

Viewing Guide for Social Justice, Faith & Community Groups

Thank you for presenting the *A Dangerous Idea* film. We made this film to raise awareness about the disturbing history of the eugenics movement in the U.S. and to do what we can to prevent our country's healthcare systems, education systems and opportunities, and even public safety from being shaped by the notion of "genetic superiority". We can all challenge these dangerous ideas to create a better future for our children and future generations. We hope you find this Viewing Guide a valuable companion for hosting the film in 5-easy steps.

#1 Choose Film Options

Full Film: 1 hour and 47 minutes

Your group may wish to watch the full film and discuss the full spectrum of topics it covers. If you're doing a virtual screening and discussion, your group can watch the film at home and join a scheduled ZOOM discussion any time after.

42-minute Excerpt

If you prefer a shorter screening, this version offers the basics about genetic determinism, then features the compelling story of Elaine Riddick, one woman's fight to end forced sterilization. Also included is the little-known history of how the Nixon administration worked to overturn War on Poverty programs while also lifting a moratorium on federal funds being used to reimburse clinics for sterilization operations. That policy change resulted in nearly half a million women and girls living in poverty – most African American – being sterilized without their knowledge, through coercion, or against their will.

13-Minute Film Summary

Not much time? This edited summary gives a quick overview of the film's topics. If your group has 30-minutes to spend together on this activity, you could watch the 13-minute version and the rest of the time for discussion.

All versions of the film mentioned can be found in your online kit. [Click here to access that page on our website.](#)

#2 Choose a Virtual or In-Person Screening

Virtual Screening and Discussion

Many people find that hosting a virtual screening for members of their community group or congregation is the easiest and most accessible option.

1. **Set a date for discussion.** Create a ZOOM invitation link (or another online app). Remember that free ZOOM accounts only allow 40-minute sessions.
2. **Email the Zoom link** to your invitees, along with the film link and discussion questions. Schedule the discussion time within a week so that the film is fresh in everyone's minds.
3. **Host your ZOOM discussion** and determine any follow-on activities.

In-Person Film Viewing and Discussion

Consider where to host your screening. Which locations in your area could accommodate the number of people you anticipate? Movie theaters, houses of worship, community centers, schools, libraries, museums, commercial venues, parks, and private homes are all excellent venues. Find a partner. Who is already working on these issues in your community? Can they co-sponsor the event? Help spread the word? Speak on a panel discussion after the screening? Potential partners include educational groups, faith-based community groups, and grassroots organizations. Invite a guest speaker. teachers, religious leaders, and community activists offer insight into the issues raised in the film and help encourage discussion or facilitate a Q&A session with your audience after the screening.

#3 Promote Your Event

Think about the best ways to publicize your screening. Send emails to your group and personal contact lists. Share on social media. Create a Facebook event page. Post to online community calendars, and place announcements in your email newsletters. Feel free to include the film trailer and testimonials.

Promotional Trailer: <https://bit.ly/3KIqVfd>

Your online screening kit includes links to promotional language and images that you can use.

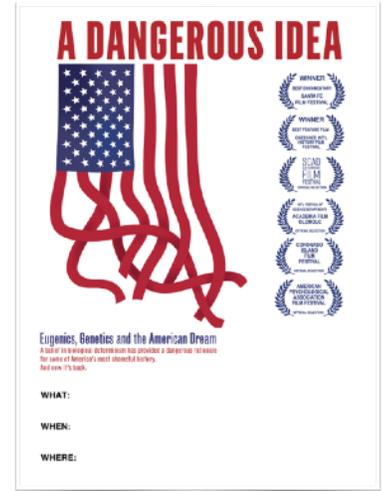
Testimonials that you can use to promote your screening event:

“You have these people who ... just seemed to have missed the whole point of the country. And they think that the founding reality of profound inequality is fine with them. And that view even tries to masquerade as science.”

— **VAN JONES**, activist, commentator, author, non-practicing attorney

“In this time of false facts and backlash against a new equality, *A Dangerous Idea* should be required viewing.”

— **GLORIA STEINEM**, writer, lecturer, political activist



[Click for Promo Flyer](#)

#4 Lead a Discussion

Here are some sample questions you can use in your post-screening discussion depending on your group's interests:

The book, *The Bell Curve*, was notorious for its arguments that there is a racial hierarchy in terms of “intelligence”. But the main argument the authors were making was that a genetic hierarchy that determines where you end up in society, rich or poor, success or failure. Have you encountered views reflecting this sentiment? What do you think helps to perpetuate this view?

After viewing *A Dangerous Idea*, do you feel that cutting funds to lift people out of poverty is a form of eugenics? If so, why? What can moral arguments be made against these policy decisions?

Have you heard claims that males and females have different brains that make them better suited for specific jobs or abilities? What other assumptions about the sexes have you encountered or experienced?

We often hear comments about people having certain genes to describe their personality or behavior, like “the smart gene” or “the funny gene”. What about when it’s used to claim that people are born with genes that make them more prone to poverty and criminal behavior?

Were you required to take IQ tests when you were young? In the military? In order to get a job? What about the SAT to get into college? Talk about your experiences with those tests and the notion that a single number can determine your access to opportunities.

Why is it easier for some groups of immigrants and refugees to come to the U.S. and not others? Do you see this as an example of how eugenics is used to promote so-called “genetic superiority”? If so, why?

Do you know anyone who was a victim of U.S. eugenics policy? What sort of reparations do you believe there should be for them? Do you think a new wave of eugenics could happen again? If so, who do you think would be targeted? How do you think it can be prevented?

#5 Inspire Action

Click on these links for faith-based resources and helpful guides and tools that social justice and community groups can use to create meaningful action after watching *A Dangerous Idea* or shorter versions.

Helpful Guides for Racial Healing

[Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Implementation Guidebook](#)

[Restoring to Wholeness: Racial Healing for Ourselves, Our Relationships and Our Communities](#)

[Facing History's Classroom Discussion Guide on Eugenics:](#)

Racial Equity Tools & Organizations

[The Advancement Project](#)

[List of Top Civil Rights Organizations](#)

[Middle Church Racial Justice Resources](#)

[Racial Equity Tools](#)

Faith-based Articles Related to Film's Themes

[The Christian Century's Ebony Marshall Turman on Black Women's Faith](#)

[Rev. Matthew Fox on Racism, Creativity, and the Recovery of the Soul](#)

[Truthdig's Chris Hedges on The Heresy of White Christianity](#)

[LA Times op-ed Rabbi Sharon Brous on Why Jews Should Support Reparations](#)

Related Sermons

[UCC's Traci Blackmon's sermon, "A Conversation on Race"](#)

[Middle Church's Jacqui Lewis' sermon, "400 Years: A Reflection on Liberty"](#)

[Trinity United Church of Christ's Rev. Otis Moss III on "#StayWoke"](#)

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Faith-based initiatives

[National Council of Church "Act Now to End Racism" resources](#)

[United Church of Christ "White Privilege: Let's Talk—A Resource for Transformational Dialogue"](#)

[United Methodists – Tools for Racial Justice](#)

[Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity Faith & Reparations Toolkit](#)

[Christians Against Christian Nationalism](#)