

Name_____

13th, a documentary available on Netflix

Viewing guide

1. What do you learn about mass incarceration in the US from the first few minutes of the film?
2. How did the passage of the 13th Amendment lead to an increase of mass incarceration?
3. What was the political and social impact of the Birth of a Nation?
4. How did the Civil Rights Movement impact the view of criminalization?
5. How did the election of Richard Nixon and the war on drugs impact the prison population in the US? How was this a part of his southern strategy?
6. What impact did the election of Reagan have on the war on drugs?
7. How did the media influence the way Black people were viewed as criminal?
8. Why was the Willie Horton ad in 1988 so controversial and important to the US presidential election that year?

9. Under Bill Clinton, how did Democrats change their tactics? How did the three strikes law, mandatory minimums, and the 1994 crime bill impact the prison population in the US?
10. The film describes the criminalization of several key Black leaders. Take notes on how each of the following were criminalized by the US government below:
 - a. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - b. Malcolm X
 - c. Fred Hampton and the Black Panthers
 - d. Assata Shakur
 - e. Angela Davis
11. Why was George Zimmerman acquitted in the murder trial of Trayvon Martin in Florida? What did the organization legislative group, ALEC, have to do with this situation?
12. How does the Corrections Corporation of America profit off of the US prison system?
13. What do you learn about the American Bail Corporation? How is this group hoping to profit off the US prison system?
14. What is the prison industrial complex? How did companies like JC Penney and Victoria's Secret benefit from it?

15. What do you learn about Kalief Browder?

16. In what ways are felons punished even after they are released from prison?

17. What historical parallels does the director use with the rhetoric of Donald Trump?

18. What do you learn about the number of Black men in prison today?

19. How did the protests in Ferguson, MO tie into historical protests by Black communities in the US?

20. How has technology helped bring attention to the Black Lives Matter movement?

21. After watching this film, how has your perspective on the 13th Amendment changed? In what ways has Black dissent and political power been criminalized? What about the issue of mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex in the US? What are some possible solutions to these issues? Be specific.

Questions for post viewing discussion

1. In what ways did slavery and the mass control of African Americans/people of color remain after the passage of the 13th Amendment?
2. In what ways have politicians and political campaigns used racism and fear to divide Americans and win elections? Give some examples.
3. Do you believe that the film unfairly criticizes some politicians or political parties? Why or why not?
4. Why do private prisons appeal to some politicians? In what ways is the prison industrial complex an example of the iron triangle/sub government?
5. Why do many released felons struggle to find ways to re-adjust to society after they are released from prison? Should the government change certain policies to reduce recidivism?
6. In what ways has Black dissent and political power been criminalized? How is the Black Lives Matter movement a continuation of other Civil Rights struggles?
7. What are some possible solutions to the issues raised in the film?
8. Would you recommend this film to someone else? Why or why not?