

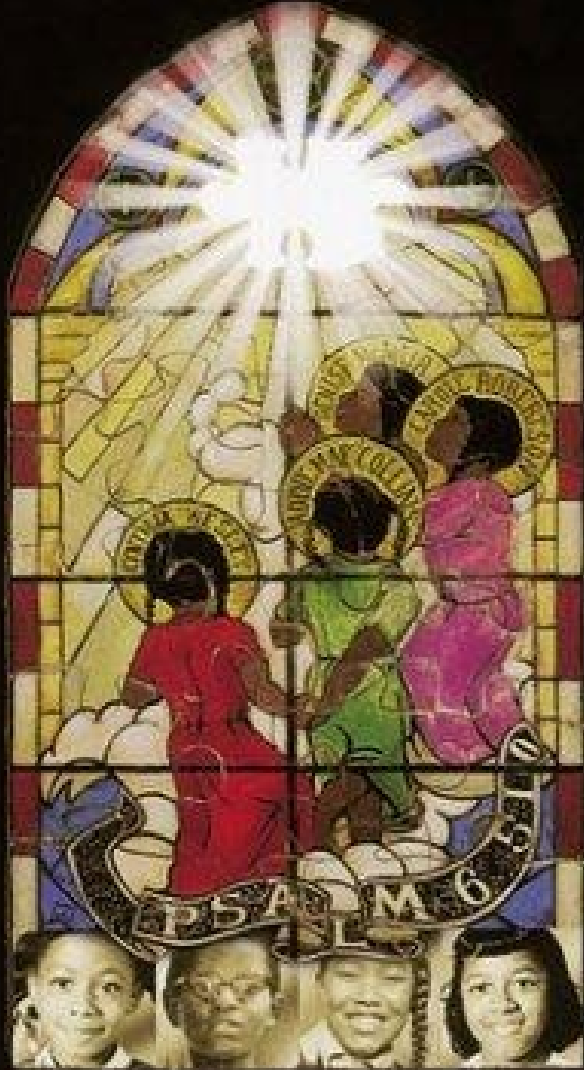
**WAITING ROOM  
FOR COLORED ONLY**



**BY ORDER  
POLICE DEPT.**

A FILM BY SPIKE LEE

# 4 Little Girls



The story of four young girls who paid  
the price for a nation's ignorance.

A Brief Introduction by  
John Lansingh Bennett

**Let's Ground Ourselves**

**for Just a Moment . . .**

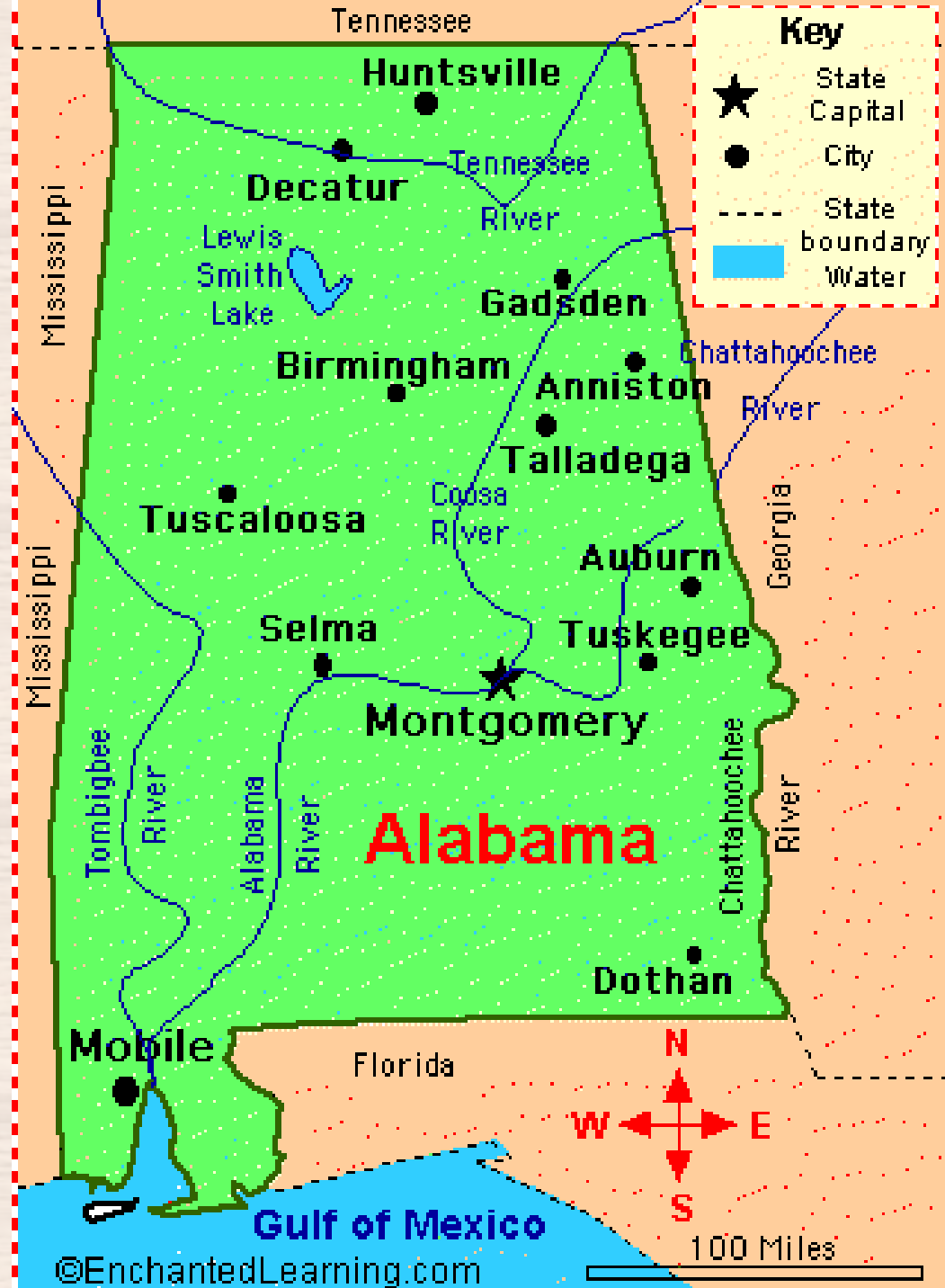


**Alabama's Capital: Montgomery**

**Largest City: Birmingham**

**"Pittsburgh of the South"**





# Setting the Stage

- 1948 Truman's Executive Order ends segregation in the Armed Services.
- 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ends segregation in *public* schools. (Many schools remain segregated.)
- 1955 14-yr-old Emmett Till murdered for allegedly flirting with a white woman.  
Rosa Parks triggers Montgomery bus boycott.

# Setting the Stage

- 1957 Little Rock Nine blocked from integrating Central High School; Eisenhower sends federal troops to escort them.
- 1960 Greensboro Four refuse to leave a “whites only” Woolworth’s lunch counter without being served, sparking sit-ins elsewhere.
- 1961 Freedom Riders protest segregated bus terminals & attempt to use whites-only facilities.



# Setting the Stage

1963 In June, Gov. Wallace blocks U. of Alabama doorway to two black students. Standoff continues until Kennedy sends in the National Guard.

In August, March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Rev. Martin Luther King gives “I Have a Dream” speech at the Lincoln Memorial.

In September, bomb at 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in Birmingham kills four and injures others.



With members working in mining and industry in the 1950s, KKK chapters had ready access to dynamite and other bomb materials. In fact, Birmingham earned the nickname “Bombingham” for the 50 explosions in the city between 1947 and 1965. (One neighborhood was targeted so often it was nicknamed Dynamite Hill.)

The bombing of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church was the third bombing in 11 days following a federal court order that mandated integration of Alabama schools.

**And a Bit About the Film**

**We Will Be Seeing . . .**

An HBO Documentary in assoc. w/ 40  
Acres and a Mule Filmworks

Director: Spike Lee

Dir. of Photography: Ellen Kuras

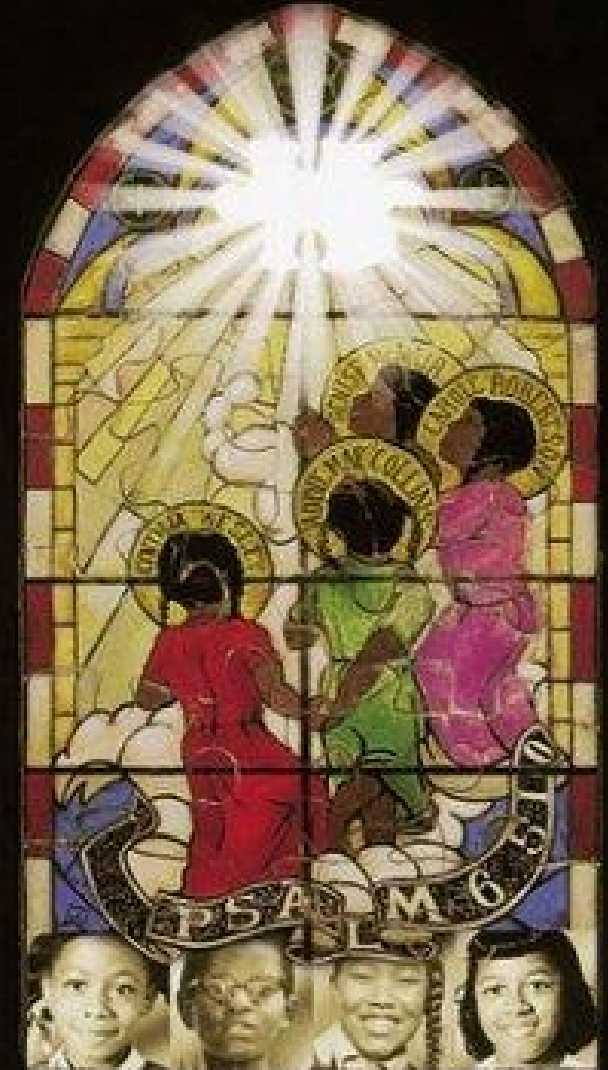
Editor: Sam Pollard

Music: Terence Blanchard

Producers: Spike Lee & Sam Pollard

Nominated: Academy Award, Best Doc.

A FILM BY SPIKE LEE  
4 Little Girls



The story of four young girls who paid  
the price for a nation's ignorance.





Shelton Jackson “Spike” Lee  
Born 1957 in Atlanta, Georgia

# Three Bio Bits

- Raised in Brooklyn, NY
- B.A. in mass communication from Morehouse College in Atlanta, having taken filmmaking courses at Clark Atlanta University
- M.F.A. in film and television from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts

*Just a Few of  
His 90+ Credits  
as a Director*



- 2020 **Da 5 Bloods**
- 2018 **BlacKkKlansman**
- 2015 **Chi-Raq**
- 2012 **Red Hook Summer**
- 1997 **4 Little Girls**
- 1992 **Malcolm X**
- 1991 **Jungle Fever**
- 1990 **Mo' Better Blues**
- 1989 **Do the Right Thing**
- 1986 **She's Gotta Have It**



Although perhaps better known for his fictional features, Lee has garnered great respect for his work as a documentarian:

- Oscar-nominated *4 Little Girls* (1997)
- Peabody Award-winning *A Huey P. Newton Story* (2001)
- Emmy Award-winning *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* (2006) and its follow-up *If God Is Willing and da Creek Don't Rise* (2010)

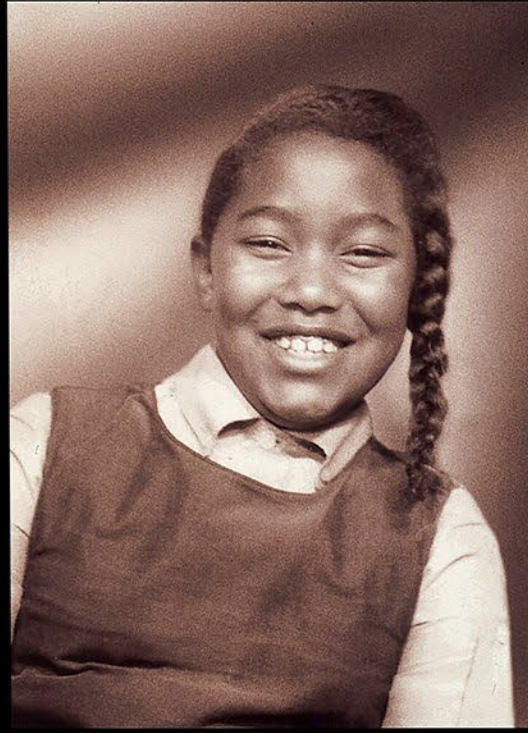
# Among His Accolades

- Student Academy Award, Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay, Academy Honorary Award
- Honorary BAFTA Award, BAFTA for Best Adapted Screenplay
- Two Emmy Awards
- Two Peabody Awards
- *Grand Prix*, Cannes Film Festival
- Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize
- *Do the Right Thing*, *Malcolm X*, *4 Little Girls* and *She's Gotta Have It* selected by Library of Congress for preservation in National Film Registry









IN MEMORY OF



DENISE MCNAIR CYNTHIA WESLEY ADDIE MAE COLLINS CAROL ROBERTSON

THEIR LIVES WERE TAKEN BY  
UNKNOWN PARTIES ON SEPTEMBER 15,



In Florida, shortly after the bombing, Rev. Charles Lynch addressed a KKK rally:

I tell you people here tonight, if they can find these fellows, they ought to pin medals on them. Someone said, ‘Ain’t it a shame that them little children was killed?’ In the first place, they ain’t little. They’re 14 or 15 years old—old enough to have venereal diseases, and I’ll be surprised if all of ’em didn’t have one or more.



In the second place, they weren't children. Children are little people, little human beings, and that means white people. . . .

And in the third place, it wasn't no shame they was killed. Why?

Because when I go out to kill rattlesnakes, I don't make no difference between little rattlesnakes and big rattlesnakes, . . .

because I know it is the nature of all rattlesnakes to be my enemies and to poison me if they can. So I kill 'em all, and if there's four less tonight, then I say, 'Good for whoever planted the bomb!' We're all better off. . . . I believe in violence, all the violence it takes either to scare [them] out of the country or to have 'em all six feet under!

It took fourteen years to bring the main bomber, Klan member Robert Chambliss, to justice, but the public image of the Klan had been set: it was an organization that bombed children in churches.

Three other men were also directly linked to the bombing; one died in 1994, one was convicted in 2001, and the third was convicted the following year.



## It Wasn't Just Down South . . .

For example, in 1922 and 1924 two large Ku Klux Klan gatherings were held in Tuscola, Illinois. The 1924 rally consisted of nearly 2,000 Klan cars, a hundred marching Klansmen, burning crosses, and a naturalization ceremony in Tuscola's Ervin Park.

And It Wasn't Just Way Back Then . . .





In these April 2016 photos, members of the Ku Klux Klan participate in cross burnings after a White Pride rally near Cedar Town, Georgia.

Klan leaders feel U.S. politics is going their way as a nationalistic us-against-them mentality deepens across the nation. Stopping or limiting immigration—a desire of the Klan dating back to the 1920s—is more of a cause than ever.





# Jumping-Off Points for Learning More

*Carry Me Home* by Diane McWhorter; Pulitzer Prize-winner that focuses on the Birmingham bombings.

*Eyes on the Prize* by Juan Williams and Julian Bond; companion to the PBS documentary series.

*Parting the Waters* by Taylor Branch; 1<sup>st</sup> of a 3-part biography of Martin Luther King—goes up to 1963.

*My Soul Is Rested* — excellent history of the era by Howell Raines, a native of Birmingham.

