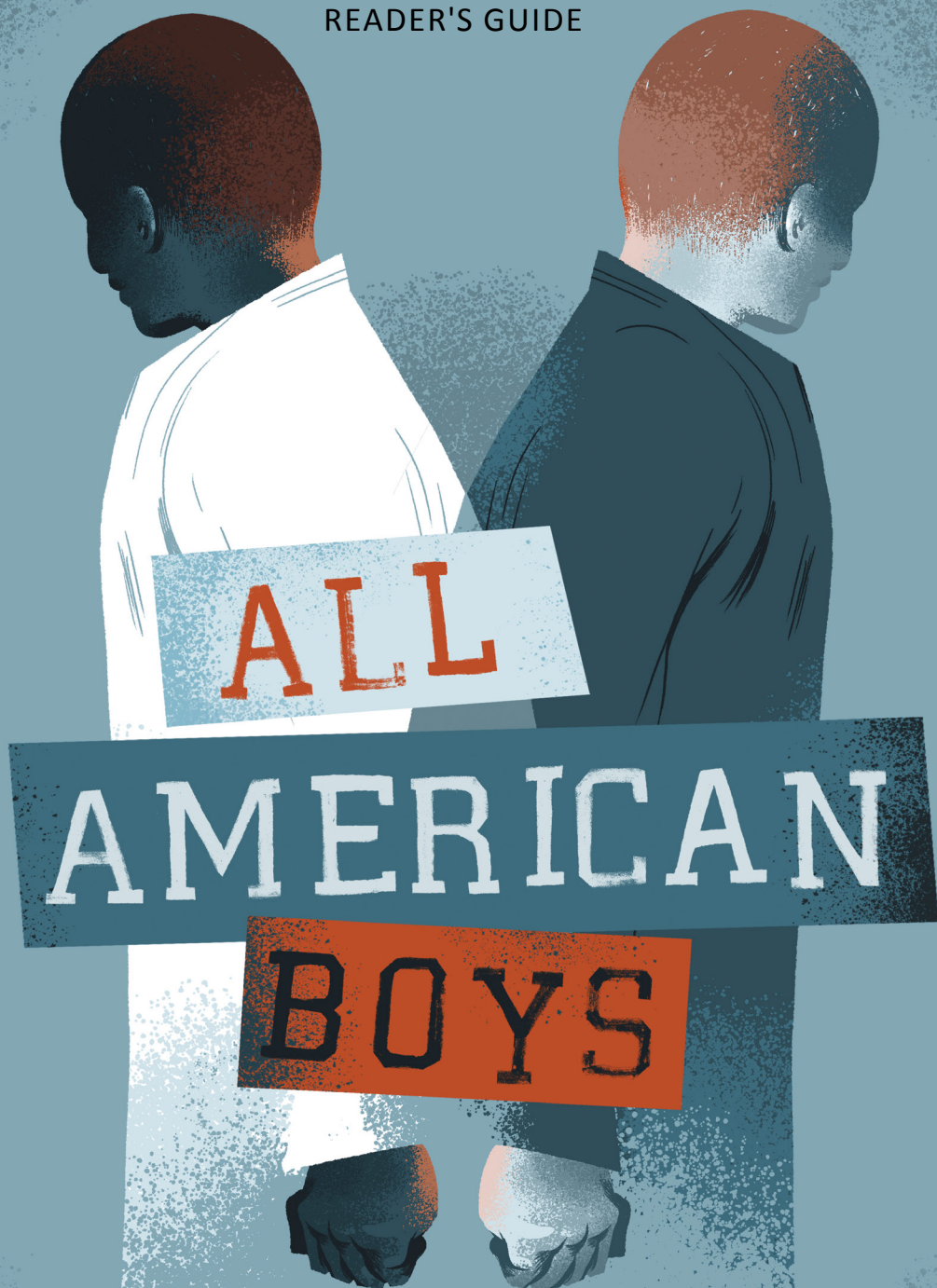


ONE MARYLAND ONE BOOK 2016

READER'S GUIDE

Fiction © 2015 Atheneum



BY JASON REYNOLDS & BRENDAN KIELY

WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF EVERYONE READ THE SAME BOOK AND CAME TOGETHER TO TALK ABOUT IT?

When we read a great book, we can't wait to share the experience and talk about it with others. That's one of the joys of reading.

In this spirit, Maryland Humanities created One Maryland One Book to bring together diverse people in communities across the state through the shared experience of reading the same book. In its ninth year, One Maryland One Book remains Maryland's only statewide community reading program. Each year, the selection process is guided by a common theme. The theme for 2016 is "the 21st Century Great American Novel."

The Maryland Center for the Book at Maryland Humanities partners with public libraries, high schools, colleges and universities, museums, bookstores, correctional facilities, and other organizations to bring book-centered discussions and other related events to communities across Maryland. But One Maryland One Book is not just about reading or literature; it is also about bringing people together for meaningful dialogue.

One Maryland One Book programs, including an author tour, take place each year in the fall. A calendar of free public events is available on our website.

The book selected for 2016 is *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely.

GRAB YOUR COPY

Find a copy of *All American Boys* at your local library or bookstore and get reading!

What if a copy of *All American Boys* finds you? If you're out and about, you might find copies of the book in unexpected places. Our Wandering Books can be found in a myriad of public spaces from bus stops to county fairs. If you find a copy, it's yours for a short time. Register the book online so we can see how

far it travels (instructions are included inside the book), read it, review it, and then leave it behind for someone else to find and enjoy.

JOIN IN

Each year, more than 10,000 Marylanders read the One Maryland One Book selection. How many of those people are your friends or family? How many are perfect strangers you sit next to on the train or stand in line with at the grocery store? Use the book to jump-start a meaningful conversation with an old friend or to make a new one.

PULL UP A CHAIR

We invite you to join Maryland Humanities and thousands of Marylanders at one of the many book discussions and related events happening around the state in September and October.

To find One Maryland One Book programs in your area, go to www.onemarylandonebook.org and click on Events.

For all the latest information, "like" or follow us:



[facebook.com/MDCenterfortheBook](https://www.facebook.com/MDCenterfortheBook)



[@MDHumanities](https://twitter.com/MDHumanities)

Look for Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely at venues across the state in late September, including the Baltimore Book Festival on Sunday, September 25.



Scan this code on your smartphone to listen to the first chapter of *All American Boys*.

LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Thank you for joining Maryland Humanities as we embark on the ninth year of One Maryland One Book, our state's largest reading and discussion program. Marylanders have embraced the concept of bringing people together from around the state through the reading of one book, selected by a devoted group of literary enthusiasts, since the program's launch in 2008. Each year we find joy in the power of literature as we explore a new book with other readers—from book clubs at workplaces and libraries to students in high school and college. This shared experience lies at the heart of One Maryland One Book. Whether you've read with us every year or are new to the program, welcome!

This year's book, *All American Boys*, gives Marylanders the opportunity to discuss longstanding, systemic issues that affect all of us. When our One Maryland One Book committee convened to choose the 2016 book, they had their work cut out for them. The 2016 theme, "The 21st Century Great American Novel," inspired a remarkable shortlist, compiled from titles nominated by residents across our state. The list was chock full of Pulitzer Prize winners, National Book Award winners, and bestsellers. But one book stood out. *All American Boys* is the story of two young men—one black, one white—who are more alike than they are different. Though they do not know each other, Rashad and Quinn live parallel lives. Suddenly, a shocking event not only brings them together but forces them to confront deep-seated issues of racism and prejudice in their community. Inspired by an eye-opening conversation they shared about current events, award-winning authors Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely joined forces to write a story that enables its readers to hear a variety of perspectives relating to a single event. *All American Boys* is genuine, powerful, and something to which all Marylanders—from teens to seniors—can relate.

We encourage you to pick up a copy of *All American Boys* and join the conversation at one of our many public discussion programs across the state. A program of the Maryland Center for the Book at Maryland Humanities, One Maryland One Book is made possible each year through the generosity of our sponsors and community partners. We greatly thank them for their support. Find out how to get involved at www.onemarylandonebook.org.

Sincerely,

Stephen Sfekas and Phoebe Stein
Maryland Humanities Board Chair and Executive Director

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



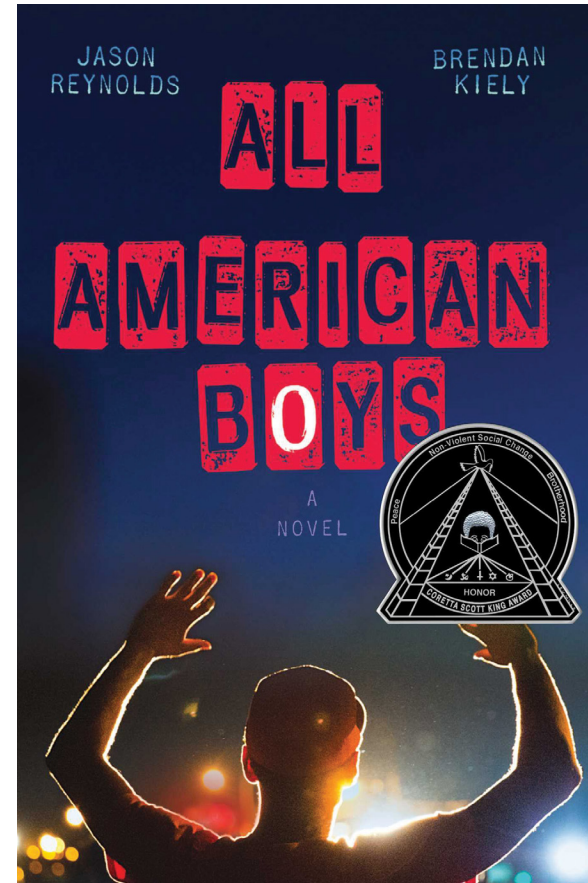
Jason Reynolds

Jason Reynolds earned a BA in English from The University of Maryland, College Park, before moving to Brooklyn, New York to pursue a career in writing. He is the author of the critically acclaimed *When I Was the Greatest*, for which he was the recipient of the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent, the Coretta Scott King Honor Author Books *Boy in the Black Suit* and *All American Boys* (co-written with Brendan Kiely), and *As Brave as You*, his middle grade debut. You can find his ramblings at JasonWritesBooks.com.



Brendan Kiely

Brendan Kiely received his MFA from the City College of New York. He is the author, with Jason Reynolds, of the Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book *All American Boys*. His debut novel, *The Gospel of Winter*, has been published in ten languages, was selected as one of the American Library Association's Top Ten Best Fiction for Young Adults 2015, and was a *Kirkus Reviews* selection for the Best of 2014. He is also the author of *The Last True Love Story*. Originally from the Boston area, he now lives with his wife in Greenwich Village. Find out more at BrendanKiely.com.



ABOUT THE BOOK

What would you do if you witnessed something you never would have believed? And how do you know you're doing the right thing?

All American Boys is the unforgettable new novel from award-winning authors Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely. Two teens—one black, one white—grapple with the repercussions of a single violent act that leaves their school, their community, and, ultimately, the country bitterly divided by racial tension. Written in tandem by two award-winning authors, this tour de force shares the alternating perspectives of Rashad and Quinn as the complications from that single violent moment, the type taken from the headlines, unfold and reverberate to highlight an unwelcome truth.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 As the police officer slammed Rashad to the ground, Rashad says “the pain was a color—white” (22). What do you think he means?
- 2 Quinn is proud of his neighborhood even though he knows it shows signs of decline and is increasingly unsafe. Have you ever had a similar connection to a place? What does Quinn’s attachment say about the power of memory and association?
- 3 Why do you think Rashad’s father assumes that Rashad is lying and that the police officer acted reasonably? Do you think you would assume the same? Why or why not?
- 4 Rashad’s brother, Spoony, and their father are opposites in many ways. What lessons does Rashad learn from each man?
- 5 How has Quinn’s life changed since his father’s death in Afghanistan? What about his mom’s life?
- 6 At the Galluzzo family’s barbeque, Quinn has a lot to share about what he saw and even more questions to ask. But he never addresses the situation and never asks a single question. Why not? Realistically, how do you think you would handle the situation?
- 7 Guzzo accuses Quinn of forgetting that Paul raised him after Quinn’s father died. Do you think this influences Quinn’s response to Paul’s actions?
- 8 For most of the novel, Quinn refuses to watch the arrest video. Jill reminds Quinn the video “isn’t about [him].” Why is Quinn so concerned with whether or not he could be identified in the video?
- 9 After hearing Rashad referred to as “a thug” and “a student,” Mrs. Webster’s class chants Rashad’s name. The basketball team changes the name of their best play from “fist” to “Rashad.” Why do the students think saying Rashad’s name is important?
- 10 Rashad admires the work of artist Aaron Douglas. Why do you think Rashad uses elements of Douglas’s style to create his artistic version of the arrest?
- 11 According to Paul, Springfield’s white population has dwindled from 84% to 37% in the past 30 years (167). Do you think this plays a part in the community’s response to the arrest? How?
- 12 Though Coach Carney forbids the basketball team from discussing the arrest, the players’ silence quickly dissolves after someone spray paints “Rashad is absent again today” on the school’s sidewalk. How would you describe Quinn and English’s conversation?
- 13 Jill tells Quinn that referring to the arrest as a “one-time thing” despite knowing otherwise is a sign of Quinn’s own racism that he cannot recognize. Do you agree?
- 14 As Berry explains protests to Rashad and his friends, she discovers that the boys have been the subjects of racial profiling for years. Why did they never share their experiences with Berry, who as a lawyer could have taken action?
- 15 In Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, Quinn learns about an “invisibility” he has never experienced. How are the students in Quinn’s English class enlightened and ultimately empowered by *Invisible Man*?
- 16 On Wednesday, Rashad’s father shares a tragic memory of his experience as a police officer. What is his goal in sharing this story? How does the conversation change Rashad’s relationship with his father?
- 17 In a single afternoon, Rashad is visited by two very different women who ultimately have a similar impact. What changes for Rashad after Mrs. Fitzgerald and Katie Lansing visit? What changes in him?
- 18 Quinn’s teacher Mrs. Erlich writes statistics about police gun use on the board (254-255). What differences do you observe in the statistics? Do you think numbers, including these, can “lie”?
- 19 What do the students hope to achieve by making the protest a “die-in”?
- 20 *All American Boys* invites the reader to experience one situation from two different perspectives while giving glimpses of others’ views, too. Do you recognize yourself in Rashad? In Quinn? What about the supporting characters?



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

We encourage you to continue your exploration! Each year we hope that your participation in One Maryland One Book inspires you to keep talking about the many thought-provoking topics examined in the selected book. The following list of books and movies might be of interest after reading *All American Boys*. While we include suggested ages for some of the readings, they are just a guide. Feel free to choose based on your interests.

BOOKS

Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction, Adichie's blend of social critique and love story examines what it means to be black in America, Nigeria, and Britain.

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness by Michelle Alexander
Civil-rights lawyer Alexander exposes the inherent racism in the American criminal justice system, arguing that Jim Crow's social control has been merely reimagined via mass incarceration. (Nonfiction)

Miles to Go Before I Sleep: Life, Death, and Hope on the Streets of Washington, D.C.

by Christopher M. Archer

Struggling to understand his brother's untimely death, Archer searches for purpose and meaning and comes of age in the DC Police Department. As a cop in the city then dubbed "the homicide capital of the states," Archer soon finds his perspective shifting. (Nonfiction)

Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

In this extended open letter to his young son, *Atlantic* national correspondent and senior editor Coates relives his experience as a young black man growing up in America, where slavery, mass incarceration, and police brutality continue to play a foundational role in the nation's history—and present. (Nonfiction)

Blue Blood by Edward Conlon

Conlon, a fourth generation police officer, shares both personal and family stories in this memoir on what it means to protect, to serve, and to defend among the ranks of the New York City Police Department. (Nonfiction)

Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison

The nameless narrator of this 1952 National Book Award-winning novel describes growing up in a black community in the South, attending and being expelled from college, becoming the chief spokesman of Harlem's "Brotherhood," and retreating to the basement lair of the "Invisible Man" he imagines himself to be.

The Race Card: How Bluffing About Bias Makes Race Relations Worse

by Richard Thompson Ford

Stanford Law School professor Ford combines legal analysis, stories, and logic to address the topics of racism, racial profiling, and affirmative action, among others. (Nonfiction)

Black Looks: Race and Representation by bell hooks

Noted feminist and social activist hooks declares that, particularly in mass media, "images of black people [continue to] reinforce and reinscribe white supremacy." In this collection of essays, hooks examines why this is this case, how it has come to be, and what everyone involved needs to do to shift the paradigm. (Nonfiction)

Are Cops Racist?: How the War Against the Police Harms Black Americans

by Heather Mac Donald

As the John M. Olin Fellow at The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Mac Donald's work in urban affairs created the foundation for this analysis and critique of the political correctness in law enforcement. (Nonfiction)

Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools by Monique W. Morris

For four years, Morris, author of the critically acclaimed *Black Stats*, chronicled the experiences of black high school girls across the United States, revealing how policies, practices, and cultural illiteracy can push countless students out of school and into unhealthy, unstable, and often unsafe futures. (Nonfiction)

Police Brutality: An Anthology by Jill Nelson

Comprised of twelve original essays, this anthology explores the history, politics, and resistance movements of police brutality. The comprehensive collection features perspectives ranging from a police lieutenant to a Black Panther. (Nonfiction)

Citizen: An American Lyric by Claudia Rankine

Rankine's much-lauded 2014 collection pushes poetry's forms to disarm readers and circumvent our carefully constructed defense mechanisms against the hint of possibly being racist ourselves. (Nonfiction)

Fall of Rome by Martha Southgate

Jerome Washington, the sole African American teacher at an elite American boarding school, has spent his career trying not to appear "too racial." The arrival of a talented, black inner-city student who wants Washington to be his mentor threatens to unhinge the professor's carefully cultivated persona.

The Men We Reaped by Jesmyn Ward

Ward relives her experiences of losing five young men, including her brother, within four years. Their deaths were connected only as their lives had been: by identity and place. Ward weaves a powerful account of men dying because certain disadvantages breed a certain kind of bad luck. (Nonfiction)

Native Son by Richard Wright

Wright's classic 1940 novel about a young African American man who murders a white woman reflects on the forces of poverty, injustice, and hopelessness that continue to shape our society.

YOUNG ADULT (Ages 13–18)

If I Ever Get Out of Here by Eric Gansworth

As a young man on a Tuscarora Indian reservation, Lewis “Shoe” Blake has never had a white friend—until George Haddonfield, whose family recently moved to town with the Air Force. Gansworth’s relatable story unearths revelations about poverty, friendship, and the joys of rock ‘n’ roll.

If I Lie by Corinne Jackson

Just before high school senior Quinn’s boyfriend, Carey, deploys to Afghanistan with the Marines, a picture surfaces on Facebook that shows her kissing another boy. Soon after, Carey goes missing in action, causing Quinn’s classmates, and many adults in her military town, to shame her for ruining a hero’s life. But Quinn is committed to her own sacrifice by keeping a secret about Carey—one that could dishonor him.

How It Went Down by Kekla Magoon

When Tariq, a black sixteen-year-old, dies from two gunshot wounds from a white man’s gun, his community is thrown into an uproar. What follows is a classic “he said, she said” between two sides within one community. Ultimately, everyone must find a way to say with certainty: “This is how it went down.”

Dear Blue Sky by Mary Sullivan

Ever since her brother Sef left for Iraq, Cassie has felt like her life is falling apart. Her parents are fighting, her siblings are struggling, and her best friend no longer has time for her. Then Cassie turns to a surprising source of comfort: Blue Sky, an Iraqi girl she meets online. As Blue Sky works to reclaim her freedom in her war-torn city, Cassie works to start facing her problems instead of running from the pain.

MIDDLE READER (Ages 8–12)

It Ain’t So Awful, Falalel by Firoozeh Dumas

Once again, Zomorod Yousefzadeh’s family has moved. But this time Zomorod starts life anew, renames herself “Cindy” and vows to be popular. But it’s the late 1970s and Iran is making headlines with protests, revolution, and finally the taking of American hostages. Suddenly, the anti-Iran sentiments hit too close to home.

Heart of a Shepherd by Rosanne Parry

When Brother’s dad is shipped off to Iraq, along with the rest of his reserve unit, Brother must help his grandparents keep the ranch going. He’s determined to maintain it just as his father left it, in the hope that doing so will ensure his father’s safe return. The hardships Brother faces will not only change the ranch, but also reveal his true calling.

The Hope Chest by Karen Schwabach

Eleven-year-old Violet has one goal in mind when she runs away from home: to find her sister, Chloe, who is fighting for women’s suffrage. Before long, Violet unites with Myrtle, a “colored” girl who is happy to leave her own training as a maid and join Violet’s quest to find Chloe. The girls confront the heavy issues of racism and sexism head-on but find strength together.

Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson

Raised in South Carolina and New York, Woodson always felt halfway home in each place. In vivid poems, she shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights Movement.



PICTURE BOOKS (Ages 3–8)

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De La Peña

In this Newbery-winning picture book, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. CJ spends the trip asking questions—why their family does not have a car and why they always have to get off in the dirty part of town, among others—and his grandma gives answers, encouraging CJ to see the beauty in his world.

Skin Again by bell hooks

Celebrating all that makes us unique and different, hooks offer new ways to talk about race and identity. Race matters, but only so much—what's most important is who we are on the inside. *Skin Again* celebrates discovering in each other the treasures stored down deep, beyond the skin.

Desmond and the Very Mean Word by Desmond Tutu

When Desmond rides his new bicycle through his neighborhood, his pride and joy turn to hurt and anger when a group of boys shout a very mean word at him. Though he responds by shouting an insult of his own, Desmond quickly discovers that fighting back with mean words doesn't make him feel any better. With Father Trevor's help, Desmond comes to understand his conflicted feelings and see that all people deserve compassion, whether or not they say they are sorry.



FILM

A Conversation About Growing Up Black (2015, 6 min., NR)—Directed by Joe Brewster and Perri Peltz, *The New York Times*

In this short documentary, young black men explain the particular challenges they face growing up in America.

A Conversation with Police on Race (2015, 7 min., NR)—Directed by Geeta Gandbhir and Perri Peltz, *The New York Times*

In this short documentary, former officers share their thoughts on policing and race in America.

Crash (2004, 112 min., rated R)—Directed by Paul Haggis

Los Angeles citizens with vastly separate lives collide in interweaving stories of race, loss and redemption.

Do the Right Thing (1989, 120 min., rated R)—Directed by Spike Lee

On the hottest day of the year on a street in Brooklyn, everyone's hate and bigotry smolders and builds until it explodes into violence.

End of Watch (2012, 109 min., rated R)—Directed by David Ayer

Shot documentary-style, this film follows the daily grind of two young Los Angeles police officers who are partners and friends, and what happens when they meet criminal forces greater than themselves.

Fruitvale Station (2013, 85 min., rated R)—Directed by Ryan Coogler

Based on a true story, *Fruitvale Station* chronicles the last night of Oscar Grant III, a 22-year-old Bay Area resident, who crosses paths with friends, enemies, family, and strangers on the last day of 2008. Grant was killed by a single shot to the back from a Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) officer.

In The Heat Of The Night (1967, 109 min., rated PG, mature audiences suggested)

—Directed by Norman Jewison

An African American police detective is asked to investigate a murder in a racially hostile southern town.

Mississippi Burning (1988, 128 min., rated R)—Directed by Alan Parker

Two FBI agents, one white and one black, with wildly different styles arrive in Mississippi to investigate the disappearance of some civil rights activists.

A Raisin in the Sun (2008, 132 min., rated PG-13)—Directed by Kenny Leon

An African American family struggles with poverty, racism, and inner conflict as they strive for a better way of life. Based on the play by Lorraine Hansberry.

Training Day (2001, 122 min., rated R)—Directed by Antoine Fuqua

On his first day on the job as a Los Angeles narcotics officer, a rookie cop goes on a 24-hour training course with a rogue detective who isn't what he appears.

NOTES



The content and resources of this guide were created and compiled by the staff of Maryland Humanities. Portions have been reprinted with permission from Antheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster.

One Maryland One Book is coordinated by the Maryland Center for the Book, a program of Maryland Humanities, in partnership with Enoch Pratt Free Library.

One Maryland One Book is sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services via LSTA grant funds through the Division of Library Development & Services, Maryland State Department of Education, as well as by the PNC Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Baltimore City Foundation, BGE, Wells Fargo, and M&T Bank.

Maryland Humanities is an educational nonprofit organization. Our mission is to create and support educational experiences in the humanities that inspire all Marylanders to embrace lifelong learning, exchange ideas openly, and enrich their communities. To learn more, visit www.mdhumanities.org.



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