

"You can't understand most of the important things from a distance. You have to get close."

— BRYAN STEVENSON,
JUST MERCY: A
STORY OF JUSTICE
AND REDEMPTION

eji

The lynching of African Americans was terrorism, a widely supported campaign to enforce racial subordination and segregation. Lynching in America documents more than 4400 racial terror lynchings in the United States during the period between Reconstruction and World War II.

Follow the QR Code to read EJI's Report about lynching in America. You can also get lesson plans for teaching the report to students.



Bulloch Bears Witness

HISTORICAL MARKER DEDICATION
Statesboro-Bulloch Remembrance Coalition
in partnership with

eji **Equal Justice Initiative**

STATESBORO CITY HALL
January 11, 2024 | 6:30 PM

"In the "lynching era," between 1880 to 1940, white Christians lynched nearly five thousand black men and women in a manner with obvious echoes of the Roman crucifixion of Jesus. Yet these "Christians" did not see the irony or contradiction in their actions."

— James H. Cone, The Cross and the Lynching Tree

Bulloch Bears Witness

STATESBORO-BULLOCH REMEMBRANCE COALITION
Historical Marker Installation Ceremony
Council Chamber

Dr. James Thomas, Master of Ceremony

Welcome

Ivna Casuso, Statesboro Youth Council

Invocation

Jamersyn Hughes, Statesboro Youth Council

Greetings from the Coalition

Adrienne McCollar and Dr. Chris Caplinger

Occasion

Dr. Stacy Smallwood

Musical Tribute

Agape Worship Center

Remarks from the City of Statesboro

Mayor Jonathan McCollar

Community members will gather outside City Hall to dedicate the Historical Marker.

Remarks from the Equal Justice Initiative

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Moment of Silence and Lighting of Candles

Participants are invited to acknowledge the victims of racial terror.

HISTORICAL MARKER UNVEILING

Reading of the Marker

Azaria Joyce, Statesboro Youth Council

Special Charge and Benediction

Rev. Dr. Francys Johnson

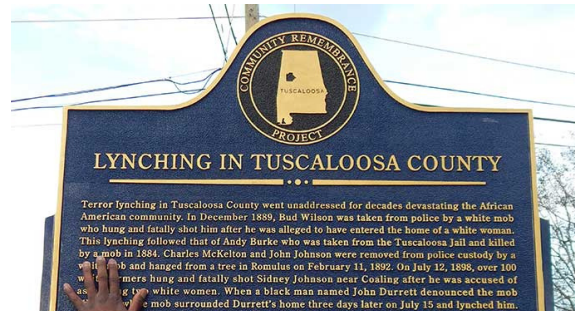
Reception follows in the Lobby of City Hall

Acknowledgement

This evening, the citizens of Statesboro acknowledge the nine human beings lynched in Bulloch County as documented by the Equal Justice Initiative. They include Jake Braswell, July 15, 1886; Kennedy Gordon, April 11, 1901; Paul Reed and William Cato, Aug. 16, 1904; Albert Roberts and another Black person, name unknown, Aug. 17, 1904; Sebastian McBride, Aug. 27, 1904; Thompson Gilbert, Feb. 18, 1908; Henry Jackson, April 21, 1911.



Reckoning with a Terrible Legacy
Soil Collection Project



Remembering Racial Terror Lynchings
Historical Marker Placement



Cultural Enrichment
Visiting Museum and Memorial



Reflecting on Today
Essay Contests



About

The Statesboro-Bulloch Remembrance Coalition is an initiative dedicated to helping our community understand and begin to heal its legacy of lynching and legal terrorism used to enforce racial subordination. This is necessary to create a welcoming community bound by equity and inclusion. Variegated in our humanity, we believe truth-telling is fundamental to reconciliation and healing. Justice requires this reconciliation for the good order, peace, and dignity of our community and those who live or visit here. We are partners with the Equal Justice Initiative based in Montgomery, Alabama.

Side 1

LYNCHING IN BULLOCH COUNTY

From 1886 to 1911, white mobs lynched at least nine Black people in Bulloch County. Suspicion alone—even in the absence of evidence or due process—caused many white people to presume a Black person’s guilt. On July 15, 1886, a white mob abducted Jake Braswell following the alleged assault of a white girl and forced him to “choose” between being burned alive or hanged. The mob then tied him to a tree limb and riddled his body with bullets. On April 11, 1901, Kennedy Gordon died after being shot repeatedly by a white mob that seized him from a constable, who had arrested Mr. Gordon after reports of an attempted assault. On August 16, 1904, a white mob of at least 100 abducted Will Cato and Paul Reed from the courthouse, marched them to woods a mile north of here, and burned them alive. Hours later, white mobs lynched Albert Roberts in his home along with at least one other unidentified Black man. Five white men took Sebastian McBride from his home 10 days later, severely whipped him, and shot him to death. On February 17, 1908, Thompson Gilbert was shot to death after being falsely accused of assaulting a white woman. In fact, Mr. Gilbert had been called by the woman’s husband to treat her illness, but she screamed at the sight of a Black man in her home. On April 21, 1911, a white mob hanged Henry Jackson and riddled his body with bullets after its leader alleged Mr. Jackson had threatened his wife. No one was ever held accountable for these lynchings.

EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

STATESBORO-BULLOCH REMEMBRANCE COALITION 2023

Side 2

LYNCHING IN AMERICA

Thousands of Black people were victims of lynching in the United States between 1865 and 1950. During this era, lynching emerged as the most notorious and public form of racial terrorism, used to enforce racial hierarchy and segregation. Many Black people were lynched following accusations of violating the social order or committing crimes, even when there was no evidence tying them to any offense. Black Americans often faced hostile suspicion and a presumption of guilt that left them vulnerable to white mob violence and lynching following any reports of a crime. Almost 25 percent of documented lynchings were sparked by allegations of sexual assault, at a time when any contact between a Black man and a white woman could be characterized as assault and aroused violent mobs. Lynchings went beyond hanging, often including death by gunshot, burning, or mutilation. Local, state, and federal officials tolerated – and sometimes encouraged and participated in – these lawless killings of Black women, men, and children, especially by granting impunity to mob participants, who rarely faced criminal or communal consequences for their actions. One victim, Sebastian McBride, identified three of his assailants as he was dying, but there is no evidence any were convicted. Although many victims of racial terror lynching were not documented and remain unknown, at least 702 racial terror lynchings of Black people have been documented in the state of Georgia.

EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE 2023