

P  **V** **Community
Engagement &
Education**

DISCUSSION GUIDE



Who Killed Vincent Chin?

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WHO KILLED VINCENT CHIN?

On a hot summer night in Detroit in 1982, Ronald Ebens, a Chrysler foreman, killed Vincent Chin, a young Chinese American engineering draftsman, with a baseball bat. Ebens' stepson Michael Nitz, a laid-off autoworker, held Vincent in a bear hug while Ebens brutally bludgeoned him to death. Although Ebens and Nitz pled guilty to manslaughter, they never spent a day in jail. This gripping Academy Award-nominated film relentlessly probes the legacy of Asian American activism and the implications of the murder—for the families of those involved and for the American justice system.

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This guide is an invitation to dialogue. It is based on a belief in the power of human connection and designed for people who want to use *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* to engage family, friends, classmates, colleagues, and communities. In contrast to initiatives that foster debates in which participants try to convince others that they are right, this document envisions conversations undertaken in a spirit of openness in which people try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively.

The discussion prompts are intentionally crafted to help a wide range of audiences think more deeply about the issues in the film. Rather than attempting to address them all, choose one or two that best meet your needs and interests. And be sure to leave time to consider taking action. Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even in instances when conversations have been difficult.

Please be advised that there are a number of disturbing scenes of violence, sexuality, and racist depictions. In terms of language, be aware of profanity and racial slurs throughout the film. Referring to anyone of Asian descent as “oriental” or a Japanese/Japanese American as a “Jap” is inappropriate and racist.

For more detailed event planning and facilitation tips, visit <https://communitynetwork.amdoc.org/>.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: TIPS & TOOLS FOR FACILITATORS

The following are meant to support you as you prepare to facilitate a conversation that inspires curiosity, connection, critical questions, recognition of difference, power, and possibility for generating new ways of being in, and understanding, the world. Importantly, you should prepare yourselves to engage in tensions that arise while also committing to non-violent communication.

PREPARING TO FACILITATE

Participants in any conversation arrive with differing degrees of knowledge and lived experience with regard to the many topics *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* invites you to explore. It is helpful to prepare yourself and ground yourself in both knowledge and intention ahead of facilitation. We urge you, as a facilitator, to take the necessary steps to ensure that you are prepared to guide a conversation that prioritizes the safety of those whose experiences and identities have been marginalized. This will allow you to set an intention (and sustain a generative dialogue) that maximizes care and critical curiosity, transformation, and connection.

The following are tools to support preparation and resources to use to invite your community into a shared space of dialogue after screening.

Community Agreements: What are they? Why are they useful?

Community Agreements help provide a framework and parameters for engaging in dialogue that allows you to establish a shared sense of intention ahead of engaging in discussion. Community agreements can be co-constructed and creating them can be used as an opening activity that your group collectively and collaboratively undertakes ahead of engaging in dialogue. [Here is a model](#) of community agreements you can review. As the facilitator, you can gauge how long your group should take to form these agreements or if participants would be amenable to pre-established community agreements.

Opening Activity (Optional): Establishing Community Agreements for Discussion

Whether you are a group of people coming together once for this screening and discussion, or a group whose members know each other well, creating a set of community agreements helps foster clear discussion in a manner that draws in and respects all participants, especially when tackling intimate or complex conversations around identity. These steps will help provide guidelines for the process:

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: TIPS & TOOLS FOR FACILITATORS

- Pass around sample community agreements and take time to read aloud as a group to make sure all participants can both hear and read the text.
- Allow time for clarifying questions; make sure all understand the purpose of making a set of agreements and allow time to make sure everyone understands the agreements themselves.
- Go around in a circle and have every participant name an agreement they would like to include. Chart this in front of the room where all can see.
- Go around 2 to 3 times to give participants multiple chances to contribute and to also give a conclusive end to the process.
- Read the list aloud.
- Invite questions or revisions.
- Ask if all are satisfied with the list.
- Ask all participants to sign the list of agreements. Leave it where all can see. As the facilitator, be mindful of the agreements throughout your session, noting if someone speaks or acts in a way that runs counter to them.



PARTICIPANTS AND KEY ISSUES

PARTICIPANTS

- Vincent Chin - adopted son of C. W. and Lily Chin; held two jobs as a draftsman and waiter; recent graduate of computer trade school; murder victim
- Lily Chin - mother of Vincent Chin; activist leader of the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign
- Helen Zia - activist leader of the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign through the American Citizens for Justice organization
- Horace Sheffield - founder and president of the Detroit Area Black Organizations (DABO)
- Ronald Ebens - auto foreman who killed Vincent Chin
- Nita Ebens - wife of Ronald Ebens
- Michael Nitz - autoworker who was an accomplice to the murder of Vincent Chin; stepson of Ronald Ebens
- Rich Wagner - friend of Ronald Ebens
- Gary Koivu - friend of Vincent Chin
- Racine Colwell - witness of what led to the killing, dancer at bar
- “Starlene” - witness of what led to the killing, dancer at bar
- Michael Gardenhire - off-duty Highland Park police officer who witnessed the crime
- Morris Cotton - off-duty Highland Park police officer who witnessed the crime
- Charles Kaufman - judge, Wayne County Circuit Court
- Frank Eaman - defense attorney of Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz

KEY ISSUES

- Stereotypes of Asian Americans—“perpetual foreigner,” “model minority myth”
- Institutional racism and criminal justice complex
- Hate crimes and incidents
- Legal justice
- Racial scapegoating and discrimination
- Activism
- Cross-racial solidarity
- Masculinity and violence

Who Killed Vincent Chin? is an excellent tool for outreach and will be of special interest to people who want to explore the following topics:

- Racial Scapegoating and Discrimination
- Systems of Legal and Criminal Injustice
- Asian American Activism and Cross-Racial Solidarity

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**The Life and Death of Vincent Chin**

Vincent Chin was adopted from China then lived in the Detroit area in his adult life and was a recent graduate of Control Data Institute, a computer trade school. He worked as a draftsman and waiter to support his parents, C. W. and Lily Chin. C. W. immigrated to the United States in 1922 during the peak of Chinese immigration to Detroit. The first Chinese immigrants came to Detroit in 1872 and mainly worked in laundries, which is what C. W. Chin did until his death in 1981, a year before Vincent was killed at the age of 27. During the early 1900s, the young auto industry of Detroit was booming. The Great Migration from the South brought African Americans and whites to work in the factories. These are the people the Chinese immigrant laundry workers mainly served. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and other anti-Asian laws in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to loosen during World War II. These laws were designed to prevent Chinese men from becoming naturalized citizens because they were considered “unassimilable” and a threat to American society. Women from China were barred from immigrating in the Page Act of 1875 because they were seen as immoral and suspected of prostitution. During World War II, China’s first lady, Mayling Soong, went on a goodwill tour to the U.S. and met with President Roosevelt and his wife, Eleanor. The strengthening of U.S.-China relations led Roosevelt to sign the Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act in 1943. As a result, Chinese were allowed to immigrate to the United States at a quota of 105 and C. W. and other immigrants became eligible for citizenship. He was drafted to serve in the U.S. Army, and when the war ended, the U.S. government instituted the War Brides Act of 1945 and 1947, allowing him to find and marry a wife from China. He arranged for Lily to come to the United States in 1948. The Chins adopted Vincent in 1961 from the Guangdong Province in China, the same province where they both grew up. In his youth, Vincent ran on the high school track team and wrote poetry.

The 1982 murder of Vincent Chin and the legal cases that unfolded in its aftermath led to many significant developments in history. The Vincent Chin case marked the first time an Asian American was protected under hate crime laws in a civil rights case and marked a critical turning point that expanded communities who were protected under national hate crime policies. As a result, this case is referenced in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice website. Also, according to Helen Zia, one of the leaders in the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign, the activism that erupted was the “first explicitly Asian American grassroots community advocacy effort with a national scope.” Finally, a series of legal reforms in Michigan were enacted, such as the Crime Victims Rights Act of 1985. Prosecutors also must be present at sentencing hearings and there are now mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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Racial Scapegoating and Discrimination

The killing of Chin is situated in the context of severe economic decline and struggles faced by working class people during the 1980s. This was connected to the international oil crisis of the 1970s and caused extreme inflation, a higher cost of living, and unemployment. The auto industry, centered in Detroit, was especially affected. Since oil prices were so high, many Americans preferred newer fuel-efficient, Japanese-made, cars from companies like Honda and Toyota, over American cars from companies like Chevrolet, Chrysler, and Ford.

Those Americans seeking a racialized scapegoat blamed Japan for American economic and social problems. Some believed that due to a strained trading relationship with Japan, the Japanese engaged in unfair trading practices, leading to Americans buying more products from Japan than the United States, especially automobiles. As a result, racist discourse and ideology centered against Japan and Japanese people, became widespread throughout the United States. Disparaging comments came from political leaders such as the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Tip O'Neill, U.S. Senator Carl Levin, and U.S. Representative John Dingell of Michigan. These racist sentiments were infused into popular culture as they appeared on bumper stickers meant to remind the public of what Japan had done to the U.S. during World War II with messages like "Honda, Toyota - Pearl Harbor." Public figures like Chrysler Corporation chairman Lee Iacocca, made similar references to this line of thinking by harshly joking about dropping nuclear bombs on Japan.

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Along with leadership of automotive companies, workers also displayed such attitudes. For example, a sign outside of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union stated, “300,000 Laid-Off Autoworkers Say Park Your Import in Tokyo.” Culturally-fueled anti-Asian sentiments became part of union member activities as they held “sledgehammer events” to vent their anger by destroying Japanese cars. As this anti-Japanese sentiment grew, it fueled racist perceptions of all Americans of Asian descent.

This is the backdrop against which Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz, two white autoworkers, targeted and killed Vincent Chin. They harbored anti-Asian feelings, wanted to inflict violence on Vincent and his Chinese American friend, and stalked them by paying a local neighborhood man 20 dollars to “get the Chinese.” Ebens also equated Vincent with the Japanese they believed were causing their problems within the auto industry and they scapegoated him by saying, “It’s because of you [profanity] that we are out of work!”

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Systems of Legal and Criminal Injustice**

During the trial, Ebens and Nitz pled guilty to beating Chin to death with a baseball bat and on March 18, 1983, Judge Kaufman sentenced them each to three years probation and a 3,000-dollar fine. His reasoning was that the circumstances were nothing more than a simple barroom fight. Kaufman was quoted saying, “These aren’t the kind of men you send to jail... You fit the punishment to the criminal, not the crime.” The sentence stunned Detroit residents, and resonated with the majority African American population, who often received more severe sentences for less serious crimes. Public outcry followed this lenient sentence, which resulted in neither Ebens nor Nitz spending a day in jail. Detroit Free Press columnist Nikki McWhirter wrote, “You have raised the ugly ghost of racism, suggesting in your explanation that the lives of the killers are of great and continuing value to society, implying they are of greater value than the life of the slain victim... How gross and ostentatious of you; how callous and yes, unjust.”

Lily Chin and the Asian American community were utterly outraged by the fact that the killers would not be punished for the brutal murder of Vincent. Lily wrote a letter to the Detroit Chinese Welfare Council, an organization that advocated for the wellbeing of Chinese Americans, expressing her anguish. In her letter she wrote:

This is injustice to the grossest extreme. I grieve in my heart and shed tears in blood. My son cannot be brought back to life, but he was a member of your council. Therefore, I plead to you. Please let the Chinese American community know, so they can help me hire legal counsel to appeal, so my son can rest his soul.

Immediately after the sentencing, a small group of Asian Americans met to discuss what could be done to get justice for Vincent Chin. Local community leader and restaurateur Henry Yee, Chinese Welfare Council president Kin Yee, attorney Liza Chan, and journalist Helen Zia met. After their meeting, they gathered a larger meeting on March 20 of around thirty Asian Americans, including lawyers from across Michigan. Led by Lily Chin, the group decided that it was imperative for the public to know about this injustice. Lily said, “We must speak up. These men killed my son like an animal. But they go free. This is wrong. We must tell the people, this is wrong.”

With that directive, Liza Chan began her own investigation into what exactly happened on the night of the murder so they could decide on legal options for Vincent Chin’s case. It was during her pro-bono work that many details of the injustices involved in the Vincent Chin case were uncovered. First, Liza discovered that the arresting officer mishandled evidence from the crime scene. When she visited him for questioning, she noticed that the baseball bat used to kill Vincent was behind his desk rather than in the police department’s evidence

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storage area. Second, police on the case did not interview everyone who witnessed the crime and what led to it, namely the dancers at the bar and the local neighborhood man the killers paid outside of the bar to “get the Chinese.” Also, Judge Kaufman spent 15 minutes listening to the case before he gave his sentencing of Ebens and Nitz. It was only presented from the defense’s position and prosecutors were not at the sentencing to make a punishment recommendation to the judge. Further, Kaufman neglected to read reports that would have given a more accurate picture of the killing. One was a psychiatric report “warning that Ebens was ‘an extremely hostile and explosive individual... with a potential for uncontrollable hostility and explosive acting out.’” Another was a recommendation by the probation officers to incarcerate Ebens and Nitz. Thus, Kaufman was only able to hear Ebens and Nitz’s attorney argue that Vincent Chin provoked the argument that led to his death. The way in which the sentencing took place clearly shows a one-sided approach in favor of the white defendants. As a result of the protests against how the Vincent Chin case was handled, laws to standardize protocol were implemented in Michigan; for example, minimal sentencing guidelines and the Crime Victims Rights Act of 1985.

These beginning meetings and investigations, with Lily Chin as the inspirational force, led to the formation of American Citizens for Justice, the organization that drove a national civil rights movement. Led by Asian Americans and in coalition with organizations and individuals of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign amassed strong national and international support.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Asian American Activism and Cross-Racial Solidarity**

The birth of a national civil rights movement for Asian Americans emerged from the hard work of the local Asian American community, who sought to gain justice for Vincent Chin. Through publicity campaigns and protests, this grass-roots effort spread across the United States within communities of all backgrounds. It began with people in Detroit and the surrounding area forming a new pan-Asian organization, American Citizens for Justice (ACJ). This happened on March 31, 1983, when over 100 Asian Americans gathered in a meeting after Helen Zia issued a press release. Before this, there was no pan-Asian American advocacy organization that represented Asian Americans in the Midwest; those types of organizations only existed in San Francisco and New York at the time. The immediate goal of ACJ was to strategize effective legal actions, promote awareness about Asian Americans and Vincent Chin to the media and public, raise money, and mobilize supporters. A number of members from the Organization of Chinese Americans, the Japanese American Citizens League, the Korean Society of Greater Detroit, and the Filipino American Community Council joined ACJ. On April 15, they conducted their first news conference at the Detroit Press Club, attracting media from across the Detroit area. It was a significant moment for the local area to witness Asian Americans coming together to fight for civil rights, something rare in Detroit.

ACJ also worked together with the local African American community. Helen Zia and Liza Chan appeared on a well-known African American radio talk show and spoke to local residents to promote awareness. Organizations such as the Detroit Area Black Organizations (DABO), the NAACP Detroit Branch, and prominent African American churches pledged their support. Horace Sheffield, founder and president of DABO and a prominent union leader, was a reliable supporter at ACJ events.

Other non-Asian organizations and individuals, such as the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the Detroit Roundtable of Christians and Jews, Latino/as, Arab Americans, and Italian Americans, also helped ACJ. Endorsements came from the Detroit Women's Forum, Black Women for a Better Society, Detroit City Council members, and U.S. Representative John Conyers.

Activists decided to pursue a federal civil rights case once crucial evidence was discovered of racial slurs and comments made by Ronald Ebens toward Vincent Chin. They collected thousands of signatures in a petition to support this. ACJ organized a large-scale demonstration in downtown Detroit's Kennedy Square, where many historic protests had been held. Hundreds of people from all walks of life and backgrounds marched and read support statements. This was the first protest organized by Asian Americans in Detroit. As a multiracial coalition, citizens of Detroit banded together and marched

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to the federal courthouse to deliver the petition to U.S. Attorney Leonard Gilman. With mounting pressure from national and international press coverage along with pan-Asian demonstrations across the U.S., the federal government agreed to try the case. A federal jury would decide if the killers violated Chin's civil right to enjoy public accommodations.

In June 1984, a federal civil rights trial was held in Detroit and found Ebens guilty of violating Vincent Chin's civil rights. This was the first time an Asian American was protected under hate crimes laws. Unfortunately, the case was appealed by Ebens' lawyers over evidentiary errors. The 1987 retrial was held in Cincinnati, and the selected jurors were screened for their contact with people of Asian descent. Ultimately this led to a largely white, male, blue collar jury, who overturned the 1984 civil rights case. Ebens was ultimately found innocent of civil rights violations and Nitz was acquitted in both trials. Neither ever served a day in jail for Chin's murder.

At the center of all this activism was Lily Chin, the heart of the movement. She was often referred to as the "Rosa Parks of Asian Americans" because of her tireless commitment to fight against the injustice of her son's case. Although she was emotionally destroyed by the final outcome of Vincent's case, the legacy of the civil rights movement she inspired lives on. Generations of Asian American groups continue to organize and stand up against anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents in their own communities.

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STARTING THE CONVERSATION

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen. You could pose a general question (examples below) and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion. Alternatively, you could ask participants to share their thoughts with a partner before starting a group discussion.

- What general emotions are you feeling after watching this film?
- What parts of the film are especially difficult to digest? Why?
- What questions or statements might you want to ask or say to any of the Key Participants?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ESTABLISHING THE KEY PARTICIPANTS AND THE KILLING

1. From listening to the witnesses at the scene, how clear a picture do you have of what happened? According to their accounts, how do you think the killers should be held accountable for their actions?
2. What do you think the neighbor of Ebens and Nitz meant by “it could happen to anybody”? What is she insinuating about Ebens and Nitz?
3. Compare and contrast the differences between Ronald Ebens’ and Lily Chin’s experiences when they moved to Detroit.
4. The film interviews of Ronald and Nita Ebens occurred after he killed Vincent Chin. What are their attitudes toward Vincent Chin and his death? How is this disturbing?

A RACIALLY MOTIVATED KILLING

1. How did Ebens, his wife, and a neighbor describe him in terms of whether he could potentially have killed Vincent out of racial motivation? Do you think this proves anything? Explain.
 - a. Can you think of any contemporary examples where White men have been accused of causing harm and their harm has been justified in similar ways?
2. In what ways is it evident that Vincent Chin’s murder was racially motivated?
3. In what ways do dangerous ideas, popularized in culture (i.e., the bumper stickers mentioned earlier) have the power to motivate and incite very real violence?
 - a. Can you think of any contemporary examples where acts of violence are rooted in ideas of hate, racism, and discrimination?
4. According to Ebens’ defense attorney, Frank Eamon, “It’s a quantum leap, a giant jump to say that you’re angry at Japanese imports and that you then hate Asian [sic] people.” Do you agree with this statement? Why would someone think it’s too far-fetched to make this kind of connection?
5. Reflecting on the title of the film, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*, what other factors are responsible for contributing to the lack of accountability demanded by the men who killed Vincent Chin? What structural issues contributed to this injustice?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**CRIME AND PUNISHMENT**

1. What was Ebens' and the defense's reasoning behind why he killed Chin? To what extent do you think Ebens wanted to kill Chin?
2. Judge Kaufman explains his sentencing by stating: "They did this too severely in careless, reckless disregard of human life, which is what manslaughter is and that's what they were found guilty of and that's what I predicated my sentence on. Had it been a brutal murder, of course, these fellows would be in jail now." How do both toxic masculinity and white supremacy show up in Kaufman's ideas of justice and fairness?
3. When a victim's family and all witnesses to a crime are not present at a trial or legal hearing, how might that alter the verdict and sentencing? Why do you think certain individuals' testimonies were left out of the sentencing hearing of the Vincent Chin case? To what extent do you think the race, gender, class, job status, and so on of witnesses affected their exclusion from the investigation and sentencing hearing?

ACTIVISM AND HATE CRIMES

1. What compelled Asian Americans to get involved in the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign? Describe a time in which you felt strongly about acts of injustice for which you wanted to stand up. What other examples are there in history or more recently?
2. Asian American activists built multiracial coalitions to fight the unjust criminal justice system. Why is coalition building such a powerful tool when protesting for equity and civil rights? What do you think are best practices and a good mindset to have in order to stay unified around civil rights struggles? Describe examples of how coalitions made up of people of all different backgrounds have effectively fought for equity.
3. How else has the criminal justice system failed people of color and marginalized communities? What can be done about a system that has historically been created from the foundations of White supremacy? What strategies can be used?
4. Hate crime laws under the U.S. Department of Justice protect individuals from civil rights violations, yet these crimes continue to happen and often go unpunished. What do you think needs to change to truly protect those frequently victimized? Think about this in terms of those who have been marginalized, scapegoated, profiled, and victimized.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

4. Part of the reason the appeal of the civil rights trial in 1987 failed is because many people found it difficult to believe that Asian Americans experienced discrimination, let alone racial violence. Why do you think this is the case and do people still think this today? How can we better inform society about who Asian Americans are and the long history of anti-Asian racism in the United States?
5. Defense attorney Frank Eaman suggested the following about American Citizens for Justice when they pursued a civil rights case for Vincent Chin: “The American Citizens for Justice began by just wanting to put these people in jail any way they could. Then they discovered really, the only way they could put him in jail is if there were a federal prosecution.” What is your reaction to this statement? What is he insinuating here?
6. Defense attorney Frank Eaman suggested the following about American Citizens for Justice when they pursued a civil rights case for Vincent Chin: “The American Citizens for Justice began by just wanting to put these people in jail any way they could. Then they discovered really, the only way they could put him in jail is if there were a federal prosecution.” What is your reaction to this statement? What is he insinuating here?

CLOSING QUESTION/ACTIVITY
Conversation Cards

This is an activity to help participants process feelings that came up for them with more focus and attention and to take care listening to one another as they process collectively.

Preparation:

Create conversation cards by writing each question on a separate index card and assembling all six cards into a pile.

Choose a facilitator with the following abilities:

- Capacity to listen intently
- Be empathetic
- Validate by reflecting individuals’ viewpoints and challenging them if viewpoints are inappropriate and disrespectful

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Activity

- If possible, assemble viewers into a semi-circle or circle to allow for more personal conversations.
- Facilitator informs the audience that they will be sharing space in an intimate conversation to help process the difficult issues addressed in the film.
- Facilitator directs the audience's attention to the posted Community

Agreements for Holding Safe Space:

- Be present. (i.e., refrain from using cell phones).
 - Listen attentively by giving eye contact.
 - Think well of one another.
 - Raise your hand to speak and wait for the facilitator to recognize you.
 - Disagree respectfully to statements, not people.
 - Offer your ideas as a perspective, not as an authority.
 - Silence is okay.
- Get the group into a reflective mindset by doing a short mindfulness exercise. Say and do the following together:
 - Feel free to put one hand on your heart or belly to calm the nervous system.
 - Breathe in deeply and feel healing energy. Exhale into the spaciousness of collective belonging.
 - Facilitator chooses one of the Conversation Cards from the deck of index cards.

Optional: Use a talking stick or microphone to give participants a chance to take turns. Explain to participants that whoever is holding the talking stick or microphone has the floor to speak, and everyone else has a responsibility to listen quietly.

Conversation Cards Questions:

1. What makes this story hard to process? What is most upsetting about it?
2. Describe a time when you experienced or witnessed someone getting away with a crime or unjust actions. How did it make you feel and how did you respond?
3. What makes it difficult to accept when a punishment does not fit the crime?
4. What can be done to bring justice and closure to a situation like the Vincent Chin case?
5. How can one cope or find peace from the outcome of the case?
6. Describe your reaction to the comments of Ebens, Nitz, and their friends. What makes them hard to hear? How do you deal with people who make challenging commentary?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

TAKING ACTION

The following are some ways you and your community can get involved and put lessons learned from *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* and your discussion into action. If the group is having trouble generating their own ideas for next steps, these suggestions can help get things started. The examples below are adapted from *Legacy Guide: Asian Americans Building the Movement* by Helen Zia and Vincent and Lily Chin Estate.

Have participants think about what action they themselves can take. Ask volunteers to share what they will do to take action.

- **Be prepared for anti-Asian incidents.** Take an online training with [Right to Be](#) on bystander intervention, preventing and responding to harassment, and/or resilience.
- **Call on national, state, and local leaders** to publicly condemn and take action to stop anti-Asian racism and halt the recent drastic increase in anti-Asian hate incidents. Support and elect leaders who do; encourage others to register and vote as well. Find ways to call out, educate, and address racism, whether through organizations, letters to companies and advertisers, visits to elected officials, or through media, to make it clear that there will be consequences for anti-Asian hate.
- **Support solidarity movements** of people of color and people of conscience to fight systemic racism and other forms of institutionalized inequity. Support ways to fix the broken safety net to address mental health, health care, housing and food insecurity, and language access and to seek solutions of restorative justice.
- **Demand that your state include curricula about Asian Americans at the K-12 levels.**
- **Amplify the voices and stories of historically marginalized communities, including immigrants and refugees.** Use your social media, letter writing, and other platforms to lift up the diversity of those whose lived experiences have helped to build America. Educate that Asian Americans are Americans, that they are not “perpetual foreigners.”
- **Help your local Asian American community** by reaching out to an Asian American service organizations in your community. Research online (See Resources list). If you live in an urban area where there are Asian ethnic enclaves (i.e., Chinatown, Koreatown, Little Saigon, Japantown), look up organizations there. Check in with an organization for volunteer opportunities to assist with anti-Asian violence or any other support.

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RESOURCES

Here is a list of relevant social movements, nonprofits, and organizations for you to continue learning and get involved:

[AANHPI List of mental health and behavioral services in all fifty states](#)

Spreadsheet of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander health organizations throughout the United States.

[AAPI Equity Alliance](#)

Nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. This is the umbrella organization of [Stop AAPI Hate](#), providing a variety of resources to combat anti-Asian racism, such as [Stop AAPI Hate Mental Health Report](#), [Documenting Anti-AAPI Hate Codebook](#), and Stop [AAPI Hate Signs](#).

[Act to Change](#)

Nonprofit organization that addresses bullying, particularly of Asian American and Pacific Islander youth. They provide programming for K-12 youth, resources, coalition building with advocacy organizations (Hate Crime Coalition in local municipalities) to develop policy, and data.

American Citizens for Justice

First pan-Asian advocacy organization in the Midwest that organized on a national scope. It was created by the family of Vincent Chin, Helen Zia, and civil rights attorneys to mobilize the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign. Today it's a nonprofit organization that works to combat hate in all forms and provides legal, social, and economic resources to victims of discrimination, and advocates for immigrants to gain full participation in the political process.

[Asian American Health Initiative Mental Health Library](#)

Resources on a variety of mental health concerns as they pertain to the Asian American community.

[Center for Asian American Media](#)

Nonprofit organization that showcases stories that convey the richness and diversity of Asian American experiences. They nurture emerging filmmakers and organize one of the largest Asian American film festivals every year. Presented the Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance and Rededication in June 2022 to commemorate the legacy of Asian American activism through films, conversations, and performances.

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[Chinese for Affirmative Action](#)

Nonprofit organization that protested the hate crime murder of Vincent Chin. They promote a multiracial democracy in the U.S. and stand up for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, immigrant rights, language diversity, and social justice.

[Densho.org](#)

Densho documents the testimonies of Japanese Americans who were unjustly incarcerated during World War II before their memories are extinguished. We offer these irreplaceable firsthand accounts, coupled with historical images and teacher resources, to explore principles of democracy and promote equal justice for all.

[Filipino American National Historical Society](#)

The mission of the Filipino American National Historical Society is to promote understanding, education, enlightenment, appreciation and enrichment through the identification, gathering, preservation and dissemination of the history and culture of Filipino Americans in the United States.

[Hate is a Virus](#)

Hate Is A Virus is a nonprofit community of mobilizers and amplifiers to dismantle racism and hate that started as a movement in 2020 and continues to amplify, educate and activate AAPI to stand for justice and equality in solidarity with other communities. They do this by mobilizing our community to participate in local and national campaigns, creating safe spaces for dialogue and education, and providing actionable steps and funding in partnership with trusted community leaders and organizations. This includes programs related to mental health, community-based solutions for safety, representation, solidarity-building, and so much more.

[PBS Digital Studios: A People's History of Asian America](#)

Produced in partnership by the Center for Asian American Media and PBS Digital Studios, *A People's History of Asian America* tells the history of Asian Americans through the microaggressions and stereotypes this community faces.

[Right To Be](#)

Nonprofit organization originally founded as Hollaback to prevent public street harassment. It provides bystander intervention and other trainings to prevent harassment in all forms.

[Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center](#)

The Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center brings history, art and culture to you through innovative museum experiences and digital initiatives.

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[Stand Against Hatred](#)

Website to document and educate about hate from the five affiliates of the nonprofit organization Asian Americans Advancing Justice.

[UCLA Asian American Studies Center](#)

The mission of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center is to “Expand our scholarly capabilities and deepen the public understanding of Asian American and Pacific Islander lives towards a healthy, just, democratic, and compassionate society for all.” In addition to their research and support for scholars and students, AASC serves the public with publications and media such as the Amerasia Journal, policy reports, the Census Information Center, “Collective Memories” oral histories and the rapid response Covid-19 Multilingual Resources Hub translated into 40 languages. In collaboration with leading scholars in Asian American studies, AASC creates digital educational curricula/resources including: “[Untold Stories of Civil Rights Online](#)” and “[Vanessa Unmuted Storybooks](#),” a digital K-College Asian American Studies curriculum.

[Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance and Dedication](#)

A group of organizers and former leaders of the Justice for Vincent Chin campaign who organized events and published *Legacy Guide: Asian Americans Building the Movement* to commemorate Vincent Chin and the significance of the campaign for justice for Vincent Chin.

[Vincent Who?](#)

Documentary film that illustrates how the Vincent Chin murder activated the Asian American civil rights movement in the 1980s and beyond. It relates the case to Asian American history, particularly in terms of anti-Asian exclusion and racism.

Museums, Exhibition, & Archives:

[Chinese Historical Society](#)

[Japanese American National Museum](#)

[Korean American National Museum](#) (opening 2022)

[Museum of Chinese in America](#)

[South Asian American Digital Archive](#)

[The Southeast Asian Archive](#)

[Virtual Asian American Art Museum](#)

[Wing Luke Museum](#)

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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Freda Lin is the co-director of YURI Education Project, a business that develops curriculum and professional learning with a focus on Asian American and Pacific Islander stories. She began this work as a student activist leader for Asian American Studies at Northwestern University. This led her to become a middle and high school teacher to integrate these and other marginalized stories in schools. She taught history and leadership at Chicago and San Francisco Bay Area schools for 16 years. After leaving the teaching field, she facilitated social movement history tours with Freedom Lifted and consulted with the Center for Asian American Media and UC Berkeley History-Social Science Project. She also served as the education program director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute, where she implemented new programming to promote awareness of the World War II Japanese American incarceration experience and its connection to current issues. Freda currently serves on the National Council for History Education Board of Directors.

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