

My Father's Name

PRESS KIT

"A GRIPPING AND ESSENTIAL EXPLORATION OF RACE, ACCOUNTABILITY,
AND THE FAR-REACHING CONSEQUENCES OF FAMILY SECRETS"

-Henry Louis Gates, Jr.



A father's secret. A daughter's reckoning. A nation's dark legacy.

A HAIR ON FIRE FILMS PRODUCTION

IN ASSOCIATION WITH FOOTHILL PRODUCTIONS PRODUCER JAMIE WOLF CO-PRODUCER NATHALIE SEAVER

A FILM BY SUSANNA STYRON **MY FATHER'S NAME** EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS GERALYN DREYFOUS, PATRICIA QUILLEN,

CONSTANCE ROYSTER, RODERICK SPENCER CONSULTING PRODUCER MARC LEVIN

ANIMATION AND GRAPHICS BY TODD RUFF ORIGINAL SCORE BY LILAH LARSON & SARAH GOLDSTONE

EDITED BY JASMINE CANNON, SUSANNA STYRON DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHEN MCCARTHY

PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY SUSANNA STYRON

Contact: [Susanna Styron](#) Director/Producer

My Father's Name

QUOTE

"MY FATHER'S NAME is a gripping and essential exploration of race, accountability, and the far-reaching consequences of family secrets."
— Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

TAGLINE

A father's secret. A daughter's reckoning. A nation's dark legacy.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

A Documentary Short Film by Susanna Styron
2024 | 20 minutes | USA

LOGLINE

The intimate story of one woman's attempt to uncover the truth about her father's participation in a lynching, find a way to hold her family accountable, and face the dawning awareness of her unconscious racism.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Years after Lee Ed Frazier's death, his daughter Jan made a shocking discovery: as a young man her father had participated in a lynching. Now, as she attempts to uncover the truth about what happened, Jan must reckon with deeply conflicted feelings about the father she loved, grapple with how to hold her family accountable, and face the dawning awareness of her own unconscious racism.

My Father's Name



Jan Frazier

LONG SYNOPSIS

When Jan Frazier learns that her late father and other family members took part in a lynching in 1937, her world is shattered. Unable to reconcile this act of hate with the father she loved, she sets out to learn everything she can about the incident.

Her research unearths impressive amounts of coverage, from the New York Times to foreign press, since at the time an anti-lynching bill was being debated in the U.S. Senate. Two publications, Time and Life magazines, carried photos of the lynched men — the first photographs of a lynching ever to be published nationally. Combing through reports in an attempt to find names of the perpetrators, and hoping to not find her father's name among them, she realizes that no perpetrators were ever named. Wanting to learn more, Jan's brother contacts Time, Inc. to ask the identity of the photographer, only to be sent a copy of the back of the photo where the photographer's name has been blacked, with "no credit" written above. Another name that was not named.

My Father's Name

In time, Jan comes to accept that she will never know the ultimate truth, and attempts to move on. But in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder she feels compelled to explore and confront her own unconscious racism, and her family legacy begins to tug at her again. Determined to hold her family accountable, Jan publishes an open letter in the Jackson Advocate “the voice of Black Mississippians” proclaiming her family's culpability in the incident, and putting a name — Frazier — to the unspeakable act.



Credit Marilyn Roos

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I first heard Jan Frazier's story, it hit me hard. Not only because of the stunning event at its heart, but for the earthshaking experience of discovering something unspeakable about someone you love — a dark secret that can never be illuminated by the person who carried it.

Website/Trailer/Social <https://myfathersname.com>

My Father's Name

That discovery is a profound emotional and spiritual experience, one that is shared by all too many people, including myself. How do we reckon with that? How do we make sense of the duality of good and evil in the same person?

With that as my initial motivation, I quickly discovered what I hadn't originally taken into account: Jan's personal story cannot be told independent of its uniquely American historical and social context, given that it has to do with the most charged and complex issue of our time: race. I also came to understand there is a conversation that is not sufficiently taking place among white people about our role in perpetuating racism.

"I thought I wasn't racist," Jan says at one point in the film. I can echo that. When I began working on MY FATHER'S NAME I had no idea that it would lead me to a hard but necessary assessment of my own whiteness and all of its implications. I have been the grateful beneficiary of the experience, wisdom and honesty of my Black team members and other colleagues and friends who have helped open my eyes to my own assumptions and the unquestioned patterns I've always lived with. This in turn has informed the film's evolution into what it is now.

Every schoolchild in Germany learns about the Holocaust, and German society takes ongoing responsibility for the atrocities of its forebears. Conversely, the history of lynching in America has been consistently buried and misunderstood. Not by Black people but by white people. We have had the luxury to hold it at a distance, because we are not the ones being killed. Jan Frazier didn't have to know about it — until the discovery of her father's shameful past shined a glaring light on it and she could no longer look away.

I am well aware of the pitfalls of being a white person making a film about a white person talking about horrors perpetrated on Black people. To that end I brought on as advisors historian Henry Louis Gates, Jr., journalist Charlayne Hunter-Gault and philanthropic advisor

My Father's Name

David Dodson. They gave me wise guidance and encouragement, and affirmed that the conversation, no matter how difficult and potentially inflammatory, must be furthered.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

[Susanna Styron's](#) feature documentary credits include the award-winning OUT OF MY HEAD and 9/12: FROM CHAOS TO COMMUNITY. Her debut narrative feature, Columbia Pictures' SHADRACH starring Harvey Keitel and Andie MacDowell, which she co-wrote and directed, premiered at the Venice Film Festival and was distributed theatrically worldwide.

Other narrative work includes Sidney Lumet's TV series 100 CENTRE STREET (writer/director), the web series ALL DOWNHILL FROM HERE (director) starring Brooke Adams and the award-winning shorts A DAY LIKE ANY OTHER (director) starring Reichard Beymer and Ally Sheedy, and HOUSE OF TEETH (writer/director).

Susanna's work has been seen in film festivals around the world, in theatrical release, and on such outlets as HBO, Netflix and Amazon, among others.

My Father's Name

MY FATHER'S NAME CREDITS

A Hair On Fire Films Production

Directed and Produced by Susanna Styron

In association with Foothill

Productions

Jamie Wolf, Producer

Nathalie Seaver, Co-Producer

Director of Photography

Stephen McCarthy

Edited by

Jasmine Cannon

Susanna Styron

Original Score by

Sarah Goldstone & Lilah Larson

Animation and Graphics by

Todd Ruff

Executive Producers

Geralyn Dreyfous

Patricia Quillin

Constance Royster

Roderick Spencer

Consulting Producer

Marc Levin

Advisors

Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Charlayne Hunter-Gault

David Dodson

Archival Producer

Rebecca Kent

Sound Design

Margaret Crimmins

Re-recording Mixer

Greg Smith

Colorist

Oliver Eid

Additional Archival Research

Sam Aleshinloye

Tirzah Brott

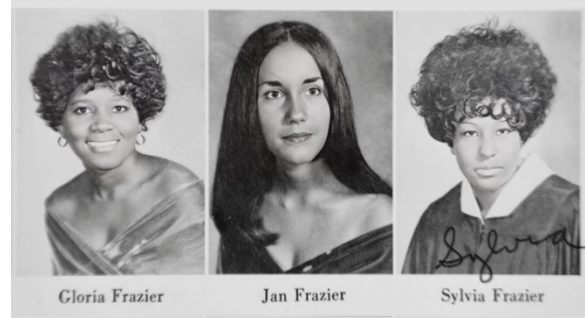
Finishing Editor/ Post Production

Supervisor

Eavvon O'Neal

Website/Trailer/Social <https://myfathersname.com>

My Father's Name



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FATHERS NAME Production Stills visit
<https://myfathersname.com/#press>

For High Resolution Downloads of MY
FATHERS NAME Team visit
<https://myfathersname.com/#filmmakers>

Website/Trailer/Social <https://myfathersname.com>