgbh.org](mailto:erin_callanan@wgbh.org)  
617-905-6866

Alimah Boyd  
Cheryl Duncan & Company Inc  
[alimah@cherylduncanpr.com](mailto:alimah@cherylduncanpr.com)  
201-552-9239