

THE *BEST* OF ENEMIES

BASED ON A TRUE STORY



@THEBESTOFENEMIES



@BESTENEMIESFILM

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IN THEATERS APRIL 5



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THE BEST OF ENEMIES
SHOWS US THAT
CHANGE IS POSSIBLE,
AND IT'S WORTH
FIGHTING FOR.

The incredible true story of the friendship between Ann Atwater and C.P. Ellis is evidence of the power of transformational honesty. The outcome witnessed in *The Best of Enemies* forces us to acknowledge that in order to make real change, we must confront racism, inequity, and bias head-on. This is especially true for the people who have historically been in positions of power. While Ann's passion and strength were instrumental to C.P. changing his way of thinking, the onus was on C.P. to confront his own racism. Even in the film, we see that things aren't so simple; racism is not erased overnight. And that's why the conversation needs to continue, and stories of leaders like Ann's need to be told and shared.

More than just a movie, *The Best of*

Enemies provides a constructive opportunity to have meaningful and thoughtful conversations about civil rights and the ways in which racism is still prevalent in schools, neighborhoods, and communities across America today. The film, coupled with this Charrette toolkit, is a tool for community engagement and is designed to address deeper issues around implicit bias, 21st-century segregation in schools, systemic racism, and splintered communities.

As Charrette convenor Bill Riddick says:
We have a responsibility to look ourselves in the mirror and examine our own biases, and if we have the courage to do that, tomorrow will be a better day.



CHAR•RETTE
/SHƏ'RET/
NOUN • NORTH
AMERICAN

A meeting in which all stakeholders in a project attempt to resolve conflicts and map solutions

WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?

A charrette is a forum where people come together to map out a solution to a particular problem through discussion. However, a charrette can also be used as a way for different people to have an open discussion and create a healing space. A charrette requires a moderator or a point person to keep the discussion on track.

HAVING A SUCCESSFUL CHARRETTE

A charrette allows for open and constructive dialogue to expand perspectives. We are encouraging respectful conversations that allow us to connect with people who do not necessarily share the same thoughts and ideologies that we do. But, we are not encouraging anyone to put themselves in a situation or conversation that risks safety. The movie is an example of a unique situation where a charrette was used in a particularly dangerous environment. However, believe we can use a charrette to have a beneficial dialogue with peers in a respectful and safe place.

Before you begin the discussion, we recommend setting three guidelines:

1. Respect each individual's own experiences.
2. Encourage active listening
3. Leave space for some silence (it's ok to take a moment and process)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: EXPLORING RACE, REDEMPTION & FRIENDSHIP

1. Divide the group into pairs. A group with an odd number of participants can have one group of three, or the odd person can partner with the group leader. Spread out as much as possible so that each partners can hear each other speak.
2. Each group will need to decide who is going to be the "interviewer" and who will be the "subject." Everyone will eventually play both roles, so it doesn't really matter who goes first.
3. Give the group three minutes for each interviewer to learn three interesting facts about their subject by asking specific questions. Do not allow them to ask, "What are three interesting facts about you?" Good questions examples are: Where did you grow up? What is your favorite movie? What are you really passionate about?
4. After three minutes have passed, bring the group together and allow one interviewer at a time to explain one or two interesting facts they discovered about the person. Jot down notes on a whiteboard or flip chart next to each person's name, which helps name recognition and sparks later conversation.
5. Once every group has shared their facts, have the participants switch roles and repeat steps 3 and 4, making note of similar experiences as well as those that are different.

- What do reconciliation and healing mean for you?
- What was the turning point for C.P. Ellis? Was there a moment that defined his denouncement of the KKK?
- When C.P. confronts the city council chair about the tactics used to threaten the lumber store owner what does it reveal about CP's real place in the white power structure?
- In the film, Ann Atwater says, "The same God that made you, made me." What does this pivotal scene mean to you?
- Do all of your friends and family look like you? How has that shaped your perspective?
- Had you heard of Ann Atwater before seeing the film? Discuss Ann's leadership and legacy in North Carolina and why it's so important for us to lift up the stories of women of color, especially women who have driven movements like Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, Rosa Parks, and more.
- According to a recent study from the Southern Poverty Law Center, the number of hate groups in the US was at its highest level in 2018 with 1,020 groups up 7% since 2017. How does this, if at all, affect your daily life? What are ways to combat hate?
- In the film, we see Ann scold three boys for messing up the KKK display of materials and their hood. Why did she think the display should stay intact? Afterwards, she straightens the hood and for a brief moment we see the terror and pain on her face. How did that scene make you feel?
- Take a moment and think of three opportunities you've had in your life that someone else may not because of your race and class. Are there ways you can bridge that gap? What are they?
- What do you hope that people take away from this film? How can it be used as a tool within your community to spark more conversation around these important topics?
- The film sparks an important conversation around race in America 50 years ago and today.

What has changed since 1971 and what remains the same?

- CP and Ann found commonalities, but as a white man who led a violent hate group and a Black woman fighting for civil rights, they lived very different lives.
- Did they have a chance to truly reconcile their differences?



JOIN US ON SOCIAL

Sharing experiences is powerful. One that we saw shift the very relationship between Ann Atwater and C.P. Ellis -- and transformed C.P.'s life.

Tell us about your charrette discussion and how it changed your way of thinking or brought up conversations that sometimes we're too afraid of or too polite to have in everyday life.

Share a picture of your charrette and what you learned with The Best of Enemies team on social media using #TheBestofEnemies and tag @BestofEnemiesFilm on Twitter, and @TheBestofEnemies on Instagram and Facebook.

We've drafted some content below, but feel free to tweak and share photos of your experience. Make sure to tag participants and your congregation, if possible.

It's never too late to have a conversation. My first charrette with [GROUP name] In honor of the film #TheBestofEnemies, coming out on 4/5.

I hosted a charrette in celebration of activist Ann Atwater who changed an entire community through her commitment to sharing her truth. Host your own: <https://bit.ly/2Wt4pNJ> #TheBestofEnemies