



P.O.V.

Discussion Guide

Season

17

A Panther in Africa

A Film by Aaron Matthews



www.pbs.org/pov



Letter from the Filmmaker

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, 2004

Dear Colleague,

A Panther in Africa started with the questions: What happened to the radicals of the 1960s? What happened to the ideals of that era? In 1998, while traveling through East Africa, I met Pete O'Neal, a former Black Panther who has been living in exile in Tanzania for over thirty years and someone who embodies the answers to these questions. I was intrigued by the fact that Pete appeared to be living in a vacuum—the only America Pete knows is the America of the 1960s—and that his exile had preserved and refined values that other 1960s radicals had left behind.

I made this film in large part because I thought Pete's life revealed a lot about America, both past and present. But it was Pete the character that drew me to the subject. He's led an amazing life, and making the film seemed like a good excuse to get to know him better. As a man of extremes, Pete is on the one hand a humorous, genial man, knowledgeable about all sorts of things—from books to film, music to sports—and people genuinely like him. On the other hand, he's a very private person who likes to be left alone, likes to do things his way, and gets depressed at times. Above all, Pete is a man of commitment. He has committed himself to the service of his ideals for nearly forty years. That sense of commitment drew me to the subject as well.

I see *A Panther in Africa* as a companion piece to my previous film, *My American Girls*, about one Dominican family's immigrant experiences in Brooklyn, New York. Like Sandra Ortiz, the mother of the Ortiz family, Pete O'Neal is a man living between two worlds, navigating life in an adopted country. Around the same time Sandra chose to emigrate to the United States to make a better life for herself and her family, Pete was forced to flee to Tanzania because of his radical beliefs. Both Sandra and Pete feel the pull of their native lands and struggle with their transnational identities. They also gain a great deal of strength from their "between-two-worlds" status. This tension forms the essence of the immigrant story, which makes up the fabric of this nation and defines who we are as Americans. Through Pete, I saw the opportunity to tell the immigrant story in reverse.

It is difficult to summarize the effect that a three-year project has on you, since those three years of filmmaking are intertwined with everyday life, and so the changes are hard to quantify. But a couple of concrete things have changed: I perform more community service, and I give more of the little money I have to charities as a result of working on this film. Witnessing firsthand Pete and his wife Charlotte's generosity, and their willingness to open their life and home to complete strangers and to share their possessions, was inspiring. I hope that other people, through this film, will see the value and reward in performing community service.

The film has also given me a renewed appreciation for political activism and dissent. As Black Panthers, Pete and Charlotte had the courage to risk jail time as well as life and limb to stand up for what they believed in. Whatever you think of the Panthers, you have to acknowledge that some of their major accomplishments—raising awareness of significant social issues, changing the way many African Americans viewed themselves—were achieved by taking great risks. It has made me realize that there are things worth fighting for.

Thanks for joining in and extending the dialogue.

Aaron Matthews



Filmmaker Aaron Matthews on location in Imbaseni Village, Tanzania.

Photo: W. De La Roche



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Introduction

The tumultuous period known as “the ‘60s” continues to cast a long shadow across the contemporary American experience. Few, if any, of the seminal conflicts that drove the era – civil rights, war and peace, racism, women’s liberation – have been fully resolved today. Nor have all the key players in that national drama been tried, pardoned, punished, vindicated, or even allowed to come home.

A Panther in Africa is the story of Pete O’Neal, one of the last exiles from the time of Black Power, when young rebels advocated black pride, unity, community service and sometimes, violence. Facing gun charges in Kansas City in 1970, O’Neal fled to Algeria, where he joined other Panther exiles. Unlike the others, however, O’Neal never found his way back to America. He moved on to Tanzania, where for over 30 years he has struggled to continue his life of social activism – and to hold on to his identity as an African-American.

Pete O’Neal, the militantly outspoken founder of the Kansas City chapter of the Black Panther Party, was eating breakfast on October 30, 1969 when four A.T.F. agents broke down his door and arrested him for transporting a gun across state lines. One year later, he was convicted of the charge, which he has always insisted was trumped up as part of the federal government’s illegal COINTELPRO efforts – subsequently exposed – to imprison or kill Panther leaders. Before sentencing, O’Neal received warnings that he may not get out of prison alive, and decided to flee the country rather than submit to imprisonment.

In 1991, Pete and his wife, Charlotte, who followed him into exile, founded The United African American Community Center (UAACC) in Tanzania. The organization sponsors an international exchange program for underprivileged American and Tanzanian teenagers. The

O’Neals also coordinate study-abroad programs for several U.S. universities, bringing American college students to The UAACC to work alongside young Tanzanians while teaching them English, computer skills and HIV/AIDS awareness.

Both heartening and heart-wrenching in its exploration of what life has held for O’Neal in the thirty years since he fled America, *A Panther in Africa* provides viewers with an opportunity to think deeply about race issues in America today, social activism and community building.



Pete O’Neal as a Black Panther in 1970.
Credit: Courtesy of Pete O’Neal



Background Information

Historical Overview

In October of 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party, a militant black political organization originally known as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense. The BPP advocated black self-defense and the reconstruction of American society to make it more politically, economically, and socially equal. The “10 Point Plan” articulated the BPP’s goals by demanding, among other items, full employment, education, land, food, clothing, prison reform, the exemption of black men from military service, and the end of police brutality.¹

The BPP emphasized class unity and welcomed alliances with white activists, such as the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and later the Weathermen, because they believed that all revolutionaries seeking to change U.S. society should unite across racial lines.²

In May 1967, at the California state capital building in Sacramento, the BPP protested a bill that outlawed carrying loaded weapons in public. There, the police arrested Bobby Seale and thirty others. News coverage of the incident attracted new recruits and led to the formation of chapters all around the country.³

The following October, Newton was arrested and charged with murder for the death of an Oakland police officer. Eldridge Cleaver, a former convict and author of a book of essays called *Soul on Ice* (1967), grew in party prominence when he took the lead in building a Free Huey movement. As part of this effort, Cleaver and Seale contacted Stokely Carmichael, the former chairman of SNCC and a nationally known proponent of Black Power. Carmichael agreed to become prime minister of the party and speak at Free Huey rallies in February 1968. The Free Huey movement saved Huey Newton from the death penalty, but in September 1968 he was convicted of voluntary manslaughter. This conviction was appealed and overturned in 1970 due to procedural errors.⁴

During 1968–69, BPP alliances with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee began to disintegrate. Carmichael wanted to end all ties with white activists because he believed that they stood in the way of black self-reliance and equality.

The BPP also had differences with the leader of a group called U.S. Panther Maulana Karenga. The BPP disparaged Karenga as a cultural nationalist who placed too much emphasis on racial unity. The escalating verbal battles between the two groups culminated in a gun battle in January 1969 at the University of California at Los Angeles that left two Panthers dead.⁵

As racial tension increased around the country, the Federal Bureau of Investigation launched a program called COINTELPRO (short for counterintelligence program) designed to disrupt efforts to unify black militant groups such as SNCC, BPP, and Karenga. By 1970, twenty-eight Panthers had been killed and other members were either in jail or in exile in order to avoid arrest. In New York, twenty-one Panthers were charged with plotting to assassinate police officers and destroy buildings.⁶

In the early 1970s, Newton sought to revive the party by discouraging further police confrontations and shifting the party direction toward developing survival programs in black communities. These programs provided free breakfasts for children, established free medical clinics, helped the homeless find housing, and gave away free clothing and food.

However, persistent internal and external conflicts caused the BPP to decline as a political force. By 1974, Newton and Seale had broken with Cleaver, who prioritized black revolution over community programs. Newton fled to Cuba to avoid new criminal charges of drug use and Seale resigned from the party.⁷

The party’s new leader, Elaine Brown, based in Oakland, California continued to emphasize community service programs, frequently organized and run by black women. The BPP continued to lose support after newspaper reports appeared alleging the illicit activities of party leaders. By the end of the 1970s, weakened by external attacks, legal problems, and internal divisions, the BPP was no longer a political force.⁸

¹ www.blackpanther.org/TenPoint.htm

² http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761563992/Black_Panther_Party.html

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USApantherB.htm



Background Information

Update on Pete O’Neal’s Case

Pete still has not received a pardon. Should he return to the U.S., he would be immediately arrested and forced to serve from four to fifteen years in prison. The second petition filed to the United States District Court for the District of Kansas was denied on July 23, 2002. (The full disposition appears below.)

The present disposition of Pete O’Neal’s Case.

by Paul J. Magnarella, Attorney

On July 23, 2002, the United States District Court for the District of Kansas denied the second petition I filed on behalf of Pete O’Neal.

In the petition I offered evidence showing that the prosecution’s two key witnesses had perjured themselves on the stand in 1970 while giving evidence against Pete under oath. I also argued that the law under which Pete was originally convicted in 1970 should not have been applied to him, because he was not a felon at the time of conviction.

Pete O’Neal’s 1970 trial had serious constitutional defects, including: perjured testimony by key prosecution witnesses, the failure of the government to inform the defense that one of its material witnesses was a paid FBI informant, the misapplication of the law, the illegal wiretaps (the fruits of which were never turned over to the defense as required by law), and the insufficiency of evidence. Consequently, O’Neal’s trial was neither fair nor valid. Given that Pete O’Neal was convicted and sentenced illegally in violation of his Fourth Amendment rights and his Fifth Amendment right to due process, and given the other extra-legal circumstances surrounding and impinging on his trial, I asked the Court to issue a writ of error coram nobis, to vacate Pete’s conviction and to order a new trial.

Instead, the judge refused to deal with the merits of the petition or with any of the evidence it offered. He based his decision on the so-called “disentitlement doctrine.” That is, he used his discretion to disentitle Pete, a fugitive, from having his post-conviction claims adjudicated on the merits. I had also argued that the disentitlement doctrine should not apply to Pete’s case because he had fled the jurisdiction of the court in 1970 because of threats on his life by police and others. He sincerely believed that had he stayed in the U.S. and gone to prison, he would have been murdered.

Consequently, at present Pete’s case is dormant. Should he return to the U.S. he would be immediately arrested and taken to prison to serve his original four-year sentence. Should that happen, I could file a habeas corpus petition on his behalf, offering the same arguments and evidence contained in my earlier petitions.



Background Information

People We Meet in A Panther in Africa



Pete O'Neal, former Black Panther Party member in exile for thirty-two years.



Charlotte O'Neal, Pete's wife, also former Black Panther Party member.



Omar Matatola, a Tanzanian who describes what Pete was like when he first arrived.



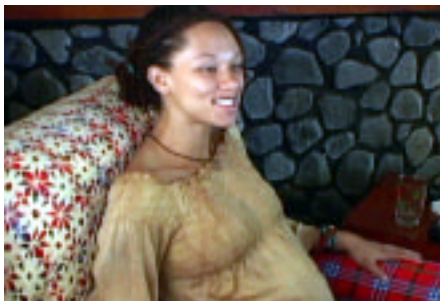
Derek Harris, youth visitor through UAACC's international exchange program, called Heal the Community.



Marty Young, youth visitor through UAACC's international exchange program, called Heal the Community.



Geronimo ji Jaga, former Black Panther Party member who moved to Tanzania.



Joju Cleaver, Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver's daughter and Geronimo's wife.



Florence O'Neal, Pete's mother, visiting Pete for what seems to be the last time.



Key Issues

A Panther in Africa is an excellent tool for dialogue because it raises issues that touch everyone interested in and/or working in social change advocacy, rehabilitation, community development, government, civil rights, law, freedom of speech, surveillance, U.S. history and international studies, including people from different races, socioeconomic classes, religions, and political perspectives. It will be of special interest to those interested in exploring or working on the following issues:

Activism

Aging

Africa (Tanzania)

African Americans

African diaspora

Civil rights

Community development

Conflict resolution / violence prevention

Counseling / anger management

Cultural displacement (immigrants and emigrants)

Education

Employment training

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) / COINTELPRO

Human rights

International studies / exchange programs

Justice system

Juvenile delinquency

Law enforcement

Legal studies

Political Asylum

Psychology

Race- or ethnicity-based community development organizations

Racism / cross-cultural conflict

Rehabilitation (halfway houses)

Social services

Social work

Sociology

Stereotypes

U.S. history

Youth programs



Potential Partners

A Panther in Africa is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- **Rehabilitation programs (including halfway houses)**
- **High schools and youth, international experience programs**
- **Curriculum and education programs listed in the Resources section of this guide**
- **Prison programs**
- **People involved with aging, poverty, immigration, employment training, activism and/or civil disobedience, and political asylum**
- **People involved with law enforcement and the justice system (e.g., judges, attorneys, FBI, police officers, parole officers, city government, prison guards and inmates, educators, and social service providers)**
- **Your local PBS station and their Program Club: www.pbs.org/pbsprogramclub/about.html**
- **Groups focused on African American activism, african diaspora, civil rights, youth, racism, cultural diversity, political prisoners**
- **Government agencies dealing with education, immigration, political asylum, social services, economic development, and youth empowerment**
- **Faith-based organizations**
- **Academic departments and student groups at colleges, universities, community colleges, and high schools, particularly departments of counseling, sociology, American, African American, and civil rights history, ethnic studies, postcolonial studies, political science, international studies, and sustainable development**
- **Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning, such as P.O.V.'s national partners Elderhostel Learning in Retirement Centers, members of the Listen Up! network, or your local library.**



Women at a local Tanzanian Market in 2002.

Credit: Nick Parfitt



Using This Guide

This guide is designed to help you use *A Panther in Africa* as the centerpiece of a community event. It contains suggestions for convening an event as well as ideas for how to help participants think more deeply about the issues in the film. The discussion questions are designed for broad audience. Rather than attempt to address them all, choose one or two that best meet the needs and interests of your group.

Planning an Event

In addition to showcasing documentary films as an art form, screenings of P.O.V. films can be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for individuals from different groups or perspectives to exchange views, and/or create space for reflection. Using the questions below as a planning checklist will help ensure a high quality/high impact event.

- **Have you defined your goals?** With your partner(s), set realistic goals. Will you host a single event or engage in an ongoing project? Being clear about your goals will make it much easier to structure the event, target publicity, and evaluate results.
- **Does the way you are planning to structure the event fit your goals?** Do you need an outside facilitator, translator, or sign language interpreter? If your goal is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges; small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)
- **Have you arranged to involve all stakeholders?** It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. If your group is planning to take action that affects individuals other than those present, how will you give voice to those not in the room?
- **Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel equally comfortable?** Is it wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that's easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it on neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?
- **Will the room setup help you meet your goals?** Is it comfortable? If you intend to have a discussion, can people see one another? Are there spaces to use for small breakout groups? Can everyone easily see the screen and hear the film?
- **Have you scheduled time to plan for action?** Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for those who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issue(s) on the table. For participants who are new to the issue(s), just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.



Using This Guide

Facilitating a Discussion

Controversial or unusual topics often make for excellent discussions. By their nature, those same topics also give rise to deep emotions and strongly held beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere where people feel safe, encouraged, and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share openly and honestly. Here's how:

Finding a Facilitator

Some university professors, human resource professionals, clergy, and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation skills. In addition to these local resources, groups such as the National Conference for Community and Justice (www.nccj.com) may be able to refer you to trained facilitators in your area.

Preparing Yourself

Identify your own hot-button issues. View the film before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

Be knowledgeable. You don't need to be an expert on the Black Panther movement to facilitate a discussion, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. In addition to the Background Information section above, you may want to take a look at the suggested websites in the Resource section on p.19.

Be clear about your role. You may find yourself taking on several roles for an event: host, organizer, projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that being a facilitator is not the same as being a teacher. A teacher's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping move the discussion along without imposing their views on the dialogue.

Know your group. Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have they dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion, and socioeconomic class can have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles, and prior knowledge. If you are bringing together different segments of your community, we strongly recommend hiring an experienced facilitator.



Using This Guide

Preparing the Group

Consider how well group members know one another. If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time at the beginning of the event for introductions.

Agree to ground rules around language. Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically, such rules include no yelling or using slurs and asking people to speak in the first person (“I think . . .”), rather than generalizing for others (“Everyone knows that . . .”).

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two participants from dominating the discussion. If the group is large, will you break into small groups or partners, or should attendance be limited?

Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate. In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, people try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and actively listening to each other. Remind the group that everyone is engaged in a dialogue.

Encourage active listening. Ask the group to think of the event as an opportunity to listen, as well as discuss. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal “active listening,” where participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then re-phrase to see if they have heard correctly.

Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of their own experience. Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. So, everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and all of them may be accurate. It can help people to understand one another’s perspectives if they identify the evidence on which they base their opinions as well as share their views.

Take care of yourself and group members. If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space to “vent,” perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that people may be upset, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies and/or have local professionals present. Be sure to make it clear whether or not members of the press are present and whether comments are “on the record” or that there is a reasonable expectation that requests for confidentiality will be honored.



General Discussion Questions

When people begin to think about the Black Panther party, political movements, radicalism, or exile, reactions can be intense. You don't want to suppress passion, but you do want participants to be thoughtful as well as emotional, to reflect and not just react. So, immediately after viewing the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen or pose a general question. People may need some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answer before opening the discussion.

Unless you think participants are so uncomfortable that they can't engage until they have had a break, don't encourage people to leave the room between the film and the discussion. If you save your break for an appropriate moment during the discussion, you won't lose the feeling of the film as you begin your dialogue.

One way to get a discussion going is to pose a general question, such as:

- What insights or new knowledge did you gain from this film?
- If you were going to tell a friend what this film was about, what would you say?
- Two months from now, what do you think you will remember from this film and why?
- Did anything in this film surprise you? If so, what? Why was it surprising?
- What is the significance of the film's title?



A signpost on Pete O'Neal's farm in Tanzania.

Photo: Nick Parfitt



Discussion Prompts



Pete O'Neal as a Black Panther in 1970.

Photo: Courtesy of Pete O'Neal

Inner Landscapes

- *A Panther in Africa* has much to offer on many different levels. Without thinking too much about it, name two or three

ways in which you saw yourself in the film. While watching the film, were there times that you said to yourself, "I've felt that way." When did this happen in your life?

- Recall the picture of Charlotte as a young woman posing with a gun. Knowing that every picture tells a story, briefly tell us Charlotte's "story". If you could go back in time, imagine meeting the Charlotte in that picture. What would you ask her? What would you tell her?

- Charlotte reflects on Pete and says, "He's very different from the way I remember him from back in the day. I've watched him grow to be very tolerant of all kinds of people's opinions. Where I think years ago if you wasn't down with the program, you know, you couldn't hardly say anything to him. You know what I mean?" Do you know someone who could be or could you yourself be described similarly? How do you think tolerance or intolerance is learned? If so, why? What are the effects on communities of either sentiment?

- When speaking about Charlotte, Pete says, "Our differing personalities have combined to create a whole that has been extraordinarily productive." What do you think he means? How have you experienced such a partnership in your own life?

- When Pete says, "The Black Panther Party turned my life dramatically around,"

what do you think he means? Recall a time in your life when something affected you deeply, and fill in the blank, "_____ turned my life dramatically around." What circumstances caused such a shift? How did you feel about yourself before and after this shift?

- While discussing with Charlotte the talk he had with the men from Alabama, Pete says, "We'll find people that'll come in our presence now, and they'll talk about social issues, and racial issues, and things like this, but these are things they



Discussion Prompts

don't think about when they're not...They think that they have to do this in our presence." Recall an experience where you felt similarly. Why do you think Pete and Charlotte are frustrated with such interactions?

- During Derek and Marty's visit to UAAACC, Pete reveals, "I'm losing that connection with African Americans. I'm kind of lost in a no man's land." When Geronimo arrives in Tanzania to settle, Pete says, "While my exile could in no sense compare to the suffering that he endured being in a horrendous prison situation, the fact that I have been in exile constitutes a sort of cultural and emotional prison. That you can have male friends of your tribe, people with similar cultural interests, similar political interests, and develop close bonded relationships with other men like this, this is something that's been missing in my life." Putting yourself in either Derek, Marty's, Pete's, or Geronimo's shoes, what do you think each person brought to their experience of being in Tanzania? Considering that growing up in the U.S. is extremely different from growing up in Africa, how would you adjust to the new situation abroad?



Former Black Panther Pete O'Neal walking in Imbaseni Village, Tanzania in 2003.
Photo: Nick Parfitt

Crossing Borders

- Recall Derek and Marty's twenty-day visit to UAACC and Tanzania. Do you see them change in that short time? In what ways?
- If Derek and Marty could not return to Kansas City after twenty-one days, how do you think they would have reacted to the Masai tribe, or to Pete and Charlotte?
- Pete and Charlotte have grown to love the Tanzanian people and the African culture there. When Pete speaks of the "Americanism" that is sometimes at odds with the mellowness of Tanzania, what is he talking about? What cultural practices

do you think immigrants to the U.S. would want to emulate? If your community contains many different cultures, what new practices have you incorporated in your own life?

- Early in the film Pete says, "I had had some very serious run-ins with the police in Kansas City and with the FBI as well. Policemen had seriously indicated that I would die if I went to prison." Imagine what it would have been like to be a Black Panther Party member during Cointelpro. What do you think he meant? Could it be that the police meant to scare Pete? If so, why? What did Pete represent to the police at the time?
- In the film, even though Pete tells some college students, "Attorney General, Janet Reno (Clinton Administration) said,



Discussion Prompts



A mural with Martin Luther King and Malcolm X at O'Neal's United African Alliance Community Center in Tanzania.

Photo: Nick Parfitt

"Yes, I couldn't agree more that his conviction was probably politically motivated," he later feels that because of our "post-9/11 world," it is unlikely that he'll be awarded a presidential pardon or that the case will be resolved in the courts. Only then can he and Charlotte return to the U.S. What do you think he means? How and why is there a relationship between the Black Panther Party and September 11, 2001? Should there be?

- At the end of the film, we learn that two Eagle Scouts requested letters of recommendation from Pete. He muses, "I thought that was ironic as hell. Black Panther recommending Eagle Scouts." For what reasons would you ask Pete or Charlotte for a recommendation? How would you advise a colleague if a young person came to them for a job with a recommendation from Pete, Charlotte, or Geronimo?

Making Connections

- While discussing the talk Pete had with the men from Alabama, Charlotte says, "So many people have a lack of knowledge about the sixties and seventies, and the whole, and the civil rights era and all that, you know. It's like they've been living in complete isolation." Brainstorm some social movements. Even if you don't know a lot about the civil rights era, why do you think it was important in U.S. history? What about some of the other movements on your list? Reflect and share your thoughts on how social movements in the last thirty years have affected society in positive and negative ways.



Discussion Prompts

- If you had the power to pardon Pete, would you? Why or why not? Consider sharing your point of view with the President of the United States.
- Does what you see and hear about in the film, especially in terms of domestic spying on activist groups, provide new insight or perspective on legislation and policy today?
- One of the men from Alabama visiting UAACC said, “We don’t see any racial problems in Alabama.” Think about your own community, would you say the same? If someone disagreed with you the way Pete disagreed with the Alabama visitors, what do you think contributes to your different perspectives on the matter? Imagine that you’re showing a new immigrant (of any race) around your town. How would you describe other factors besides race that might complicate relationships between people of diverse races and/or ethnicities?
- Pete states, “The really good things about the Black Panther Party (BPP) was the manner in which it served the community.” What are some of the services that the BPP provided in Kansas City? Do you remember how the BPP was represented in the media? If you never saw stories about the good work done by the BPP, what would you think about this organization?
- When talking about UAACC, Pete says, “What we’re trying to do here is create a microcosm of what we feel the world should be. People of all races, all cultures, all traditions come together and live and work for common goals.” In what areas of your own life do you feel that you experience such a microcosm? What kinds of obstacles get in the way of enjoying such an existence in general?



Pete and Charlotte O’Neal’s Black Panther memorabilia at their home in Tanzania.

Photo: Nick Parfitt

- Pete states, “The Black Panther Party came into existence to try to control these mad-dog policemen who were brutalizing people in the black community.” Reflect on the relationships between anger, militancy, and community service. What is it that motivates people to act? Can you relate to this experience? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Time is a great healer. After spending time with Pete, Charlotte, Geronimo, Joju, and Pete’s mom, Florence, through the film, has your view of social movements changed? Of political dissidence? Think about a “revolutionary” movement in Latin America or another place in the world. What questions would you ask of people who are involved in these movements? Is there a connection between their goals and the goals of community leaders in your own town?



Taking Action

- Imagine that you are in charge of a program similar to UAACC's *Heal the Community* in your hometown (this is the program that brought Marty and Derek to Tanzania for twenty days). Think about what challenges your community? Brainstorm a list of initiatives that would facilitate improving people's quality of life. Choose the top three initiatives and identify three to five actions that would move these ideas toward reality.
- Recall Pete saying, "You ask me, 'do I regret things?' You don't have the slightest idea what you're asking me. . . When I involve myself in community work, the primary reason I do it is because it's helping me. This is for my salvation; this keeps me on the straight and narrow. This helps me redefine my life." If you feel comfortable, share with your group something that causes you regret, perhaps a great deal of pain. Then with their help, identify two things that you can immediately implement in your life in order to say what Pete said about his community work.



Pete O'Neal with members of the Maasai tribe near his home in Tanzania.

Photo: Courtesy of "A Panther in Africa"

- If your group includes people who do not identify themselves as "white," create a "fishbowl" where the people of color form a smaller circle and speak about their reactions to the film only to each other (with their consent). The people in the outer circle cannot interrupt or question any participants in the "fishbowl," neither during nor after the discussion. However, they can seek out others from the outer circle afterwards and identify what made them "uncomfortable," if that was part of their experience. With the help of an experienced facilitator,

identify some reasons why this may have been a challenging exercise.

- Do the above exercise with youth occupying the "fishbowl." Using their discussion as a starting point, explore reasons why there may be tensions between "adults" and "youth," together or in smaller groups. Different ideas around idealism, realism, freedom, or fairness may arise. Identify a "should be" (and an alternative idea) in your group. For example, adults often say, "Kids should be more careful about talking to strangers," or youth might say, "Older people should try to understand me before they criticize." Discuss your perspective including what motivates you to believe in the "should be" (or an alternative idea) chosen by your group. Finally, come together and share how you may have redefined your perspective after listening to others.



Resources

Websites

P.O.V.'s A Panther in Africa Website

www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/pantherinafrica

Black Panther 1968

In 1968, photographers Ruth-Marion Baruch and Pirkle Jones exhibited their photos of a group of revolutionaries called the Black Panthers in San Francisco. They were granted extraordinary access and their pictures are still fascinating today. Look through our gallery of photographs and listen to former Black Panther Kathleen Cleaver talk about what it was like in those days.

Black Panther Today

Hear from former Black Panthers Kathleen Cleaver, Yvonne King, Bobby Seale, Billy Jennings, Barbara Easley and Elbert Howell about what their work with the Panthers has evolved into today. Watch a clip of Pete O'Neal talking about the evolution of his once-revolutionary rhetoric.

Film Update, Resources, and more!

Find out what Charlotte and Pete are up to these days in a special video update, exclusive to the website. Locate more websites with information on the Black Panthers, Pete O'Neal and find out what other viewers have to say about the film in the Talking Back section.

What's Your P.O.V.?

*P.O.V.'s online Talking Back Tapestry is a colorful, interactive representation of your feelings about **A Panther in Africa**. Listen to other P.O.V. viewers talk about the film and add your thoughts by calling 1-800-688-4768.*

www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html



Resources

Links to the Present and the Past

THE UAACC (UNITED AFRICAN ALLIANCE COMMUNITY CENTER)

www.uacc.habari.co.tz

Charlotte and Pete's website is a treasure trove of photos, news, arts, community program descriptions, history, and links to a myriad of pages presenting the many aspects of Charlotte and Pete's experiences through the years. It is an excellent source of inspiration and ways to participate in UAACC's mission and activities.



Tanzanian students at O'Neal's United African Alliance Community Center.

Photo: Nick Parfitt

THE KUJI FOUNDATION, INC.

www.kujifoundation.org

Established in 1999 in Morgan City, Louisiana by Geronimo ji Jaga and defense attorney Ed Jones, the Kuji Foundation supports the economic development, cooperative work and holistic approach to community building. Now sponsoring projects in Africa, this site presents information on projects in Tanzania and Uganda primarily in the areas of health, water,

youth-targeted HIV/AIDS education, and sustainable farming. Video clips included.

A PANTHER IN AFRICA

www.apantherinafrica.com

Learn about the making of the documentary, the filmmaker, screenings, and television broadcast schedule. The site also contains video clips and essential links to more information about global service, the Black Panther movement and original writings by its members, Black Culture, political art, research and news archives, African American history, the Freedom of Information Act, and human rights.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY BLACK PANTHER PARTY RESEARCH PROJECT

www.stanford.edu/group/blackpanthers

An excellent starting point for locating primary and secondary sources about the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, the organization cofounded in October 1966 in Oakland, California, by Bobby Seale and the late Huey P. Newton. This user-friendly site assists in uncovering information about one of the century's most controversial, yet least researched organizations.

AFRO-AMERICA

www.afroam.org/history/Panthers/panther-lead.html

A chronology of the Black Panther movement. Read a description of the movements paradigm, and biographies and interviews of influential leaders.

BLACK PANTHER PARTY POLITICAL ART - AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY THROUGH THE ARTS

http://cghs.dade.k12.fl.us/african-american/twentieth_century/panthers.htm

The Black Panther Party used art and propaganda to attract blacks from all over the states. In posters, Black Panthers would appear in black leather jackets and with the faces of young black warriors. Panthers had very strong words that gave



Resources

strong messages. Words like "Power to the People" and "Die for the People." The Fist of Glory was their strongest symbol. This fist was known all over the world.

THE OFFICIAL BLACK PANTHER PARTY SITE

www.bobbyseale.com/BPP.HTM

An excellent resource for all historical demographic facts and membership, time lines, Black Panther Party chapters and branches, including worldwide country locations, support groups, and organizational coalitions. In addition, you'll find information about BPP community survival programs, campaign elections, arrests, charges, courtroom proceedings, and references to the Freedom of Information Act, FBI COINTELPRO documents, articles, books, films, and video documentaries and plays produced by BPP alumni groups.

MARXIST MOVEMENTS IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD

www.marxists.org/history/usa/workers/black-panthers

Provides ideological background and the connections between domestic U.S. and international social justice movements.

THE DR. HUEY P. NEWTON FOUNDATION

www.blackpanther.org/TenPoint.htm

The Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation is a community-based, nonprofit research, education, and advocacy center dedicated to fostering progressive social change. The site contains historical and current information about the New Black Panther Party, including links to their speaker's bureau, latest news, party tours, and conferences.

"BLACK PANTHER PARTY," MICROSOFT ENCARTA ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA 2004

http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761563992/Black_Panther_Party.html

This multimedia site contains a concise article describing the Black Panther Party's history and political philosophies, and contains links to more information about Malcolm X, "Black Power," Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, etc.

SPARTICUS EDUCATIONAL

www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USApantherB.htm

The site contains online learning resources for educators, including a forum on using the Internet and teaching in general. It is an excellent starting point for links to hundreds of websites categorized by field, topic, geography, and historical events.

Community Tools:

HEART TO HEART INTERNATIONAL

www.hearttoheart.org

HHI works with UAACC. It is a global humanitarian organization that inspires, empowers, and mobilizes individuals to serve the needs of the poor in their communities and around the world. Heart to Heart accomplishes this mission through partnerships that promote health; alleviate hunger; offer resources, education, and hope; and provide opportunities for meaningful service.

SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

www.sit.edu

SIT works with UAACC. Its mission is to prepare people to be interculturally effective leaders, professionals, and citizens. In so doing, SIT fosters a worldwide network of individuals and organizations committed to responsible global citizenship. SIT fulfills this mission with field-based academic study abroad programs for college students and degree and certificate programs for graduates and professionals.



Resources

CHALLENGING WHITE SUPREMACY WORKSHOPS

www.cswsworkshop.org/about.html

CWS has worked in the broad-based radical, multiracial community since 1993. Workshop organizers believe that the most effective way to create fundamental social change in the U.S. is by building movements led by radical activists of color. One way to challenge white supremacy is to do anti-racist training workshops in white communities. CWS workshops have been designed by a group of white anti-racist organizers.

Suggested Reading

Carmichael, S., and Hamilton, C. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992 (re-issue).

Carson, Clayborne. *In Struggle, SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Cleaver, Eldridge. *Soul on Ice*. New York: Delta, 1999.

Didion, Joan. *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1990 (re-issue).

Gitlin, Todd. *The Sixties*. New York: Random House, Bantam Dell Publishing, 1993.

Jones, Charles, ed. *The Black Panther Party Reconsidered*. Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998.

Tyson, Tim. *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Woodruff, Nan. *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.



How to Buy the Film

To buy or rent *A Panther in Africa* please contact
 Filmmakers Library
 124 East 40th Street
 New York, NY 10016
 212-808-4980
 800-555-9815



ITVS funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the PBS series Independent Lens. ITVS was established by an historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since its inception in 1991, ITVS programs have helped to revitalize the relationship between the public and public television. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people. Contact itvs@itvs.org or www.itvs.org. *A Panther in Africa* was produced in association with the Independent Television Service.

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American Documentary, Inc.

www.americandocumentary.org

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. Through two divisions, *P.O.V.* and *Active Voice*, AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, on-line and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.



Now entering its 17th season on PBS, P.O.V. is the first and longest-running series on television to feature the work of America's most innovative documentary storytellers. Bringing over 200 award-winning films to millions nationwide, and now a new Web-only series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent non-fiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues.

P.O.V. Interactive

www.pbs.org/pov

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. It also produces a Web site for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through community-based and educational applications, focusing on involving viewers in activities, information and feedback on the issues. In addition, www.pbs.org/pov houses our unique *Talking Back* feature, filmmaker interviews and viewer resources, and information on the P.O.V. archives as well as myriad special sites for previous P.O.V. broadcasts.

Front cover photo: Former Black Panther Pete O'Neal on safari in 2002.

Photo: Jennifer Mittelstadt

