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WHO IS HANGING BLACK PEOPLE?

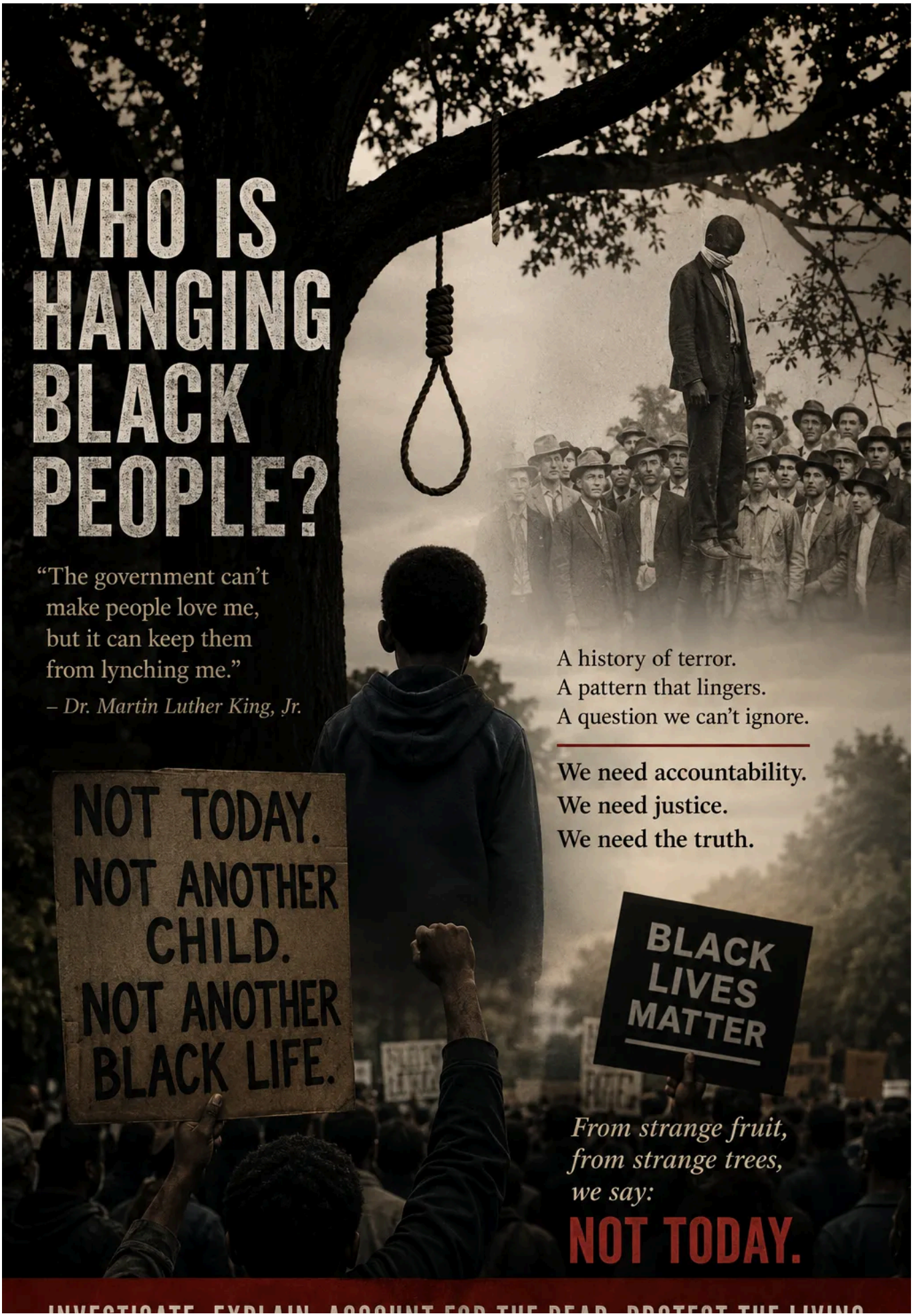


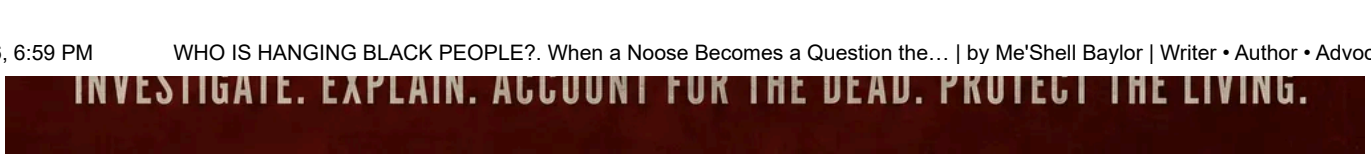
Me'Shell Baylor | Writer • Author • Advocate Follow 5 min read · Sep 4, 2026

161 2

When a Noose Becomes a Question the Nation Cannot Afford to Ignore

“The government can’t make people love me, but it can keep them from lynching me.”
— Martin Luther King Jr.


WHO IS HANGING BLACK PEOPLE?
"The government can't make people love me, but it can keep them from lynching me."
– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
A history of terror.
A pattern that lingers.
A question we can't ignore.
We need accountability.
We need justice.
We need the truth.
NOT TODAY. NOT ANOTHER CHILD. NOT ANOTHER BLACK LIFE.
BLACK LIVES MATTER
From strange fruit, from strange trees, we say:
NOT TODAY.



There are photographs that we look at and immediately understand.

There are photographs that make us stop.

And then there are moments that force us to ask whether history is repeating itself or still ongoing.

The image or news of a Black person hanging from a tree is one of them.

For generations, that history has represented one of America's darkest chapters: **racial terror and lynching.**

Lynching was not simply an act of murder. It was extrajudicial violence used to terrorize Black communities. Historically, victims were hanged, shot, beaten, burned, tortured and murdered by mobs. The violence was frequently connected to white supremacy and the effort to maintain racial control.

The numbers are staggering.

According to records maintained by the Tuskegee Institute and cited by the NAACP, **4,743 people were lynched in the United States between 1882 and 1968. Of those victims, 3,446 were Black Americans.**

That means Black Americans represented roughly **73 percent** of the documented victims during that period.

And those numbers may not represent the full extent of the violence.

The Equal Justice Initiative has documented **nearly 6,500 racial-terror lynchings of Black people between 1865 and 1950**, including nearly 2,000 additional cases during Reconstruction that were not included in earlier counts.

Have We Really Moved Beyond the Noose?

America has spent decades telling itself that the era of racial terror is behind us.

But what happens when a Black person is found hanging from a tree in 2026?

What happens when the family says, **"My loved one would never do this to themselves?"**

What happens when the public is given few answers?

And what happens when the investigation remains unresolved?

Those questions deserve to be asked without fear.

They also deserve to be asked **responsibly**.

Recently the internet was taken by storm hearing from all over the states of numerous black people hanging from trees. Multiple deaths where the coroners rule them "all suicide".

The Names Behind the Questions

In recent years, several cases involving Black people found hanging from trees or in similarly disturbing circumstances have circulated widely on

social media.

One of the most recent cases is that of **Tasia Fortune**, a 29-year-old Black woman and mother of four, whose body was found hanging from a tree behind a vacant home in Jackson, Mississippi, on August 3, 2026. Authorities identified her several days later. Her cause and manner of death had **not been officially determined** at the time of reporting, and the Jackson Police Department described the matter as an active death investigation.

Mississippi and the Weight of History

Mississippi carries one of the darkest histories of racial terror in the United States. The state was the setting for some of the nation's most notorious racial killings, including the murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in 1955. The U.S. Department of Justice describes Till's murder as a racially motivated killing that became a pivotal event in the civil-rights movement.

Today, when another Black person is found hanging in Mississippi, history inevitably enters the conversation.



Robert Elliott: Another Disturbing Mississippi Death

Then there is the case of **Robert Elliott.**

According to Greenville police, a passerby reported seeing what appeared to be a body along Thornton Street on July 21, 2026. Investigators found a body that had been **burned and wrapped in a tarp**. More than a month later, authorities identified the victim as Robert Elliott. Police say the investigation remains active, and no suspect information has been released.

This case should not be casually labeled a lynching without evidence establishing that racial terror was involved.

But neither should it be ignored.

A Black man was found dead under horrific circumstances.

His identity was eventually established.

His death remains under investigation.

And his family deserves answers.

The Bigger Question

So when we ask:

“Who is killing Black people?”

we must be willing to ask questions, demand answers, we cannot allow this to be another close case.

The real question is whether law enforcement agencies, medical examiners, coroners, state officials and federal authorities are conducting investigations with the urgency these deaths deserve.

Are forensic examinations thorough?

Are independent autopsies being considered when families challenge official findings?

Are surveillance videos being preserved?

Are witnesses being interviewed?

Are digital records being examined?

Are families being given meaningful explanations?

And when the circumstances are suspicious, are federal civil-rights authorities being asked to review the case?

These are legitimate questions.

The Noose Has Never Been Just a Rope

For Black America, a noose carries historical meaning.

It represents slavery's aftermath.

It represents Jim Crow.

It represents mob violence.

It represents intimidation.

It represents the murder of people whose lives were treated as though they had little value.

And that is why finding a Black person hanging from a tree demands extraordinary care.

Not because every such death is automatically a lynching.

But because **history has taught us what can happen when society stops asking questions.**

The federal government now has a specific anti-lynching law. In 2022, Congress enacted the **Emmett Till Antilynching Act**, providing an additional federal tool for prosecuting certain conspiracies involving serious hate crimes, including those resulting in death or serious bodily injury.

The law exists.

The question is whether America will use every appropriate legal and investigative tool available when the facts warrant it.

We Need Answers — Not Assumptions

Families should not have to become detectives to find out what happened to their loved ones.

They should not have to raise money for independent investigations simply to feel that their concerns have been heard.

They should not have to fight social media battles to convince the public that their loved one's life mattered.

And communities should not have to choose between believing everything they see online and believing everything they are told by authorities.

As a writer I told the story my grandfather never got to tell. How mobs came to lynch him the story of Nathaniel Comick.

These events have been horribly edge into the memories of my mother and her remaining siblings escaping mobs of men trying to kill their family because they are black.

With all these deaths only one thing can be done which is advocate and demand justice.

Demand the evidence.

Demand transparency.

Demand competent investigations.

Demand independent review when warranted.

Demand accountability when wrongdoing is established.

And most importantly, **do not allow the names of the dead to disappear.**

Because whether a particular death is ultimately determined to be suicide, homicide, accidental death, or a racially motivated crime, every victim deserves the truth.

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Written by Me'Shell Baylor | Writer • Author • Advocate

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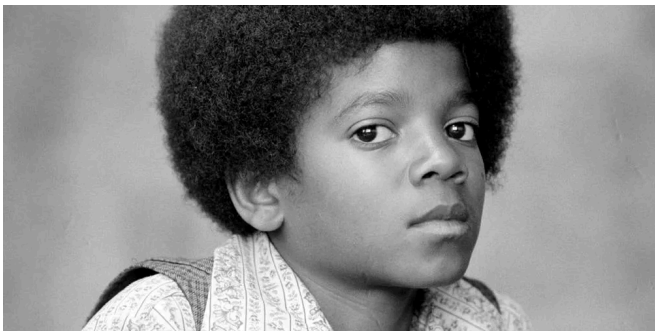


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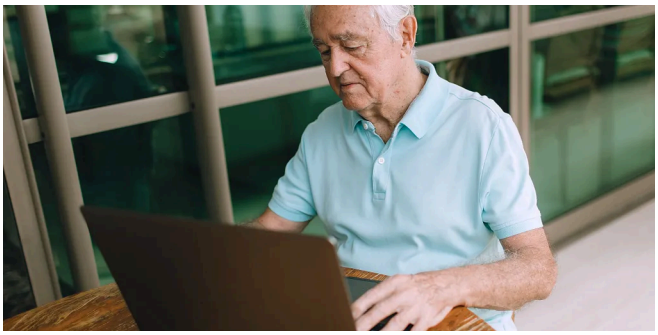
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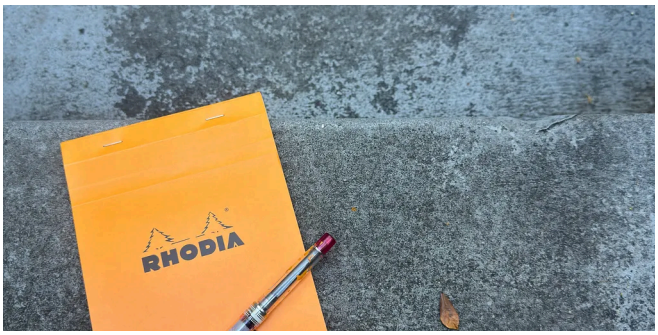
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