



**THE COST OF INHERITANCE: AN AMERICA REFRAMED SPECIAL  
EXPLORES THE CURRENT-DAY PURSUIT OF REPARATIONS FOR AFRICAN  
AMERICANS**

**One-Hour Documentary Premieres January 8, 2024, at 10:00 pm ET on PBS  
and January 15, 2024, at 8:00 pm ET on WORLD**

Pittsburgh, PA — November 2, 2023 — PBS, WQED, WORLD, and American Documentary announced that the new documentary ***The Cost of Inheritance: An American ReFramed Special*** will have its national broadcast premiere on January 8, 2024, at 10:00 p.m. ET ([check local listings](#)) on PBS, [PBS.org](#), and the [PBS App](#). The film will launch on WORLD on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, January 15, 2024, at 8:00 p.m. ET. The one-hour film traces the nation's legacy of systemic inequities to modern-day America, introducing audiences to descendants of enslaved persons and slave owners, profiling their complex intertwined histories, and detailing how their quest to bridge divides galvanized them to seek reparations together. The film's world premiere will be at DOC NYC, America's largest documentary festival, on November 12, 2023. View the trailer [here](#).

Directed by Emmy® nominee and Peabody Award winner Yoruba Richen (*The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks*), ***The Cost of Inheritance: An America ReFramed Special*** presents a nuanced view of the key issues, scope, and rationale of the reparations debate from a number of perspectives. The film documents communities seeking to make amends for economic

inequalities stemming from historic racial injustice with the aim to launch conversations about specific actions that aspire to close the racial wealth gap in America. Participants in the film address the cumulative impact of racial discrimination and a lack of opportunities firmly rooted in the system of enslavement. The film follows the long journey of individuals and communities seeking to make reparations a reality on the individual, local, and national levels.

“Making this film revealed to me how individuals and communities are grappling with the history of enslavement both on a personal and national level,” said Richen. “The stories in the film provide a necessary pathway for how we can engage in honest conversation about our past and move forward towards racial justice. Never has there been a more urgent time to engage in this discussion as the global reckoning with slavery and colonialism continues to unfold.”

The documentary examines how reparations are defined and for whom they are sought. Personal stories, expert interviews, and rich archival materials weave a narrative around the status of strategies for reparations, restitution, and restoration today.

“Combining personal stories, archival footage, scholarly analyses, and the viewpoints of a range of Americans, this film is a powerful reminder of our shared histories and intertwined legacies. It asks the viewer to examine the myriad ways we should think about repair and healing by noting what has been done, could be done, and should be done. It reminds us of our inheritances,” said Earl Lewis, Founding Director, University of Michigan Center for Social Solutions.

The history of the disparate trajectory of lives marginalized by slavery and its aftermath – in the form of Reconstruction and Jim Crow laws – unfolds through archival footage and insights from a diverse roster of interviews. The film includes robust historical context from experts, activists, and historians including Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, (D-Texas); Dr. Ron Daniels, president of the National African American Reparations Commission; Dr. Mary Frances Berry, historian, author, activist; and noted economist Shawn Rochester, author, *The Black Tax*.

“If you go back to 1860, we know there's about four million Black people held in bondage,” remarked Rochester. “Those people are the most liquid asset in the country; 22 trillion in today's value, in terms of the value of those folks to the country. It's an enormous impact...You've got Black people today in America that own about 2% of U.S. wealth. After all of this time, about 2%. How did we get here?”

Pittsburgh's WQED provides interactive digital resources and discussion guides that will be released alongside the premiere of ***The Cost of Inheritance: An America ReFramed Special***, designed to encourage further conversations about the topics raised in the film.

***The Cost of Inheritance: An America ReFramed Special*** is a co-production of WQED, The University of Michigan Center for Social Solutions (CSS), and presented in partnership with WORLD and American Documentary. Promotion and station relations provided by WETA Washington, D.C. Community and station engagement provided by Red Owl. Darryl Ford Williams is the executive producer for WQED. Chris Hastings (WORLD), Erika Dilday and Chris White (American Documentary) are executive producers for American ReFramed. Yoruba Richen is the director. Lacey Schwartz Delgado & Mehret Mandefro are producers. Iris Samson is the associate producer. Keith Walker is the first director of photography, and Frank Caloeiro is the second. Jessica Lee Salas and Cecilia Préstamo are editors.

Funding for ***The Cost of Inheritance: An America ReFramed Special*** was provided by the Ford Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Funding was also provided by public television viewers.

For additional details, please visit <http://pbs.org/AmericaReFramed>. Viewers are encouraged to join the conversation on social media via #CostOfInheritance.

#### **About PBS:**

[PBS](#), with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 42 million adults on linear primetime television, more than 15 million users on PBS-owned streaming platforms, and 56 million people view PBS content on social media, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front-row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS's broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to [PBS LearningMedia](#) for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media brand, PBS KIDS helps children 2-8 build critical skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, [PBS KIDS](#) offers high-quality content on TV — including a PBS KIDS channel — and streaming free on [pbskids.org](#) and the [PBS KIDS Video app](#), games on the [PBS KIDS Games app](#), and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](#), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](#) or by following [PBS Communications on Twitter](#) (X).

#### **About WQED:**

WQED Multimedia starts conversations and creates experiences that educate, entertain and inspire our neighbors in Pittsburgh and across southwest Pennsylvania. Founded in 1954 as an experiment in educational community-supported television, WQED was a forerunner to PBS. WQED's content creators produce [impactful stories](#) that delve into the rich mosaic of our region's past, present, and future. We cover a wide range of topics, from arts and culture to pressing societal issues that impact our lives. We profile remarkable individuals and organizations who work to strengthen our communities. [Our Learning Neighborhoods](#) support children, in partnership with area schools and libraries, and extend to high school students exploring media careers through the [WQED Film Academy](#). Known as "The Voice of the Arts," [WQED-FM](#) provides a vital platform that amplifies our vibrant and diverse cultural assets, including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. WQED Multimedia operates WQED-TV (PBS); WQED World; WQED Create; WQED Showcase; WQED PBS KIDS Channel; Classical WQED-FM 89.3/Pittsburgh; Classical WQED-FM 89.7/Johnstown; the Pittsburgh Concert Channel; [plus various streams](#), [apps](#), and [interactive experiences](#).

#### **About WORLD**

WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and programming. WORLD's original series examine the issues and amplify the voices of those often ignored by mainstream media. The multiplatform channel helps audiences understand conflicts, movements and cultures from around the globe. Its original work has won a Peabody Award, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, an International Documentary Association Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award, two Webby Awards and many others honoring diversity of content and makers. WORLD is carried by 194 member stations in markets representing 77% of US TV households. Funding for WORLD is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. WORLD is produced by GBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT). Find out more at [WORLDChannel.org](http://WORLDChannel.org).

#### **About American Documentary, Inc.**

[American Documentary, Inc.](#) (AmDoc) is a multimedia organization dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, the Open Society Foundations, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation, Reva & David Logan Foundation, Park Foundation, and Perspective Fund. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the *Chasing the Dream* and *Peril and Promise* public media initiatives of The WNET Group, Chris and Nancy Plaut, Ann Tenenbaum and Thomas H. Lee and public television viewers. POV is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with [WNET.ORG](http://WNET.ORG).

#### **About the University of Michigan Center for Social Solutions:**

[The University of Michigan Center for Social Solutions](http://TheUniversityofMichiganCenterforSocialSolutions) (CSS) CSS fosters research and collaborations that diagnose and solve critical social problems. CSS believes these solutions rely on diverse perspectives that account for the multi-faceted root causes of these issues. Their founding initiatives—diversity and democracy, slavery and its aftermath, water equity and security access, and the future of work—approach different aspects of the equality that they believe is necessary to advance as a prosperous democratic society. Find more information about CSS at <https://lsa.umich.edu/social-solutions>.

#### **About America ReFramed**

America ReFramed is a co-production of [WORLD](#) and American Documentary, Inc. The series curates a diverse selection of independent documentaries that brings to national audiences compelling stories which illuminate the changing contours of our ever-evolving country. Viewers will be immersed in stories that span the spectrum of American life, from the streets of towns big and small to its exurbs and country roads. The documentary series presents an array of personal voices and experiences through which we learn from our past, understand our present and are challenged to seek new frameworks for America's future.

America ReFramed received a Peabody Award for [Deej](#) and an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for [Class of '27](#). The series has earned several Christopher, GRACIE, Telly and Cine Golden Eagle Awards, as well as multiple nominations for Emmy, Independent Documentary Association and Imagen Awards.

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