



Camp 72

DISCUSSION GUIDE

History, Key Dates,
Provoking Questions,
Resources

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introducing Camp 72
- About the Filmmaker
- Making of the Film
- Timeline, Key Facts, and Key Terms
- History
- Origins of the Civil War
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Liberia Today
- Discussion Questions & Select Quotes
- Take Action
- Additional Resources

ABOUT THE DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide provides context for more deeply understanding *Camp 72*; serves to facilitate discussion and learning on the themes addressed in the film; and offers resources for learning more about Liberia. The film follows the story of one woman, Gladys. While her story is reflective of what many endured during Liberia's Civil War, the themes of accountability, empowerment, and reconciliation are universal. Gladys' story will ignite conversation and exchange of ideas on a range of topics relevant well beyond West Africa.

The discussion questions are designed to help students and other viewers of the film to reflect on the issues in the film and identify connections to other political and social topics. While we put forward many questions, choosing to address just one or two that relate to your syllabus can allow for a "deeper dive" into the film's content. You can also consider moving from a discussion to taking action in response to the issues raised in *Camp 72*.

The topics featured in the film can give rise to deep emotions. The film includes footage of war-time violence and descriptions of sexual violence. Please alert all viewers to this fact before screening the film and make support and resources available to those who could be re-traumatized by watching the film. A classroom setting in which people feel safe and respected will encourage a more open and constructive dialogue.

KEY ISSUES

Camp 72 will be of special interest to class curricula that explore the following topics:

- | | |
|--|---|
|  African continent. Focus on Liberia, West Africa |  International judicial systems |
|  Child soldiers |  Peace and peacebuilding |
|  Conflict transformation / resolution |  Rape as a weapon of war |
|  Democracy and good governance |  Rebel fighting groups |
|  Economic and social development |  Restorative and retributive justice |
|  Filmmaking / journalism |  Truth and Reconciliation Commissions |
|  Forgiveness and reconciliation |  War |
|  Human rights |  Women's role in conflict |




INTRODUCING CAMP 72

Camp72 is an award-winning, feature length documentary film. It was released in February, 2018. A rough-cut began screening at film festivals in 2015. The film follows the people of Liberia's quest for justice and healing after enduring a 14-year civil war in which civilians were targeted. The documentary offers an unprecedented look at the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), a process intended to reconcile the wounds of war.

Camp 72 introduces a young woman named Gladys whose story gives us insight into the atrocities of the Liberian Civil War, its aftermath, and current day Liberia. Gladys was forced to watch the brutal murder of her mother by a rebel fighter. The same fighter held her captive as a sex slave for years. The nightmare started in an area Gladys refers to as Camp 72.

Gladys is not alone in her suffering. An estimated 250,000 people died as a result of the war. The majority of women were raped. The harrowing stories of war were relayed to the TRC beginning in 2006, three years after the war. Testimonies were collected from survivors, fighters and alleged war criminals. This was intended to be an opportunity for reconciliation and a chance to end a culture of impunity. Today, the TRC's recommendations for justice have yet to be implemented. The rebel who raped Gladys and killed her mother lives in freedom only miles away from her, as no one in Liberia has been prosecuted for their war crimes.

The film reveals how many Liberians find hope in the worst of circumstances and how they move forward despite a current context of impunity and poverty. Gladys' story is the story of Liberia.



ABOUT THE FILMMAKER



Seema Mathur is a multi-award winning journalist who has earned a National Edward R. Murrow, Lone Star Emmy, several Associated Press and medical journalism awards for her reporting on issues ranging from human rights to healthcare. She worked as a broadcast journalist for U.S. news affiliates and networks including CNN, ABC, and CBS. She launched Global Voice Productions in 2009 with the goal of giving voice to those who need to be heard. *Camp 72* does just that.

MAKING OF THE FILM



When I first went to Liberia, I intended to produce a documentary about “rape in conflict” because rape had been used so extensively during the Liberian Civil War. But what I found after traveling to every corner of the country and listening to people, is that rape was only part of the story. The bigger struggle that Liberians are still dealing with is unresolved justice and healing the wounds of war. It is my hope that we learn from the inspiring survivors and gain insight from the perpetrators to move towards peaceful solutions to conflict globally.

TIMELINE, FACTS, AND KEY TERMS

Timeline



1822: Black Americans, mostly freed slaves, began to settle in Liberia. They named the capital Monrovia, after U.S. President James Monroe.

1847: Liberia became independent. The settlers formed a political party called the True Whig Party which ruled for more than a century. The political party was seen as elite by the indigenous people.

1943: William Tubman was elected as president.

1971: Tubman died and was succeeded by William Tolbert Jr.

1979: This is the year that the “rice riots” began, what many consider to be the start of decades of war. According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, it was widely believed that the President in 1979 (William Tolbert) planned to raise the price of rice so that he and his family would economically benefit. Protests and demonstrations were “brutally quashed.”

1980: Sergeant Samuel Doe, an indigenous Liberian, led a violent coup against the ruling True Whig Party, assassinating President Tolbert and 13 of his aides. The True Whig party had ruled for over a hundred years and many of the indigenous considered their rule oppressive and marginalizing of the indigenous Liberians.

1985: Samuel Doe is elected President. Before long, his government is seen as corrupt, leading to a rebellion in 1989, led by Charles Taylor. Prior to Charles Taylor's rebellion, fellow coup-maker and Former Commanding General of the Army Gen. Thomas Quiwonkpa attempted to overthrow Doe on November 12, 1985. The failed attempt deepened the division in the country as Doe's troops chased members of the Gio and Mano ethnic groups of Nimba county, Quiwonkpa's county of origin. Quiwonkpa was captured and killed. Taylor later capitalized on the division recruiting followers of the failed coup that was exiled in neighboring countries and then using Nimba as the front for launching war.

1989-2003: Throughout this 14 year period, war was on again, off again. The most intense fighting was between 1989-1997 and 1999-2003. In the war's totality, approximately 250,000 died. Thousands were mutilated and raped, often by armies of drugged child soldiers led by ruthless warlords.

2003: The Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in Accra, Ghana by the parties to the Liberian conflict, marking the conflict's political end. The Peace Agreement mandated the creation of the TRC.

2005: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf becomes the first woman to be elected as an African head of state. She takes office in 2006.

2006: The Liberian TRC is set up to investigate the root cause of the conflict, human rights abuses, and economic crimes that took place between 1979 to 2003 and to make recommendations for justice and reconciliation.

2009: After collecting testimonies from more than 22,500 Liberians over a three year period, both in Liberia and the diaspora, the TRC issues a final report.

2011: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is awarded a Nobel Peace Prize alongside fellow Liberian, activist Leymah Gbowee, for her role in helping the country transition to peace. Presidential elections, largely peaceful, are held, and President Johnson Sirleaf wins re-election to serve her second six-year term.

2013-2016: Outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus sweeps through Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. Close to 5,000 people die in Liberia and 11,000 in the West Africa region.

2017: Elections take place in Liberia, including to elect a new President. George Weah, a former international soccer star is elected as President with Vice Presidential candidate Jewel Howard Taylor (Charles Taylor's ex-wife) defeated the sitting Vice President Joseph Boakai. The ultimate victory came after weeks of delaying run-off elections due to accusations of unsubstantiated election fraud.

2018: By March 30, the U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the U.N. peacekeeping force in the country, is scheduled to hand back responsibility for security to the country's army and police. UNMIL has been active for approximately thirteen years.

2017- 2018: Mohammed Jabbateh, aka Jungle Jabbah during the civil war was convicted by a jury in a federal immigration court in Pennsylvania, USA. Jabbateh was charged with two counts of fraud in immigration documents and two counts of perjury for having lied to authorities about his war time activities. He was a ULIMO and ULIMO-K commander responsible for commanding wartime crimes including murder, conscription of child soldiers, and cannibalism. On 19 April 2018, Jabbateh was sentenced to 30 years in prison, the maximum possible sentence for his charges. This sentence is also one of the longest sentences for immigration fraud in U.S. history.

2019: A British judge dismissed charges against Agnes Reeves Taylor, the ex-wife of former President Charles Taylor. Agnes Reeves Taylor was arrested in London in 2017 and charged with eight counts of torture and conspiracy to commit torture as part of her husband's National Patriotic Front of Liberia. The Judge at the Central Criminal Court for England and Wales, ruled there was not enough evidence to prove that the group had governmental control in the areas where the atrocities were said to have taken place — a requirement for the case to be tried in Britain.

2022: The first conviction specifically for atrocities in Liberia's back-to-back civil wars happened in a Swiss Federal Court in Bellinzona. Switzerland recognizes universal jurisdiction, which allows for the prosecution of serious crimes committed in other countries. Former Liberian warlord, Alieu Kosiah, 46, was found guilty on 21 of the 25 charges against him, including ordering the killing of 13 civilians and two unarmed soldiers, the murder of four other civilians, as well as rape, cruel treatment of civilians and using a child soldier in armed hostilities. Kosiah, a former commander of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy, or ULIMO, was sentenced to 20 years in prison, the maximum sentence allowed under Swiss law. Testimonies were heard from victims who relayed events that happened decades prior during the civil war.

2023: The next Presidential and Legislative Elections are to be held in October 2023.

Key Facts



- Liberia is on the Western Coast of Africa (also referred to as West Africa).
- The official language of Liberia is English, although throughout the country different ethnic group languages are spoken.
- Population: 4,689,021. Liberia's population makes it more populous than the city of Los Angeles, but smaller than the five boroughs of New York City. In terms of its size, Liberia compares to the state of Virginia.
- Religions according to the 2008 Census: Christian 85.6%, Muslim 12.2%, Traditional 0.6%, other 0.2%, none 1.4%.
- In 2016, the World Bank reported that about 54% of the population of Liberia lives below the poverty line. This means they live on less than \$US2.00 a day.
- Liberia's industries include: mining (iron ore), rubber production, palm oil processing, timber, diamonds. In recent years there has been exploraton for oil.
- An estimated 250,000 people died as a result of the civil war.
- More than 11,000 children were forced to take up arms and fight alongside rebel groups during the civil war.



Key Terms



Civil War: Sustained political violence between armed groups representing the state and one or more non-state groups. Also called an intrastate conflict. Intrastate conflict is the most common form of conflict today.

Palava Hut: Traditional community setting for conflict resolution. Community members mediate in matters of grave concern and seek to swiftly resolve disputes amongst or between individuals and or communities.

Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs): TRCs, established following widespread human rights violations and internal armed conflict, are a governmental or independent commission to investigate and record the violations. The TRCs are non-judicial inquiries. A TRC can help to identify patterns, practices, and chains of command, and is crucial to identifying the purposeful and systematic nature of such abuses. Just as importantly, TRCs, can serve to answer the many unanswered questions generated by disappearances, executions, and other crimes committed in war. TRCs are designed to focus on the testimony of victims of atrocity, thereby providing recognition of suffering and survival to those most affected. The findings and recommendations of commissions can contribute to criminal justice, reparations, and institutional reform processes to redress past abuses and prevent new ones from occurring. TRCs can potentially facilitate the process of rebuilding civic trust among citizens and in the institutions in place to serve them.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone (or Sierra Leone Tribunal): Established by the government of Sierra Leone in 2002 and backed by the United Nations at the conclusion of the civil war in Sierra Leone. The Tribunal, a judicial body, had the goal to "prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law" committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996 and during the Sierra Leone Civil War. In April 2012, former Liberian President Charles Taylor became the first African head of state to be convicted for his part in war crimes that he committed in Sierra Leone. He has not been held accountable for alleged war crimes in Liberia.

Key Terms



Fighting Groups in Liberia's Civil Wars: Between 1989 and 2003 there was on again / off again civil war in Liberia, with peace and stability never lasting long. By the end of the war there were eight fighting factions.

National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) formed in 1989 and led by Charles Taylor with the stated purpose of defeating the government then in power - President Samuel K. Doe & Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). Charles Taylor later became President of Liberia.

Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) was formed in 1990 by Prince Johnson who initially fought alongside Charles Taylor in the NPFL before breaking off and forming the INPFL. It was the INPFL that captured President Doe. A widely circulated video shows Prince Johnson commanding Doe's torture which is believed to have led to his death in 1990.

United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) was formed in Sierra Leone in 1991 (1994 ULIMO split to ULIMO-K and ULIMO-J). ULIMO was comprised of Madingos and Krahns. At the time of the split Roosevelt Johnson led **ULIMO-J** which was made up of Krahns. Alhaji Kromah, a former university lecturer led **ULIMO-K** which was made up of people from the Madingo tribe. General Butt Naked was part of ULIMO and also from the same Krahn tribe as Doe. Doe's 1990 death did not end the fighting, additional rebel groups formed, vying for power.

Liberia Peace Council (LPC) was made up of mostly members of Doe's Krahn tribe and was founded by a close associate and advisor of Doe, Dr. George Borley.

Lofa Defense Force (LDF) was founded by Francois Massaquoi. The Lofa Defense Force was established to stop fighters of ULIMO from capturing territories in Lofa. It was made up of mainly members of the Lorma ethnic group.

Liberians United and Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) attacked the government of Charles Taylor after he became president in 1997, leading to more war. LURD was mostly made up of the Mandingo ethnic group, who also formed most of the ULIMO-K faction during the 1990s.

Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) was made up by many Krahn tribe ULIMO-J fighters. The war finally ended in 2003 with a peace agreement between the government of Charles Taylor, LURD, MODEL and political parties.

HISTORY

According to development indicators, including those from the United Nations and the World Bank, Liberia remains one of the least developed countries worldwide. The country's infrastructure and social fabric was destroyed by two civil wars spanning from 1989–2003 that claimed the lives of an estimated 250,000 Liberians, and experienced an Ebola public health crisis (2014–2015) that killed another 4,800 people.

Liberia has taken important steps toward democratic governance, including three consecutive democratic, peaceful elections, most recently in October 2017.

The founding of Liberia in the early 1800s was motivated by the domestic politics of slavery and race in the United States, as well as by U.S. foreign policy interests. In 1816, a group of white Americans founded the American Colonization Society to deal with the “problem” of the growing number of free blacks in the United States by resettling them in Africa. The American Colonization Society together with freed Blacks and former slaves “settled” Liberia. But Liberia was already inhabited by indigenous Africans. The tensions between settlers and indigenous Liberians were evident early on and in fact continue to be a dynamic of Liberia's social fabric and past civil war. The settlers were called Americo-Liberians. A slang term commonly used to refer to America-Liberians is “Congo” people.

Upon arrival in Liberia, the settlers recreated American society and established English as the language of the land. Their relationship with the indigenous people was complex: marrying them in some cases, discriminating against them in others, but continuously aiming to “civilize” them and impose Western values. From Liberia's earliest beginnings there was great discrepancy in wealth and power.

Liberia's Declaration of Independence was modeled after America's, but with a distinct preamble:

“We the people of Liberia were originally inhabitants of the United States of North America. ... We were excluded from all participation in the government. We were taxed without our consent. In coming to the shores of Africa, we indulged the pleasing hope we would be permitted to exercise and improve those faculties which impart to man his dignity ... to evince to all who despise, ridicule and oppress our race that we possess with them a common nature.”

Liberia's founding Declaration of Independence had no mention of the indigenous Liberians. In many ways Liberia's founding fathers kept the new republic for themselves. The True Whig Party (or Liberian Whig Party) dominated Liberian politics from 1870 - 1980. This founding story and decisions about inclusion and exclusion had implications for generations to follow and by all accounts was a major factor in the civil war.

Origins of the Civil War

In 1980, the indigenous rose with a bloody military coup led by Sergeant Samuel Doe. It was not long until Doe was seen as corrupt. In December 1989, Charles Taylor launched a rebellion against Doe's regime that led to a prolonged civil war, despite Doe's death in the early stages of the war.

The origins of the two civil wars (often talked about as one long war, with a brief peaceful respite) can be attributed to a power struggle; ethnic divisions; a corrupt political system; land tenure and distribution; and economic, social, civil, and political inequalities. The TRC found that underlying those causes, the seeds of conflict were sown by the early decision to establish Liberia as a state divided between natives and settlers, and the use of force to sustain the power of the settlers' over the native Liberians.

The TRC's final report pointed to the "Duality of the Liberian political, social and legal systems which polarizes and widens the disparities between the Liberian peoples – a chasm between settler Liberia and indigenous Liberia (Consolidated Final Report, Vol. II, p. 16)."

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement called for the establishment of an independent national commission on human rights, a TRC, the reform of the Liberian police force, and the reorganization of the National Elections Commission. In May 2005, the Truth and Reconciliation Act was passed to implement the terms of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act tasked the TRC "to promote national peace, security, unity and reconciliation" by investigating gross human rights violations and violations of humanitarian law, sexual violations, and economic crimes. The TRC's goal was to determine whether abuses were isolated incidents or part of a systematic pattern, establish the antecedents, circumstances, factors and context of such violations and abuses, and determine those responsible for the commission of the violations, their motives as well as the impact of the abuses on victims. At the conclusion of the TRC fact-finding and information gathering process, they were obligated to issue a public report with findings and recommendations.

The Liberian TRC was notable for its effort to include women's voices and perspectives in the information gathering process. Unique was the TRC's effort to collect testimony from the Liberian diaspora and their extensive exploration of economic crimes as a key factor in fueling conflict. The TRC report identified many perpetrators of crimes during the civil war that remain in public office. The TRC recommended that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to be barred from public office for her alleged involvement in the war. The TRC questioned her about funding warlord Charles Taylor in the early stages of the rebellion.

According to a report by the International Center for Transitional Justice, there were limitations to the TRC process which contributed to difficulty in its implementation. They write: “These include the use of data, drafting and policy inconsistencies, and poorly formulated recommendations.” Further, disagreement between commissioners was also a factor, as was Liberia’s poor post-war national infrastructure which contributed to basic logistical difficulties. According to a note in the TRC Report, “Two commissioners, Pearl Brown Bull and Sheikh Kafumba Konneh, did not sign this report for reasons stated in what they have invariably and separately described as “dissenting opinions” in the local media, even though there is no provision in the TRC Act (2005) for such appendage.”

It is a source of frustration to many of Liberians citizens that the recommendations (http://www.fahnbulleh.net/docs/trc_final_report.pdf) of the TRC have yet to be implemented.

Recommendations included:



- Establishment of an “Extraordinary Criminal Court for Liberia” to try all persons recommended by the TRC for the commission of gross human rights violations including violations of international law, international human rights law, war crimes and economic crimes including, but not limited to killing, gang rape, multiple rape, forced recruitment, sexual slavery, forced labor, exposure to deprivation, etc.
- That certain individuals who committed egregious violations against the generality of the population (but such crimes are lesser than “gross violations”) shall be prosecuted under jurisdiction of appropriate domestic courts already in existence at the discretion of the prosecutor/Ministry of Justice.
- The establishment of a complementary tool for justice and national reconciliation based on traditional Liberian dispute resolution mechanisms (Palava Hut). The purpose of the Palava Hut is to afford anyone who has committed a wrong or crime, whether knowingly or unknowingly, against an individual or the state, to admit the wrongful act and seek pardon from the people of Liberia through the Palava Hut. The jurisdiction of the Palava Hut to render pardon shall be limited to public sanctions for supporting warring groups, factions and lesser crimes only. Persons recommended for prosecution in the TRC Report for the commission of high crimes i.e. crimes against humanity, war crimes, international human rights and humanitarian law violations are not entitled to pardon by the Palava Hut.
- That all those named in the report for commission of gross human rights violations, international human rights law violations, war crimes, economic crimes, and egregious domestic law violations be barred from holding public office for thirty years (including President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf).
- Witness Protection Statute to secure protection; domestic or external for witnesses of the court.

- That specific individuals, corporations, and institutions be recommended for prosecution or, in some cases, for further investigation.
- That the Government of Liberia provide reparations for all those individuals and communities victimized by the years of instability and war. Specifically, the TRC recommends that within the first 5 years that is from July 1, 2009 - July 30, 2014 all direct victim support program must be implemented including memorials, victim support and the process of prosecution. Further that the program of compulsory free education must continue in operation for at least 30 years. There is emphasis to support women and children affected by the war.
- That the Government of Liberia issues a public apology to the people of Liberia who suffered during the war, to the governments and peoples of West African nations and other foreign nations for the deaths of their citizens including international journalists.

Liberia Today

The October 2017 elections were non-violent and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf handed over a peaceful and more economically stable Liberia to the President George Weah. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is credited with restoring electricity and water to parts of the country, building roads that allow easier travel from villages to cities, and supporting the rights of citizens to criticize her government. At the same time, government corruption remains a challenge, the health system is weak, and unemployment remains high. Weah's presidency included the Ebola and Covid-19 challenges which continued to put strain on the economy. Internet infrastructure is weak, further hindering economic opportunity.

In terms of reconciliation and justice, a 2016 report from Catholic Relief Services stated: “Although Liberians acknowledge that gains have been made in reconciliation and healing, the vast majority remain convinced that the main perpetrators of violence escaped punishment, and that the victims of violence have largely been denied justice. Notably, more than 80% of respondents do not believe that people who suffered from the war received justice through Truth and Reconciliation Commission processes, and while half believe that post-war reconciliation failed to achieve its objectives.”

In 2017 a US Immigration court prosecuted two Liberian war criminals on immigration fraud charges relating to their denial of a war history. In 2022, a Swiss court convicted a Liberian war criminal for war crimes, which was the first direct prosecution for war crimes. Several other cases are on-going in Europe.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen, or pose a general question. To create space for a constructive conversation consider giving people time to themselves to take notes or reflect on the film before opening the discussion.

General

- 1) Briefly describe what the film is about. If a friend asked you what this film was about, what would you say?
- 2) Why do you think the film is called *Camp 72*?
- 3) What do you think the purpose of the film is?
- 4) What are five things you learned from watching the film?
- 5) Describe a moment or scene in the film that you found particularly disturbing or moving. What was it about that scene that was especially compelling for you?
- 6) One of the characters says “*No one came to my aid.*” What does it mean to be an up-stander? Bystander?
- 7) If you could ask anyone in the film a question, whom would you ask and what would you ask?
- 8) A Liberian journalist in the film says: “*There can’t be peace without justice.*” Do you agree? Why or why not?
- 9) Was truth achieved as a result of the TRC? Reconciliation? Justice?
- 10) What questions remain open for you after seeing the film?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Justice and Reconciliation

- 1) How do the film's different characters talk about justice? For instance, The TRC Chairman says: *"With justice, we will visit our violent past no more."* What does this mean to you and how does it contrast with the woman who says, *"If they go through the investigation that cannot bring my brother back to life."*?
- 2) How do the film's different characters talk about forgiveness? Point to examples.
- 3) Gladys says, *"For me, I have already decided I will let it go because if I keep burning in my heart against someone that hurt me then I would not like to move forward in life. But, if I want to move forward I have to let go of the pain in my heart and I have already decided to do that and I have done it."* How does that statement impact you?
- 4) What does the film have to say about whether (and how) a country can move forward without justice?
- 5) Do you think in the case of Liberia, prosecution would encourage more violence or do you think it would deter future violence?
- 6) What are the origins of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions?
- 7) Point to examples of two other TRCs in the world. How were they similar and different to Liberia's TRC?
- 8) What role did the Liberian diaspora play in the TRC? In what ways have other TRCs included the viewpoint of diasporas?
- 9) After watching the film, what are your ideas about why the TRC recommendations have yet to be implemented?
- 10) Is peace without justice possible for Liberia?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Justice and Reconciliation

- 11) What do you think about the traditional Palava Hut? The Narration in the film describes the Palava Hut as: *"The Palava Hut is a traditional practice where the accused admits their wrongdoing and apologizes. In return the community offers swift justice."* The Chairman of the TRC said, *"If you are wrong you make amends one way or another, even if it means offering a chicken if that is all you can afford to the opponent to say sorry, that would be done."*
- 12) What do you think about the cultural aspect of the TRC not recommending people for prosecution if they were "honest and remorseful" in their testimony?
- 13) How does the conflict in Liberia compare to conflicts today? Compare the tactics of war to those used by terrorist groups like ISIS.
- 14) *"It's very painful. Painful memory, but we just have to let it go. No matter what it takes one day we will be healed from our own heart."* (Gladys). What does reconciliation mean to Gladys?
- 15) Do you agree with the statement/Narration: *"In light of no one being held accountable, including General Mango, it is left to each individual to find peace."* Why or why not?
- 16) What do you think of the effort of ordinary people working on reconciliation: Agnes starting the healing center? Agnes encouraging former warlord General Butt Naked to make amends?
- 17) Describe two challenges to personal and national healing in Liberia.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Women and War

- 1) How were women targeted during the Liberian war?
- 2) What does international law say about 'rape as a weapon of war'?
- 3) The United Nations Mission in Liberia reports that 70% of women were raped during the conflict? Why do you think rape was used as a weapon of war?

A) Gladys Arthur: *"They just see you walking, they take you, they force you, they say you are wife. If you say no, they kill you."*

B) Philip Wlue, AKA General Rambo: *"The rape had two instances, that some people don't understand. We have the brutal rape and we have the intelligent rape. The brutal rape is when you throw the woman down and tear her clothes one to another raping and she's crying. The intelligent rape is that because I'm a big man and I meet you and I say look girl I want you. You will look at my face for a long time and you know what have happened to your friend that a certain group of people came here they grab my friend, they knock her down, tear her clothes and have her. So this man if I tell him no, what will become of me? And to keep your pride, you will accept to love to I alone because maybe if you tell me no I may get annoyed and say gentlemen here knock her down."* (Seema): *"This is taking a wife?"* (Philip): *"So it is intelligent."* (Seema) *"Why did commanders take wives?"* (Philip) *"You see the rebel leaders... all of them today that came to this bush, none of them brought a wife. All of them flee from what so ever , they left their wives and their children there. And understand every man has nature and when nature calls, no understanding until you ease yourself."*

C) Jerome Verdier/Chairman TRC: *"What we gathered from our investigation, part of the standard operating procedure was to intimidate and instill fear and rape was used to subdue the local population, to subdue them into submission. The history of our conflict is such that territories changed hands many times between different factions. So, if a faction occupied this place, abducted all the women as their wives, if they are raped for example massively, the population is under control."*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Women and War

- 4) In what other conflicts have women been targeted?
- 5) What do you think of women's roles as peace makers? How did women help bring peace to Liberia?
- 6) Some women took up arms in Liberia and fought back. What are your thoughts on that?
- 7) What do you think was the purpose of the Nobel Peace Women's visit to Liberia?

Combatants and Child Soldiers

- 1) What are the different approaches to seeking forgiveness that General Rambo and General Butt Naked take?
- 2) Many of the former child soldiers also raped and killed. What does it mean to say that the victim becomes the perpetrator?
- 3) What does reconciliation mean to General Butt Naked?
- 4) What do you think of General Butt Naked's statement on how he was able to kill? *"Before we inflict anyone, whether woman or man, we see them less. You have to convince yourself that that person is less than human."*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Film Studies/Journalism

- 1) What is the progression of the film? How does it start? Where is the arc? What stages does it pass through? How does it conclude?
- 2) Why do you think the filmmaker chose to tell the story through a journalistic style vs Cinema vérité?
- 3) Do you think the filmmaker was objective in presenting information?
- 4) What cinematic techniques were used to tell the story? How was sound used to emphasize points?
- 5) If the filmmakers asked how this film could be improved, what would you tell them? Describe the changes you would suggest in detail.
- 6) How would you tell this story with similar material?
- 7) How would you fact check material?
- 8) How would you go about planning an overseas film shoot? Coordinating Crew? Getting funding?

ACTION!

At the conclusion of your discussion, you may want to pose one of these questions in an effort to synthesize and move the focus from dialogue to action.

- 1) If you could require one person (or one group) to view this film, who would it be? What would you hope their main takeaway would be?
- 2) Complete this sentence: I am inspired by this film (or discussion) to _____.
- 3) What does this statement from Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire mean to you: "The great hope for humanity is the resilience of the human person."?

TAKE ACTION!

Speak out / host a screening of Camp 72: By hosting a film screening in your community you raise awareness about post-war Liberia and the impact of war on all members of society. Schedule a public or university hosted screening: www.camp72.com for licensing information. Email: info@camp72.com

Support grassroots groups working for peace. <http://www.gboweepeaceafrica.org> The Gbowee foundation supports the education of select Liberian students.

<https://urgentactionfund-africa.or.ke> Supports and provides protection to female activists and grassroots efforts working for human rights.

The film reveals challenges facing Liberia that planted the seeds of war. These include: political, social, economic marginalization, lack of educational opportunity and gender inequality. What are needs in YOUR community around political, social, are economic marginalization? Lack of educational opportunity? Gender inequality? What actions can you undertake to support gender equality, education, and mutual understanding?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Read



- Summary of an October, 2017 speaking event by President Johnson Sirleaf: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/09/liberias-sirleaf-calls-us-remain-global-leader>
- “After Ebola”: 2016 article by The Atlantic magazine <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/07/after-ebola/485609/>
- “State of Peace, Reconciliation, and Conflict in Liberia”: 2016 report by prepared by the international Non-Governmental Organization, Catholic Relief Services https://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/state-of-peace-reconciliation-liberia_0.pdf
- “The fallout of rape as a weapon of war”: 2014 research report by Overseas Development Institute <https://www.odl.org/publications/8464-rape-weapon-war-liberia>
- “The House at Sugar Beach: In Search of a Lost African Childhood”: Autobiography by New York Times journalist Helene Cooper <https://www.amazon.com/House-Sugar-Beach-African-Childhood/dp/0743266250>
- Historian Stephen Ellis writes about the Liberian civil war: “The Mask of Anarchy”: https://www.amazon.com/Mask-Anarchy-Updated-Destruction-Religious/dp/0814722385/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1508885924&sr=1-1&keywords=the+mask+of+anarchy
- Autobiography by President Johnson Sirleaf: “This Child will Be Great” https://www.amazon.com/This-Child-Will-Great-Remarkable/dp/0061353485/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1508885820&sr=8-1&keywords=this+child+will+be+great
- Photographer Greg Stemm chronicles the Liberian Civil war: “Liberia: When Darkness Falls” https://www.amazon.com/Liberia-Darkness-Liberias-Conflict-Through/dp/1432778498/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1508885856&sr=1-1&keywords=Liberia+when+darkness+falls
- The Final TRC Report: http://www.fahnbulleh.net/docs/trc_final_report.pdf
- 2010 report on the TRC process by the Liberia office of the International Center for Transitional Justice <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Liberia-Beyond-TRC-2010-English.pdf>
- <https://civitas-maxima.org> Keep up to date with prosecutions of war criminals

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Watch



- Pray the Devil Back to Hell: A documentary film that chronicles the remarkable story of the Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country. <http://www.forkfilms.net/pray-the-devil-back-to-hell/>
- Iron Ladies of Liberia: This film goes behind the scenes of President Johnson Sirleaf's groundbreaking administration during its first year, as it works to prevent a post-conflict nation from returning to civil war. <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/ironladies/film.html>
- Liberia: An Uncivil War: this documentary tells the story of the Liberian civil war. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0433409/>
- Sliding Liberia: A story about war, peace and surfing. The filmmakers show how surfing becomes a catalyst for social justice. <https://www.amazon.com/Sliding-Liberia-Dan-Malloy/dp/B002VVHN3I>
- Out of My Hand: An award-winning narrative feature film about a struggling Liberian rubber plantation worker who emigrates to New York City and starts a new life as a Yellow Cab driver. <http://www.outofmyhand.com>
- CNN clip about the current status of Liberia's child soldiers. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pDMSxqwAAU>
- CNN clip about post conflict rape: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qbArjpfia7c>

Discussion Guide Sources



http://www.fahnbulleh.net/docs/trc_final_report.pdf

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/liberia/essays/history/>

http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/history/2014/09/ebola_in_liberia_america_owes_the_west_african_nation_founded_by_free_blacks.html

http://www.peacebuildingdata.org/sites/m/pdf/Liberia_2011_Talking_Peace.pdf

<https://www.usip.org/publications/2006/02/truth-commission-liberia>

<https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Liberia-Beyond-TRC-2010-English.pdf>

https://www.amazon.com/Mask-Anarchy-Destruction-Religious-Dimension/dp/0814722199/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_t_0?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=RQX158VA0910YMYX3RFR

<https://civitas-maxima.org>

<https://www.nytimes.com>

CREDITS

Content:

Jessica Berns/Jessica Berns Consulting

Seema Mathur/Filmmaker & Journalist, Camp 72
Director and Producer

Design:

Seema Mathur

Reviewers:

Nat B. Walker/ Department of Political Affairs,
Peace and Security, Early Warning Directorate,
Economic Community of West Africa States

Stacey Connaughton, Ph.D. Associate Professor
Director of the Purdue Peace Project
The Brian Lamb School of Communication
Purdue University

Jerome Verdier/Former Chairman of Liberian Truth and
Reconciliation Commission

